

PUNGENT TRUTHS

ROBERTS





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**PUNGENT TRUTHS**

¶ The engraving of Mr. Roberts is a copy of an original drawing presented to the publishing house by Mr. C. C. Husted, of Jamestown, New York. The likeness is strikingly characteristic, and will be appreciated by all who knew the author. . . .





*W. F. Roberts*

# PUNGENT TRUTHS

*BEING EXTRACTS FROM THE  
WRITINGS OF*

**The Rev. Benjamin Titus Roberts, A. M.,**  
*WHILE EDITOR OF "THE FREE METHODIST"  
FROM 1886 TO 1890*

*Compiled and Edited by*  
**WILLIAM B. ROSE**

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## PREFACE

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In compiling this volume the aim has been to present the pointed truths contained in the briefer editorial paragraphs written by the Reverend Benjamin T. Roberts while editor of *The Free Methodist*.

The relation which the author sustained to his readers as one of the founders of the church of their choice, and as a spiritual father to many of them, together with the fact that these writings carry the wisdom and experience of one for more than twenty-five years in direct touch with our early denominational history, will make this book of special interest.

The scope of these editorials is exceedingly broad. The compiler was surprised upon bringing the several paragraphs together to find that though the author had written a number of times upon the same subject, and at various intervals during a period of four years, yet each writing presented some phase of the subject not treated elsewhere.

In those rare instances where there may seem to be a similarity of thought, or a scripture passage appears a second time, connected with some subject, the reader will, because of the peculiar setting, commend us for leaving the paragraph as originally written.

Nearly all the titles of subjects have been supplied by the compiler, the original writings having appeared without them. The arrangement of subjects is alphabetical, and that of sub-divisions is designed to be logical and also alphabetical, so far as comports with a logical order. Each paragraph is numbered.

For convenience, two indexes are provided: one being general, though condensed, and the other analytical, but

full, in which both subjects and sub-divisions are in alphabetical order. All references are to paragraph numbers.

“Pungent Truths” is sent forth with the prayer that these words may again be clothed with the spirit in which they were written, and that so the reader may feel the power of “thoughts that breathe and words that burn.”

*Chicago, August 17, 1912.*

W. B. R.

## INTRODUCTION

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“Pungent Truths” is rightly named. It is a compilation from the editorial writings of one of the most pungent of speakers and writers.

BENJAMIN TITUS ROBERTS was not accustomed to speak or write for the entertainment of the public, but rather to produce conviction. His words generally had the same effect that Saint Peter’s did on the day of Pentecost—those who heard them were “pricked in their heart.” That is the natural effect of pungent discourse, since pungent means “pricking, stinging, piercing.”

Such is the character of the collection of truths herewith presented. They are utterances under the reading of which ordinary mortals will not sleep, any more than a man would sleep with needles or thorns piercing his flesh. Like the “Word of God,” which they clearly elucidate and forcibly apply, they are “living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12, R. V.).

Truths of this character are greatly needed in this age of indifference to spiritual things, in these times of general paralysis of conscience, and of prevailing moral laxity even on the part of professedly religious people. The Laodicean age in which we live needs pungent truths to arouse men from their carnal security, bring them to their senses, and produce within them that deep moral concern without which life would be frittered away in mere trivialities.

The reading of some books tends to produce narrowness of vision; but the perusal of “Pungent Truths” will broaden one’s perspective of Christian life and service. The truths contained in this volume cover an extensive range, including

every topic of vital importance in relation to Christian experience, life and service; also numerous paragraphs and articles on educational, sociological, political and reform subjects.

This volume will be especially helpful to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness"—to those who would excel in holy living. The discussions on Holiness will be instructive, inspiring and otherwise helpful, alike to anxious inquirers and to those farthest advanced in Christian experience.

There is much also that will be particularly quickening and stimulating to the Christian minister. A glance at the Index reveals the fact that the number of topics relating to preachers, preaching, pastoral work and kindred duties, is well proportioned to their importance. The hints, suggestions, advices and more extended discussions on these subjects are gems of wisdom.

The author of "Pungent Truths" excelled as a writer. His scholarship was deep and broad. His style was chaste, clear, convincing and highly suggestive. Few writers could say as much as he in so few words; few were so highly gifted in the art of vivid illustration.

While the contents of this volume have been arranged by the compiler with reference to logical order, yet for the most part each item is independent of that which precedes and follows it. The topics are numbered, and alphabetically indexed. The book therefore may be read with profit, either consecutively or by topic. The numbering and indexing of the nearly 650 topics also renders it convenient for ready reference.

The Rev. W. B. Rose, Agent of the Free Methodist Publishing House, as compiler and editor, has rendered a valuable service to the denomination and a most commendable contribution to Christian literature in the production of this work. His work is also a well-deserved tribute to the memory of the chief founder of the Free Methodist Church, who was also its first General Superintendent (Bishop) and, from the date of his election in 1860 to that of his death in 1893, was also under God its chief guiding spirit.

We are much gratified that these editorial productions, covering the four years during which Mr. Roberts was editor of the Free Methodist, have been gathered up and presented to the public in permanent form. "Pungent Truths" will perpetuate the influence of a great and good man. "By it he, being dead, yet speaketh."

Evanston, Illinois.

WILSON T. HOGUE.



# PUNGENT TRUTHS

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## 1 ACCURATE STATEMENT, Importance of

Form habits of accuracy. It will add to your happiness, your usefulness, your prosperity, and your piety. You can depend upon yourself, and others can depend upon you. A text of Scripture which you will want to use, commit carefully to memory, and quote it as it is. Do not misstate nor exaggerate any facts you may relate. If you make allusions to any of the arts or sciences, see that you do not get things mixed or wrong end to.

At a camp-meeting in Minnesota, we referred to a Presbyterian brother in the East, on whose land a railroad station was located. In every deed he gave he stipulated that the property should be forfeited, if intoxicating liquors or beer were sold upon the premises. A man opened a saloon on a lot which he had bought. The Presbyterian brought suit in the courts. The case was carried to the Court of Appeals, the lot declared to be forfeited, and liquor kept out. The occurrence took place a thousand miles away, and twenty years before the relation of it here referred to. We had no thought that any one present knew anything about it. To our surprise a resident of the community, a gentleman well known, who made no profession of religion, confirmed all we had said, and stated that he himself "was the victim"—the man who made the attempt to run a saloon and was defeated. This little incident seemed to add greatly to our influence with the congregation. People appeared to think they could rely upon our statements.

It greatly cripples one's ability to do good, when those who hear him feel that they must make allowance for what

he says. Be accurate in your statements. Keep accurate accounts.

### 2 ALTAR WORK: Prayer Important

Brother, when any persons come forward to be prayed for, and you undertake to lead in prayer, then *pray for them*. If you are not in a spiritual condition to do it, then be honest and go forward for prayers yourself. But do not substitute a sermon on your knees for prayer. Do not attempt to inform the Lord what he is. Come to him in simplicity, and in plain, earnest language ask him to do the work that the Spirit makes you feel needs to be done. Many words are not necessary. Borrowed beauties of expression are not necessary. But definiteness and simplicity, and faith, are necessary. If the seeker is not under conviction, as he should be, pray conviction upon him. If he lacks light, try and bring to his soul the light of the Holy Ghost. If the Lord gives you anything for him, it can be said in a few words; say it, and then keep him looking to the Lord for deliverance. All our members should be good workers at the altar. They may be, if they will. If you are not a good altar worker, will you become one? Consecrate yourself to God for this service, and he will fire you up, and use you.

### 3 ALTAR WORK: United Prayer the Means

“Evil communications corrupt good manners.” Some of our people, by working in popular revivals, have got in a bad way of working. They talk too much, and sing too much, and pray too little. They do not appear to get the burden of souls upon them. They do not pray with the intercession of the Spirit, “with groanings that cannot be uttered.” We must never forget that souls are not saved by prayer, but by the power of God in answer to prayer. We do not pray to men, but to God. Therefore, if fifty pray at once it is no confusion, for God can hear fifty or a thousand at the same time, as well as one. Invariably, where people take hold together in this way, the best results are realized. The converts are more numerous, and stronger, and longer-

lived. Let us do the work which God has committed to us just as nearly as we can in God's own way.

#### 4 ALTAR WORK: Salvation only by the Holy Ghost

Souls are saved by the power of the Holy Ghost, and not by the force of logic. When Paul reasoned of "righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix trembled" (Acts 24:25). That was as far as logic could carry him. But when Paul, "filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes" on Elymas, and in response to his words the great sorcerer was smitten with blindness, "then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord" (Acts 13:12). So, when sinners come forward to our altars, we should pray the power of God upon them, and not carry on a running conversation with them. We should rely upon the Holy Ghost to do the work in answer to prayer. Seekers should be encouraged to pray; and we should hold on with them until the blessing comes. If they do not pray right, we should lead them right, and put short, appropriate petitions in their mouths. Only get them to pray in earnest and in faith, and they will get through. "Every one that asketh receiveth."

#### 5 AUTHORITY To Be Respected

The Bible inculcates a proper respect to persons in authority. "Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:7). To "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities," the Apostle gives as marks of those who have "crept in unawares"; "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (Jude 8 and 4). Ungodly pride and ambition are at the bottom of this unwillingness to respect those above us. The celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson says: "Your levelers wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they can not bear leveling *up* to themselves. They would all have some people under them; why not, then, have some people above them?" Love of having the pre-eminence makes sad havoc with personal piety and with the prosperity of the church.

Such people are ready to reject their preachers. Diotrephes would not receive even the Apostle John, the beloved disciple.

#### 6 AWAKENING, Efforts For

Unless the whole community is converted, a preacher ought not to be satisfied with preaching only, or mainly, to his own members. Where this is the case, there is something wrong with the preacher. If there is no interest, he should awaken an interest. But alas! Probably none needs awakening more than himself. A man can not be deeply interested in anything without, if he tries, exciting an interest in others. This is doubly true in the great matter of salvation. A lack of interest in the congregation—much more, the lack of a congregation—proves that the preacher is spiritually dead.

"Let Zion's watchmen all awake  
And take the alarm they give."

If you can not get the people to come to you, then go to them. Visit them at their homes. Show an interest in them, a sympathy for them. If you are in town, hold a meeting in the street, just before the time for meeting in the church. Form a procession and march, with singing *in the Spirit*, to the church. This never fails to draw a congregation. Keep up an interest in the meeting. Long, dull, prosy prayers and exhortations drive the people away. Get others to take a part in the meeting. Begin in the Spirit, and go on in the Spirit to the close.

#### 7 AWAKENING, True

A desire to flee from the wrath to come is the very beginning of a genuine religious experience. No one can be justified, much less sanctified, without it. If in every case *this desire* shows itself by the fruits above specified, then it must follow that the vast army of jewel-wearing, novel-reading, cigar-smoking, money-grasping professors of religion, with which the churches are filled, can not possibly be in a state of salvation! They have not attained to the first stage of a truly religious life. Many of them will say

that they do not feel condemned for these things. But those same General Rules say that all these "we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts." Then it must follow that those who have no conscience on these matters are not awakened. Oh, what a need there is everywhere of doing thorough work for God!

#### 8 BACKSLIDER? Are You a

Are you a backslider? The question is not untimely nor impertinent. Do not dismiss it readily. You may be backslidden in heart and not know it. Many are. You know that something is not right, but you never suspect that the trouble is with yourself. You think that the preachers you hear and the papers you read are not as they used to be. The way things look to us often depends upon our own eyesight. Perhaps the difficulty may be, in part at least, with yourself. It may be that Divine truths do not affect you as they once did, because you have lost your interest in Divine things. The failure of sermons to touch you may be owing to your own hardness of heart. It is possible that even you have lost your first love. It will do no harm to look into the matter.

#### 9 BACKSLIDER Deceived

Many are backslidden and do not know it. Their professions are high—their state of grace low. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17). It is a sad thing not to see; it is still sadder not to know that one can not see. Christ could not do much for the Pharisees. They were so observant of some of the practises of religion, that they would not admit the possibility of their not being in a state of salvation. They were censorious of others; they were charitable towards themselves. Many are in this same condition. They are strict in some things, loose in others. Their religion is a religion of selfishness. They have unbounded admiration of themselves. Any one

who approves of them and their course they fellowship; those who disagree with them they condemn. They are not wilful hypocrites, but they are deceived.

We are too apt to judge of our religious state by comparing ourselves with those around us, instead of examining ourselves by the Word of God. Many a one is floating rapidly down to hell with the quieting remark, "I guess I am as good as any of them." Suppose you are. If they are not good enough to go to a Heaven of purity, into which there can not enter anything that defileth, your being as good as they are will not save you. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). Condemning others will not save ourselves. Whatever is the condition or conduct of others, we must be right with God. The betrayal of Christ by Judas did not excuse Peter for denying his Master. He had to repent for himself. The great question for each of us to settle is, "Am I right with God?"

#### 10 BACKSLIDER, A Redeeming Feature of a

There was one redeeming feature in the backslidings of Solomon—he did not put in a claim for what he had done and given towards the building of the Temple. He did very wickedly in yielding to his wives, and building altars to their favorite divinities. For the sake of domestic peace he sacrificed the purity of the worship of Jehovah, and "went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites." And he built high places "for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods" (1 Kings 11:8). But he did not put a mortgage on the Temple to pay for them; nor did he withdraw the offerings which he had made to God. He made no attempt to turn the Temple over to the priests of Baal. Bad as his case was, it might have been worse. But if God was angry with him, how must he feel towards those who labor to destroy what they formerly built for God?

## 11 BACKSLIDER, Return

If you have, in the slightest degree, wandered from God, come back to him at once. Do not wait till you have broken some great commandment before you bring him a broken heart. Open disgrace is not essential to true penitence. The sooner you confess wherein you have been wrong, the less you will have to confess. Nothing can possibly be gained by waiting. You are constantly growing harder, and you may grieve the Spirit until he leaves you.

“Wanderer from thy Father’s home,  
 So full of sin, so far away,  
 Wilt thou any longer roam?  
 Oh, wilt thou not return to-day?  
 Wilt thou? Oh, he knows it all.  
 Thy Father sees; he meets thee here!  
 Wilt thou? hear his tender call.  
 ‘Return, return!’ while he is near.”

Do not wait for some great occasion, or for some eminent saint to help you. You have now the best occasion—a time without distraction, the best and greatest of helps—the Holy Spirit. And God is saying, “Return unto me, and I will return unto you” (Mal. 3:7). Then come back at once, however slightly or however widely you may have wandered.

## 12 BACKSLIDER, Death of a

For years he was a happy Christian and a successful worker in getting souls saved. He went into politics. During the excitement preceding election he neglected prayer-meetings to attend political meetings. He became cold and formal. He obtained an office. Before his term of office expired he gave up religion entirely. He took to smoking, and then to drinking beer. We went to see him. He received us cordially. We reminded him of former days and urged him to get back to the Lord. He laid his hand on our shoulder and with great emphasis said, “Brother, I have not a single doubt but that if I die as I am I shall be damned. But I have not a single desire to be otherwise.” He had grieved away the Spirit.

“There is a line, by us unseen,  
That crosses every path;  
The hidden boundary between  
God’s patience and his wrath.”

A few mornings after our conversation, he went out from his home apparently as well as usual. In the heart of the town he suddenly fell in the street. A crowd gathered around him. They tried to lift him up, but he was dead. The inexorable summons had come, and all unprepared as he was, he was ushered into eternity. Beware of the beginnings of backsliding.

### 13 BACKSLIDING When Old

Probation lasts while life lasts. Every day a man lives in sin he is becoming hardened in sin, and the probability of his ever becoming converted is lessened. The longer and more faithfully one lives in the service of God, the more confirmed are his habits of piety and obedience to God; and the harder it is to turn him aside into any of the ways of sin; still, till one gets through to glory there is a possibility of falling. God is able to keep us. He inspires and prompts and leads, but he never interferes with the freedom of the will. All along the way of life there are by-paths, which lead into the broad, well-traveled road that ends in destruction, and any one may easily pass over to it if he will. Those who have for many years done valiant service in the cause of God, are not exempt from the danger of falling and, if they forsake God, they insure their destruction just as certainly as if they had never known him. “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die” (Ezek. 18:26). Solomon was the ablest man of his age. His intellect was of the highest order; his knowledge unequalled. He had been brought up in habits of piety. His conversion was clear, and to him was made a miraculous manifestation of God’s presence and blessings. For many years he had the clearest evidence of the fulfilment of God’s promises in his behalf; and yet we read: “For it

came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father" (1 Kings 11:4). If Solomon fell when he was old, then who is exempt from the liability of falling when he is old, and after he has spent happy years in the service of God?

One danger of backsliding when one is old, results from the love of peace and tranquillity which grows upon us as we grow in years. We do not like contention: "Young men for war." Old men have had enough of it. They have seen that its track is strewn with desolation, and that all the Christian graces and useful arts flourish best in times of peace. Especially do the aged want peace in the family. This was the case with Solomon. He did not forsake God because he had any inclination himself to do it; but his wives were clamorous. They wanted altars built for their false gods; so Solomon, for the sake of peace, hearkened to their requests and built an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. He did not tear down the altar of Jehovah; sacrifices were offered upon it as usual. *He only compromised.*

The same thing, in substance, is often done in our day. Men who have served God faithfully for years; who have clear convictions of the incompatibility of Baal-worship with the worship of Jehovah, will, at the instigation of their wives, pay their money for the support of Masonic preachers in whose Christianity they have no confidence and for the rent of pews, when they know that God's house should be just as free as his proffered grace.

As in the case of Solomon, they may keep up the form of worship, and so they fail to see, until too late, that they have in reality backslidden from God. It is better to have war than wantonness in the household. It is more necessary to be true to the principles of the gospel than to have peace.

Another cause of backsliding is love of money. Many, as they grow old, grow covetous and stingy. The stream

of beneficence flowing from them grows smaller the longer it flows. The less use they have for money, the more they love money. They hoard up property for relations who do not need it, and who will spend it in the service of the devil. As an old writer expresses it, "They go to hell making money, and their heirs go to hell spending it." They hope to have durable riches, though they have not been "faithful in the unrighteous mammon" (Luke 16:11). They hope God will give them a heavenly inheritance, and yet they do not give God any part of the earthly inheritance which for a little time he entrusted to their hands. They do not even remember him in their wills.

Ye who are on the downhill side of life, will you not listen to the words of warning written in love by one of your number? Let us see to it that whatever suffering fidelity to God may cost us, we endure to the end. Let us not be weary in well-doing. The reaping time is at hand. Let us go on till the Master calls, and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Whatever of conflict may await us, let us say with Paul: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." Then, when the warfare is ended, we shall be able with him to say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

#### 14 BAPTIZED HEATHEN

Fletcher was a very loving, amiable man, but he was a very outspoken one. He has one chapter entitled, "An Address to Baptized Heathen." The matter that follows is worthy of the title:

"O ye that regard pleasure, profit and honor more than justice, mercy and the fear of God; ye that, far from embracing Divine truth at the hazard of your reputation, spread abroad scandalous untruths to the ruin of other

people's reputations; ye who try to persuade yourselves that religion is nothing but a monstrous compound of superstition, enthusiasm and priestcraft; ye who can violate the laws of temperance or honesty without one fearful remorse, breaking through promises, oaths and matrimonial or sacramental engagements, as if there were no future state, no supreme Judge, no day of retribution, no Divine law enacting that 'whosoever loveth or maketh a lie shall be cast into the lake of fire'; that 'the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God,' ye are the persons whom I beg leave to call baptized heathens."

Reader, are you a Christian?

#### 15 BELIEVING AND CONFESSING

There is an inexhaustible fountain of blessings in that saying of St. Paul's, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The believing must be with *the heart, the affections*, THE WILL, and not merely with the head—the intellect. Believing in this way brings one into righteousness, into the principle of right, into the determination and the power to do right. This is a great blessing. But with *the mouth*—not merely with the life—confession is made unto salvation. There must be the frank, outspoken confession, if you would taste in their fulness the joys of salvation. It was for his own benefit, as well as for that of others, that the Psalmist said, "Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare unto you what he hath done for my soul." You can not keep the blessing God has given you unless you declare it. Confess it to your family, to those with whom you come in contact, and, on proper occasions, to the great congregation.

#### 16 BIBLE, The

The Bible is a wonderful book. It never ceases to be interesting and instructive. The more we read it, the more we enjoy it. We always find in it something new. It is a field, the fertility of which increases the longer, and the more thoroughly, it is cultivated. The more there is taken from it,

the more it is capable of yielding. It is a mine, which grows richer and richer the deeper it is worked. We lose our interest in other books after reading them a few times. It is not so with the Bible. It is the oldest book in the world, and yet it is always fresh and new to those who devoutly read it. It was adapted to every period of the world's history in the past; it is especially adapted to our times. Beloveds, read your Bibles.

#### 17 BIBLE Mysteries

The mysteries of the Bible are not greater than the mysteries that surround us. The words of the Apostle sound strange to some: "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." "How is it possible," says the materialist, "that there can be a *spiritual* body?" We will tell you if you will explain to us how it is possible that the same elements, combined in *precisely the same* proportions, should form substances so unlike in their appearance, and in their properties, as water and ice and snow and steam. The most ordinary life is enveloped in mysteries. But, thank God! we may all understand enough of the mystery of godliness to make us happy in life and triumphant in death. He whose ear God hath opened can hear songs in the night.

#### 18 BIBLE Never Changes

Fashion changes, but the Bible never changes. Like its author, it is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Clocks may vary, but the sun never varies. It always keeps time. It never rises a second too late, nor sets a second too early. So the Bible presents an unerring, invariable standard of right and wrong. One generation may sanction slave-holding, but through all generations the Bible rings out, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." In some countries some who read the Bible may love strong drink; but in all countries the Bible sounds the warning, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the

last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Churches may dress like the world, live like the world, and seek enjoyment in worldly pleasures; but in all churches the Bible utters the solemn charge, "And be not conformed to this world." Then love your Bible, carefully obey its directions, and it will lead you at last to a full and unending participation of joys immortal.

#### 19 BIBLE Reading

We recommend all our readers to read the Bible through once a year by course. You will feel an interest in it, that you can not when you take it up and read at random. We read through last year the Revised Version of the Bible. It is a good thing to have a copy to consult when you come to a passage in the Old Version that you do not understand. It sometimes brings out the meaning of the original more clearly. But on the whole we like the Old Version immeasurably better. We think it is destined to hold its place. It is dear to the hearts of millions of God's children.

#### 20 BLESSING OF GOD: It Maketh Rich

The humblest place is made pleasant by the presence of God. If we had more of his Spirit abiding in our homes, we should need less costly furniture, and fewer fine clothes. Debts, with their never-failing annoyances, would be avoided.

"God bless our going out, nor less  
Our coming in, and make them sure;  
God bless our daily bread, and bless  
Whate'er we do—whate'er endure;  
In death unto his peace awake us,  
And heirs of his salvation make us."

This prayer of Martin Luther is a good one to be adopted by every family. We should not take a single step in life upon which we can not have God's blessing. Still more beautiful is the blessing which Aaron and his sons were commanded to pronounce upon the children of Israel: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make his face

shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num. 6: 24-26).

Let us prize the blessing of God as above all price.

**21 BREAD, Daily, Provided**

Green pastures are provided by the Great Shepherd for all his flock. The food is nutritious, delicious and abundant. And the sheep gather it as they need it, each for himself. There is none laid up in store. It is not fed out dry by hired men. The prayer which our Lord teaches us is, "Give us this day our daily bread." There should be no starvelings in the flock. Saints may be without a preacher, but their great Provider is always at hand. He supplies their wants, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another; but he never leaves them to suffer for lack of bread. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

**22 BURDENS OF THE LORD Not Crushing**

The burden which the Lord lays upon us is not crushing. The yoke that Christ would have us bear is not galling. Sometimes, in the work of the Lord, we allow others to put burdens upon us which the Lord never imposed. We suffer a yoke to be put upon us which Christ never intended us to wear. Others may have more knowledge than we in many things; but we should live so near the Lord that we hear and know his voice in all matters relating to our duty. The promise is general: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." We should each seek to be divinely taught, especially in regard to our own duty. We may always expect an answer when, in humility and submission, we inquire, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

**23 BUSINESS FOR GOD, Not Slothful in**

He who is doing business for God should, of all men, be most diligent in business. His work is the most important of that in which a human being can engage. His wages are the very highest. None should surpass him in fidelity

to his calling. He should make the most of every hour and every day.

We once lived near a blacksmith, who was diligent in his calling. The ring of his hammer has roused us up to read God's Word and pray—to study and devotion. The Holy Spirit said, "Ought you to be less diligent to lay up treasures in Heaven, than this man is to secure an earthly competence?" So his industry was made to us a means of grace.

#### 24 CAMP-MEETING, Location of

The success of camp-meetings depends very much upon their location. Our experience has demonstrated that it is not profitable to hold them in some neighborhoods.

1. They should not be held on grounds used by others as pleasure grounds. The people come there, not to be instructed, but to be entertained. They will not attend often enough during the week to get sobered down so as to become serious. When they come, it is to visit, to hear "smart preaching," to criticize. They are joined to their idols. Let them alone.

2. They should not be held where the people are hostile or indifferent. We should not, as a rule, hold camp-meetings where the people do not feel sufficient interest to fit up the ground. This holds true, even where we have no members in the neighborhood. The smallest attendance we saw at a camp-meeting last summer was about a mile from a city, in a thickly populated neighborhood. The light had been offered to the people, and they had deliberately rejected it. They did not want to be troubled further, and so stayed away.

3. Locate it as conveniently to a depot as you can, and have it in a friendly neighborhood. Do not be afraid of the towns. The people residing in them, generally, are getting so civilized that they will not disturb a properly conducted, salvation meeting.

#### 25 CAMP-MEETING, Manner of Preaching at

If you preach at camp-meeting, be surè and preach the gospel. Do not try to pull down anybody; but hold up

Christ. If you have a grievance against any of your brothers or sisters, do not go to camp-meeting to give them an airing. Slander and ridicule and sarcasm and personal abuse, however merited they may be by those for whom they are designed, are no parts of the means which God has ordained for the salvation of mankind. Plain preaching need not be provoking. It will not be if it comes from a heart full of tender love. One moved by deep compassion can so utter the most searching truths as to melt instead of madden. Men and women may be cut to the quick; but they will repent under the truth spoken in love, and will not resent what they feel was said from no other motive but to do them good. Elijah appears to have been severe in his conflicts with the priests of Baal; but he carried the people with him. He destroyed the priests of idolatry; but he did it to rescue their deluded followers. He brought the people back to God. His example gives no support to those who, by their ill-timed denunciations, drive away those who were half-inclined to go with them. If you can not cast out devils, be careful how you stir up devils.

26 **CAMP-MEETING**, Preaching at

The preaching at our camp-meetings should be of the most awakening character. Fine sermons are out of place everywhere, especially at camp-meetings. The people do not need to be delighted, but to be convicted. Superficial, worldly religion is on the increase. Its utter worthlessness to save the soul should be clearly shown. The radical truths of the New Testament should be proclaimed with all authority. Where our work is no more thorough than that of the popular churches, it is not needed. Those who heal slightly should reform at once; for they are in danger of losing their own souls, and of taking their hearers with them down to hell. God's law is not repealed. The sermon on the Mount has not become obsolete. We must not only preach the truth, but insist upon it, and enforce it. Those converted among us should be so thoroughly saved that the popular churches will not want them. They should be so in love

with Christ and his truth that they should everywhere be ready to bear a bold testimony to his power to save from bondage to tobacco, and pride, and the world, and the lodge.

**27 CAMP-MEETING: Preachers Should Be Burdened for Souls**

The preachers at a camp-meeting should feel a deep concern for the salvation of souls. The wretched, dangerous condition of the unsaved should rest as a heavy burden upon them. They should have something at least of the feeling of the Psalmist, when he exclaimed, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law" (Ps. 119:136). The more the preachers have of this feeling, the deeper anxiety will God's people feel for the lost. A spirit of awakening will rest upon the congregation, and sinners will be converted to God. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isa. 66:8). But if chairmen and preachers are indifferent at heart, or in appearance, no matter how good and how pointed the preaching may be, the results will not be satisfactory. To have the best help from abroad is a positive injury to a meeting if it is the cause, or the occasion, of those upon whom the responsibility of the meeting should rest, slipping from under the burden and making the meeting only a season of social enjoyment.

**28 CAMP-MEETING: Preachers Should Remain at the Altar**

It does not look well at a camp-meeting, when sinners come forward to be prayed for, to see the preachers generally scatter and leave the prayer-meeting. The preachers may have a good excuse. The one who preaches probably has; but those who are not exhausted by incessant labors should make themselves felt at the altar. A preacher of the gospel should be able to prevail with God in prayer. He should be an example and an inspiration to the people in this respect. The real battle for souls has only begun when sinners have become so awakened as to take a position before the world as seekers of salvation. It is a critical time, and the most fervent prayers of the righteous should

be offered up for their salvation. If they give up without being converted, they may become discouraged, and give up seeking the Lord until it is too late. At such a crisis, for those preachers who are fresh and strong to go away looks as if they felt but little interest in the salvation of souls. This appearance of evil should be avoided.

29 **CAMP-MEETING, Public Criticism at**

If the Free Methodist critic will carry on his business at camp-meetings, let him do it when the outside world are not present. Those in charge of the meeting should see that none are allowed, *on the Sabbath, before the great congregation*, to make wholesale attacks on the piety of our preachers and members. Such attacks do not evidence either piety or sense. They can do no good—they may do much harm. They should not be allowed.

30 **CAMP-MEETING, Family Altar at**

Family prayers should not be neglected at camp-meeting any more than at home. The one in charge should give out the hour for both morning and evening prayer.

Said a gentleman to us at a camp-meeting: "I am not a Christian, but my wife is. For twenty years I have not been so crowded with work that I did not, with my men, attend family prayer which she conducted. But I have been here a week, stopping with a Free Methodist preacher—and he is a good one—and we have not had family prayers yet."

We should not like to take the responsibility of such a preacher. We should be afraid we might hear God say, "*His soul will I require at thy hand.*" A man, to attend a camp-meeting in that way, must at heart feel a good deal of religious interest. Who can say that, with proper effort by those with whom he stopped, and in answer to persistent prayer at the family altar, he might not have been converted? Where Abraham pitched his tent he builded an altar.

Keep up your family altars at the camp-meetings, and everywhere you go.

**31 CAMP-MEETING, Strangers at**

When strangers come to your camp-meetings, or other meetings, treat them with proper courtesy. You need not indorse them as Christians, if they do not bring forth the fruit of Christians; but you should treat them civilly. You can be friendly where you can not feel the fellowship of the Spirit. You should hold up the cross of Christ; but do not make it needlessly offensive by your repulsive manners. Sinners drive; saints draw. Use people so, when they come to your meetings, that they will want to come again. A friendly spirit will make more converts than a criticizing spirit. Love attracts; bitterness repels. His enemies called Christ "a friend of publicans and sinners." Let this be one of the worst things they have to say of you. Show unsparing severity toward sin; but be very kind to sinners.

**32 CAMP-MEETING, Thorough Work at**

We hope that all our preachers who have charge of camp-meetings, or of services on camp-grounds, will see that thorough work is done for God. The ranks of superficial workers need no recruits from Free Methodists. City and country are overstocked with doctors of divinity who heal slightly. Men must be gross sinners who can not be satisfied with indulgences which popular churches permit among their members. The broad road is crowded. Men and women of all ranks of society crowd and jostle each other in their eager chase after sensual delights, which are alluring them down to hell. Let our work be to turn people from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. Let us get people converted from the world to Christ. Whether our converts be few or many, let us do our part to have them genuine. Eternity is at hand.

**33 CAMP-MEETING: Success**

A camp-meeting, to be a success, must be held steadily to the work of getting sinners converted and believers sanctified. It will not do for the one in charge to give up his time to managing secular matters, and let the meeting run at random. He must feel the burden for souls upon him, and

devote all his energies to securing an outpouring of the Spirit upon preachers and people. Let God be manifestly present, and there will be little need for committees of order. Satan may rave, but he will be bound. A baptism of the Spirit will supersede the necessity of contrivances to raise money to pay expenses.

Expect great things from God. As a rule, invite people to seek salvation at every service. Especially look to have a great ingathering of souls on the Sabbath. Pray for it, work for it.

#### 34 CAMP-MEETING: Collections

Camp-meetings are not common fishing-grounds open to all who, with baited hook, wish to draw money from the pockets of the people. If a man makes a fish-pond on his own ground, and stocks it with fish, he who goes there to catch them without permission is worse than a common thief. The fish caught may go to feed the hungry, but that does not make the action right. So, if a society, or a quarterly conference, are at the trouble and expense of getting up a camp-meeting, they have a right to say to what an extent, and for what purpose, advantage shall be taken of the coming together of the people, to raise money. The object may be the very best, but that does not cover with morality a transaction which is wrong in itself. There are rights in such cases which all conscientious Christians are bound to respect. It is grossly inconsistent, as well as wrong, for men who oppose organizations and who refuse to submit to authority, to take advantage of these organizations to promote their own selfish objects. Christians should imitate Christ in their freedom from guile.

#### 35 CHARACTER AND REPUTATION

The armor of righteousness can not keep us from being shot at, but it can keep us from being wounded. Job's friends, sincere but mistaken, endeavored to convict him of secret wickedness, but in due time God appeared for his vindication. Men may injure our reputation for a season, but they can not injure our character. What we *are*

depends only upon ourselves and God; what *is said* about us depends upon the disposition of others. Over the latter we have no control; over the former our control, under God, is absolute. It is ours to be right and to do right; it is God's to take care of the results. Sensitiveness is a symptom both of pride and unbelief. He who is conscious of integrity, confident of divine protection, has nothing to fear. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday" (Ps. 37:5, 6).

### 36 CHILDREN: Labor for Conversion of

Some years ago we assisted Brother Phillips and others in a camp-meeting at Boyden, in northwestern Iowa. The meeting was remarkable for the large number of children who were clearly and powerfully converted. As we pass through the place we are pleased to see one of the boys who was then converted, now a young man of promise, come on the train on his way to conference to take work.

Those who place a light estimate on the conversion of children make a great mistake. The best orchards are composed of trees which were grafted when small. The men of whose deep and abiding piety, and consequent usefulness, honorable mention is made in the Bible, began to lead a life of piety in early youth. Look over the list. We give one or two: Moses was brought up in the court of Pharaoh, and was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians; but there is no mention made of his having practised their vices. Joseph, while a mere lad, lived so close to God that prophetic revelations were made to him. He, too, as Moses had done, successfully resisted all the enervating and worldly influences of an idolatrous court.

Those converted young may not make as great a sensation at the start as those who have turned from vicious courses to the service of God, but they, as a rule, hold out longer and lead more useful lives. Let us labor more earnestly, steadily and prayerfully for the conversion of the children.

**37 CHILDREN, Take Your, to Camp-meeting**

The camp-meeting season is upon us. If consistent, by all means attend. Go with a tent, and take as many of your family with you as possible. Do not leave the unconverted children at home. Take them with you, and make a special effort for their salvation. Do not be so much interested in others that you do not feel, and *manifest*, a deep interest for your children. Their eternal salvation depends upon their being converted to God. The longer they remain unconverted, the greater is the probability that they will never be converted. Now is the accepted time. Do all you can to have this day the day of their salvation. They may do much good by being converted to God. Be importunate in your prayers; faithful in your effort for their salvation.

**38 CHILDREN? Where are Your**

One of our liveliest, most earnest members in a church of which we were pastor, was a man past middle life. He had grown up wicked, and had been miraculously converted after his younger children were of an age to attend Sunday-school. We urged him to bring them, but he never would. He said, "I don't want my boys brought up formalists; I want them to know when they are converted." Before we left the charge, one Sunday, while the parents were at church, one of the older boys had an eye knocked out, and another one had his arm broken in a bar-room fight in a country tavern! We learned that some of these boys afterwards went to State's prison, but we never heard that one of them was ever converted.

Brother, do you take your children with you to church regularly? Do you see that they are not serving Satan while you are serving God?

**39 CHILDREN, Modesty in Dress of**

As long as parents are responsible for their children they should control their children. They should consecrate them to the Lord, and train them up for the Lord. In dressing them they should conform to the rules which

God has laid down in his Word. They should explain to them that they do it to please the Lord. The minds of children should be directed to something nobler than the vanities of dress. Children may learn at an early age that the favor of the Lord is more to them than the admiration of the world. But measured even by the low standard of taste, a child is never so beautiful as when dressed with simplicity. Modesty and humility are more precious ornaments than any which can be purchased at Vanity Fair. Teach your child to prize these above all price. If God has opened your eyes to see that you must dress plain, then, if you have children, dress them plain. Do not put ornaments on them which you can not wear. Relatives or friends should not be permitted to dress them up in fashionable attire, any more than they would be permitted to send them to a dancing school. Dress then in a neat, comfortable, plain manner. If you dress them up when they are small, they will dress you up when they are big. Many a woman who dressed plain when young, and when her children were small, and who led a godly life, has allowed her fashionable children to dress her up like the world, and has lost her religious experience, and become a mere dead, formal professor, in danger of damnation. If you allow yourself to become one of this world, you will share the fate of worldlings. You compromise in religious matters with your children at great peril to yourself and to their souls. Pride shuts those whom it governs out of Heaven. Therefore shun it if you would shun hell.

#### 40 CHILDREN Should be Taught to Work

A great injury is done to children by bringing them up without teaching them how to work. It may be easier for you to do a piece of work than to teach your child how to do it, but when the child is old enough to learn, it has the right to learn, and you should take the pains to teach it. Bring up your children from an early age to wait on you and help you, instead of making yourself a slave to them. If you have a cow and have boys and girls, have every one of them learn to milk, and teach the boys how to

take care of a cow. They may some day own one themselves. If we hire others to do work, especially ordinary farm work, it helps very much towards having it done properly, for us to know how to do it ourselves. One of the best things that can be done for a boy from fifteen to twenty years of age, is to have him work out by the month, one season at least, with a good Christian farmer. It will be worth more to him than a year at school. The habit of applying himself to work all day long will be of incalculable benefit to him in after life. That was a wise father who, when asked what he was going to do for his daughter, who had just graduated with all the accomplishments the schools could give, replied, "I am going to apprentice her to her mother, to learn how to take care of a house and family."

A boy that has been good to his mother will be good to his wife. A girl that has steadily helped to bear her mother's burdens will find her own more easily borne, from the discipline she has acquired.

#### 41 CHRIST, All in All

Christ is God. "They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." There has always been a longing in men for a manifestation of God among them. To this feeling, idolatry owes its origin and prevalence. In Christ we have *God manifest in the flesh* (1 Tim. 3:16). Granted that it is a mystery; we are surrounded by mysteries—the human mind loves mysteries. When it can not find them it strives to make them. But he meets all the longings of our hearts.

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want."

There is no longer any demand for sacred animals, or for idolatrous images. He who has found Christ will not seek further. He is happy and contented. He has a present help in every time of need; one whose resources and whose power never fail. To every soul in which he dwells, Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords.

## 42 CHRIST, Spirit of, Essential

These words of Paul are of universal application: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). Here is no chance for a single exception. Let each of us ask himself: "*Have I the Spirit of Christ?*" I am not so much concerned about others as I am about myself. If all others are wrong, that will not save me. My prospects are not improved by the shortcomings of my brethren. Their failures to reach Heaven will not take me there. I may be very zealous for truth, but have I the spirit of truth? I may be a strict observer of Christian forms, but am I a *new creature*? Is the prayer offered and answered—

"Jesus, plant and root in me  
All the mind that was in thee,  
Settled peace I then shall find;  
Jesus' is a constant mind"?

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

## 43 CHRIST'S MESSENGER Must Have Courage

The messenger of Christ must be a man of courage. The coward will compromise. He will keep back part of the truth. The fear of giving offense will take the edge from his sword. If he is true to God, he can but arouse against him the active hostility of the enemies of God, as well in the church as in the world. Paul, the most divinely prudent of men, did; John Wesley did; Jonathan Edwards did. Charles G. Finney met with the most decided opposition, even in his own church. He who will be faithful to the truth has need to pray:

"Steel me to shame, reproach, disgrace,  
Arm me with all thine armor now;  
Set like a flint my steady face,  
Harden to adamant my brow."

Eternal life is not won without a struggle. The world is not overcome without a conflict. Souls are not rescued

from the grasp of the destroyer without the most determined effort.

Buckle on your armor; whet your swords; *fight the good fight of faith.*

#### 44 CHRIST'S YOKE

Christ says, "My yoke is easy," but he does not say that it is an easy, trifling matter to take it upon us. Quite the contrary. His words are, "So likewise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). This modern, easy way of getting people converted, without repentance, without renouncing the world, by substituting presumption for faith, is but blinding them to their true condition, and leading them down to eternal death. A popular evangelist is reported to have converted two hundred in a single evening. "And it was done so quietly and with such propriety!" Lookers-on did not say, "These men are full of new wine." There was no known confession of sin, no restitution, no crying unto God with the voice. To the simple, and those quite meaningless questions, "Do you accept Christ?" they answered "Yes," or assented by nodding the head, and that was pretty much all there was to it!

And it is quite as easy a matter to live this kind of religion as it is to get it. Bishop Hurst of the M. E. church is reported to have said in a recent dedication sermon, "Where there is such timidity, diffidence, hesitation, or where extempore prayer is not considered just the thing that one is free to offer in his family, I do not see why one can not have domestic prayers by reading just a passage of Scripture and just reciting the Lord's Prayer." Is not this "Religion made easy"? Reader, Christ says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

#### 45 CHRISTIAN, A, Must Be Both Firm and Yielding

While a Christian must be inflexible in principle, he must be yielding in methods, as far as is consistent with principle. He must be firm but not obstinate, independent

in his judgment but not self-willed. It is blessed to learn how to yield gracefully in things indifferent, even when we are satisfied that our way is best. One who must always have his own way will make trouble in a church. No matter how many good qualities he may possess, he will in the end do more hurt than good.

#### 46 CHRISTIANS, All, Working Christians

We have an intense dislike for all those arrangements, becoming so popular, by which a *portion only* of the church is put into active service for the salvation of souls. They are unscriptural, and anti-Christian. They assume that one can be a Christian and yet not be a working Christian; that one can be on his way to Heaven and yet not be putting forth Christian endeavors for the benefit of his fellow men.

Christ speaks in no ambiguous terms on this point. He declares: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12: 30). This does not look as if Christ expected that a single one of his disciples would be indifferent in the great work of the salvation of souls.

Every member of a Christian church should be engaged in earnest efforts to rescue the perishing. In the cause of Christ indifference is hostility, and lukewarmness is a damning sin.

#### 47 CHRISTIANS, Consistent

People who will not dress like Christians have no right to call themselves Christians. It is true the dress does not make the Christian, any more than the feathers make the bird. The inner will clothe itself in appropriate outward forms. A humble person never has the appearance of a proud one, although a proud person may, for selfish purposes, put on an appearance of humility.

Bishop Morris, one of the godly bishops of the M. E. church of the last generation, says that such things as these can not be for any purpose but to gratify vanity—"a gold ring on the finger, or hung to the ear; a gold breastpin, or guard-chain; a gold-headed staff; an artificial

flower on the bonnet; a string of gold beads hung around the neck; a large bunch of some dead person's hair hung on the side of the face. How unsuitable, trifling and sinful it is for persons to indulge in them, who, as disciples of Christ, should be dead to the world, always bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus; not conformed to the world, but glorying in the cross of Christ; and more especially our Methodist brethren and sisters, who have been better instructed on the subject. They offend with their eyes open, knowing that God forbids the wearing of gold and costly array, as plainly as he forbids any sin."

#### 48 CHRISTIANS Are Citizens

In becoming Christians we do not cease to be citizens. We are still members of the civil community, entitled to its protection and under obligations to do our part toward its support. While we should avoid a litigious spirit, yet it is proper for us, when the emergency requires it, to claim the protection of the civil power. Paul appealed from the persecuting priests of the church to Cæsar.

#### 49 CHRISTIANS Must Respect the Rights of Others

The gospel makes us respect the rights of all mankind. We can not be Christians and make it our business to look out for ourselves alone. We must take some interest in the welfare of those around us. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Pay a proper regard to their interests, their convenience, and their feelings. *One* objection, among the many, to the smoking habit is, that it makes its votaries so forgetful of the claims of others. In a public place, where pure air can be had, every person has the right to have it. Yet smokers do not hesitate to smoke in the streets and parks, and even in the sleeping cars! We have been so annoyed with the latter, that when obliged to take a sleeping car, we ask for one that is not also a smoking car. On our last trip we were given one. In the morning we had the gratification of getting up without a headache, as we do not when compelled to go to sleep amid the fumes

of tobacco smoke. If men will undermine their own constitutions and annoy others by this vile habit, we say, as Daniel Webster is reported to have said, "If these men must smoke, let them take the horse shed."

#### 50 CHRISTIANS Should Read and Inform Themselves

Some professing Christians do not seem to care to learn. They live on excitement. They have but little relish for sermons that explain the Scriptures, and set forth clearly the doctrines which God would have us believe, and the duties he would have us perform. Articles in periodicals which afford instruction, and which require some attention to get their full meaning, they either do not read at all or pass over so hastily as not to be able, when through, to tell what they are about. Such people do not make useful, permanent Christians. They may make a great ado for a time, but they soon die. In a long-continued battle they can not be depended on; but, like some of Stanley's men recently in Africa, they run away and proclaim that their leader is dead.

They will mourn at last "and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!" (Prov. 5:12, 13).

#### 51 CHRISTIANS Should Study

In olden time God complained, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." This is still the case. Multitudes are led astray because they have not the understanding they should have in the things of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:7). Let the most ignorant person become truly converted to Christ, and he will at once feel an inward yearning for knowledge. He who settles down content with knowing little or nothing of the ways and works of God, gives, by such an act, the clearest evidence that he has no saving knowledge of God. A house not only needs inhabitants, it also needs furniture. If God dwells in us, we must furnish the temple with knowledge, as well

as with other good things (2 Pet. 1:5). Do the best we can, we shall still be ignorant of many things it is desirable to know. But we may make daily advancement in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, if we will.

#### 52 CHRISTIAN CHARACTER, Building

It is by insensible additions made from sources outside of itself that a tree grows. It picks up particles from the air through its leaves, and from the soil through its rootlets, and by the wonderful power of life transforms them into its own substance and makes them a part of itself. It is much the same way that Christian character is built up. From the reproofs that he gets, the trials with which he meets, a live Christian learns to correct something in his spirit, or in his manner, and so grows strong. He derives profit from each undeserved reproof. He who always puts himself in an attitude of defense, and indignantly repels every intimation that he might possibly be better or do better, shows that he has too much of the life of self and too little of Divine life. To bear reproof and profit by it is one mark of a true Christian.

#### 53 CHRISTIAN COURAGE

A Christian often needs higher courage than a soldier. Some who can face ramparts bristling with cannon, can not face ridicule. It is much easier for many a man to be a soldier than to be singular for Christ's sake. To stand committed to the truth in the presence of its enemies, to hold up the doctrine of the cross among worldly, compromising, unscrupulous members of the professed church of Christ, demands a valor that veteran soldiers seldom possess. Said George of Freundsberg, a valiant captain, a commandant of the Emperor's guard, to Luther, as he saw him boldly enter Worms, a city filled with Luther's mortal enemies: "Little monk, this is a daring step thou art going to take! Nor I, nor any captain of us, ever did the like. If thy cause is good, and if thou have faith in thy cause, forward! Little monk, in God's name, forward!" Luther had faith in his cause, and went forward.

## 54 CHRISTIAN COURTESY

A Christian is always known. Those present may never have seen him or heard of him before; but he can not be long in their company without their finding out who he is. They may not know his name, or his residence, but they will generally conclude that he is a Christian. There is something in the plainness of his dress and the quiet simplicity of his manners that attracts attention. He does not manifest in little things a selfish spirit. He is considerate of others. He is careful to respect their rights. If any one needs assistance he is ready to give it. On every fitting occasion he is ready to express his opinion, but is never obtrusive. It may be apparent to all that he is "unlearned and ignorant"; but they will "take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus." Those who think that a Christian need not be a person of good manners; that, in order to be free from pride, he must be boorish and uncivil, would do well to ponder the exhortation of the apostle, "Be courteous." (See 1 Peter 3:8). This term "courteous" is used to express the noble bearing of those who compose the court, or the social circle, of the king. These are understood to be the most polite, well-bred, obliging people in the world. You may not equal them in the outward graces of expression; but you should greatly exceed them in true kindness of heart, of which good manners are only an imitation. What with them is an outside appearance, should be with you an inward reality.

## 55 CHRISTIAN FERVOR, Awakening

People out in the cold often do not know how cold they are till they come in to a fire. So a Christian living in a community where coldness and formality prevail, does not realize his own condition till he gets among those whose affections are warm for Christ and his disciples. Their fervor contrasts strangely with his coldness, and he sees what he has lost. If he is honest he will confess how he has drifted, and seek again the joy of salvation. If he allows pride and self-conceit to gain the mastery, he will resist conviction and endeavor to reason himself into the belief that those with

whom he once had fellowship are too strait and perhaps fanatical. This is a dangerous state. One in this condition is apt to sink lower, until the light that was in him becomes darkness. When this takes place, how great is that darkness!

56 **CHRISTIAN INTEGRITY** Must be Retained

When one parts with his integrity, he virtually sells his soul. No earthly advantage can be a sufficient compensation. James II. of England gave to his son this last advice: "I am about to leave this world, which has been to me nothing but a sea of tempests and storms. The Omnipotent has thought right to visit me with great afflictions; serve him with all your heart, and never place the crown of England in the balance with your eternal salvation."

What must be the remorse in the dying hour, and to all eternity, of those who bartered their salvation—not for a crown, but for fleshly indulgence, for the varieties of dress, for the deceitfulness of riches, or the fleeting, unsatisfying honors which these mortals can give?

57 **CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE** the Foundation of Christian Character

Genuine Christian principle lies at the foundation of true Christian character. He who lacks obedience to God, whatever else he may possess, can not possibly be a real disciple of Christ. If he knows he is not, and yet professes to be, he is a hypocrite; if he does not know it, he is deceived. The Savior gives us ample warning on this point. "Not every one that saith unto me. Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." The Savior does not here discard faith, but rather he shows us the nature of saving faith. It is not of purely a speculative character. It does not consist mainly in consent to creed; nor does it manifest itself mostly in confident assertions of our own safety, and in violent denunciations of those who differ from us. It prompts us to humble, patient, conscientious obedience to all of God's commands. He who is living in plain violation of a single one of God's commands, can not atone for such

disobedience by any degree of zeal for other requirements, nor by any amount of contributions for the enterprises of the church. One who habitually neglects what he knows to be a duty which he owes to God ought to dismiss all hope of Heaven, though he be a prominent professor or an eminent minister. A religion that will take us through to Heaven consists in something more than reciting creeds and singing hymns and saying prayers.\* It will bring us into harmony with God and obedience to his commands.

58 **CHRISTIAN PROFESSION: Start Right**

It has become a popular thing to belong to a church. In many instances it secures admission to better society. It helps in business. So, where one joins a church from religious convictions, because he believes its doctrines, and is in hearty sympathy with its measures, it is to be feared that many join for the sake of the social and secular advantages which they hope to realize by so doing. Such motives show the utter worthlessness of the Christian profession which those make who yield to them. Even when Christ was here in the flesh, he said to many who sought him, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:26, 27). Selfish motives spoil commendable acts.

We are in the days spoken of by the prophet Isaiah (Ch. 4:1). There is no doubt but that this chapter refers to the gospel dispensation. "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." The word "woman," in prophetic language, stands for "church." The number "seven" denotes the completeness, or the whole. By "one man" is meant the man Jesus Christ. So the meaning of this verse is, that in the corrupt days of Christianity, the several religious associations will take the name of Christ, in order to be respectable—to take away their reproach—but will make their own conditions, will

dress like the world and live like the world; will eat their own bread and wear their own apparel.

Do not be of this class. If you take the name of Christ, eat the bread which he furnishes; embrace his doctrines; seek to comprehend them, and get the strength which they impart. Live as he directs. Wear his apparel. Dress plain. Be not conformed to this world. Avoid all jewelry, all expensive and fashionable attire, and dress plainly and economically.

Men may fail of success in business, without any fault of their own. But if you fail of becoming a real Christian, no one else will be to blame. The failures of others can not cause you to fail, unless you will let them. Whether any one else goes through or not, you may become soundly converted to God, if you will. The kingdom of Heaven is opened before you, and you are cordially invited to enter. No man has the power to shut you out. Everything depends upon the decision you make and the action you take. Your destiny is placed in your own hands. God calls on you to decide. Do not stop with any half-way measures. Make thorough work. Commit yourself in the most public and in the most positive manner. Give yourself wholly to God. Pray in the name of Jesus, until you get the evidence, as clear as a sunbeam, that your sins are forgiven, and that you are a child of God.

#### 59 CHRISTIANITY AND ANTI-CHRISTIANITY

False Christianity very readily unites with anti-Christianity. Nothing on earth is more liberal than sin; nothing more intolerant than true holiness. Light has no affinity for darkness. Everywhere it is its active opponent. Sin and holiness never make a truce; much less a peace. The conflict between them never ends, except in the death of one or of the other. Wherever the two exist, there will be all the commotion incident to a state of active hostility. What is called peace between the church and the world is actually a surrender of the church to the world. Some kings when in captivity have fared more sumptuously than they did when free and enduring the privations of the camp

and the dangers of the battlefield. So the church, led captive by the world, may flaunt in its fineries, dance to its music and feast upon its delicacies; but its fine apparel is that of a victim doomed to slaughter, and its dance is the dance of eternal death.

Though fetters are of gold, spurn to wear them; though your prison-house may be a palace, choose God's broad canopy as your covering in preference. *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."*

#### 60 CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The best way to celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace is to have, as far as we are concerned, peace on earth and good will to men. Have others wronged us? We should forgive them. Have any persons any complaints against us? We should be kind and conciliatory, ready to make any concessions and do all on our part to bring about a good feeling. Envy, jealousy and animosity form no part of the Christian character. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of love. Where Christ reigns friendship and brotherly kindness prevail. If you want Christ to come into your heart you must cast out of it all unkind feelings towards others. You can not love God without loving your brother.

#### 61 CHRISTMAS GIFTS

It is customary to wish our friends a "Merry Christmas." We do not exactly like the word "merry" in this connection; but we wish our readers all that is meant by it in its best sense. The Apostle James couples the word merry with singing psalms (Jas. 5:13). This kind of merriment does not degenerate into levity. It does not grieve the Spirit.

If you would have a pleasant Christmas, your pleasure will come more from what you do for others than from what others do for you. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Try and make others happy all the way through life, so that, as you look back, you can say,

“The thought of our past years, in me doth breed  
Perpetual benediction.”

Christ loved us, and gave himself for us; and he would have us manifest our love for him by doing good to others.

#### 62 CHURCH of Jesus Christ

“Dedication of a church?” You are mistaken. It is not the shape, nor the magnificence, nor the cost of an edifice that constitutes it a church of Jesus Christ. A very church-looking building near us is, we are told, devoted exclusively to the uses of Masonic lodges!

The gospel of Jesus Christ is preached to the poor. An edifice from which the poor are excluded by selling or renting the seats, and by the aristocratic and exclusive air with which it is pervaded; an edifice in which the nature and the conditions of the salvation offered by Jesus Christ are not laid down and insisted upon; in which the hymns are sung by a godless choir, and the acts of worship generally are performed by proxy; an edifice in which a kitchen and parlors are provided to allure those “whose god is their belly,” is not a church of Jesus Christ. Those who help to support it, thinking it is, are grossly deceived. It is a temple of Mammon!

#### 63 CHURCH and Riches

The professed church of Jesus Christ is rapidly passing from the dispensation of the Holy Ghost into the dispensation of worldly riches. “I thank God,” we heard a doctor of divinity say in a sermon, “the time has come when men’s piety is not estimated by what they profess, but by what they give.” No matter how they got their riches. He had nothing to say about that. It may have been acquired by stock gambling, by the brewing business, by wholesale liquor-selling; but if they only gave liberally to the institutions of the church, their liberality must be praised and their piety must not be called in question! Hear the word of the Lord, “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are

motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas. 5:1, 2, 3, 5).

#### 64 CHURCH Must Have Life

An animal may be ever so noble, but it is of little worth unless it has life. If it is entirely dead, it is good for nothing but to be consumed. "A living dog is better than a dead lion." An organization may be ever so perfect, but unless life is put into it, no good will be effected by it. We believe most firmly in free churches. Every seat in every Christian church should be free for any who wish to come there to worship God. To sell or rent pews in a house dedicated to the worship of God is contrary to the letter and the spirit of the New Testament. Yet live people in a pewed church, if such a thing is possible, will do more good than dead folks in a free-seated church. Our dependence must be, not in any system, or rules, or organizations, but in the living God. Our organization is a good one, but we must be alive to make it efficient. What we need, above all things else, is that which Christ came to impart, *life more abundantly*.

#### 65 CHURCH Progresses by Power

The Free Methodist church progresses, not by popularity, but by power. Where the preacher and the people seek to make it popular, by conforming to the ways of worldly churches, they soon run out. But where they plant themselves firmly and fully on the Bible platform, and are careful to maintain holy living, and keep among them Holy Ghost power, they make steady progress. All the churches around may combine against them; but God stands by them, and sinners are convicted and converted, and the work moves on in the face of prejudices that seem well-nigh insurmountable.

This is as it should be. There are enough proud, formal,

dead churches already. If we can not be unlike them in these respects, we had better not be at all. God has called us out to be a plain, pious, peculiar people. Let us obey the call.

66 **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP** Should Not Be Sought for Secular Ends

No Christian should belong to a religious denomination unless he conscientiously believes in the doctrines it teaches and the principles it upholds. A lack of sincerity certainly evidences a lack of saving grace. He who is in a church for the opportunities which it affords to promote his own secular interests, or his ambitious schemes, greatly deceives himself if he thinks he is in a state of salvation. Christ demands honesty of all his disciples.

Dr. Stephen Olin, one of the greatest, largest-hearted men ever connected with the M. E. church, says: "He is the best Methodist, and, being a Methodist, I think the best Christian, who respects and follows fully our appointed methods of getting and doing good. He attends upon the public and the more private and social means of grace punctually and conscientiously. He is ever at his class, at the prayer-meeting and the love-feast. He approves of—he sustains the institutions, and forms and usages of his own church, very little concerned if it should so happen that others do not altogether like them.

"If denominational attachments should be strong, sectarian prejudices can not be too weak or too few; and I should rejoice to know that never a word is said in this or any other Methodist pulpit to excite or strengthen them."

67 **CHURCH,** Urge Converts to Join

If souls are converted under your labors, open the door of the church and invite them to join. Do not wait to see whether they will hold out. Help them to hold out. The younger a child, the more it needs its mother. If people ever need to be within the protecting bulwarks of the church, it is when they have just started in the service of Christ. Satan is after them with

all his arts, and all his malignity. Their old companions in sin will seek to draw them back.

If any show a hesitancy about joining the church, visit them at their homes; give them a personal invitation; talk with them freely; let them know they will be welcome; and remove any objections they may offer. Do not be afraid to proselyte your own converts. You may rest assured that preachers of other denominations will have no such scruples. They will go eagerly after any that would be likely to add strength to their church. Young converts, full of love and zeal, are often drawn into dead churches by being told how much their "help is needed," and how much good "you can do among us," and "how much we need your influence to wake us up."

It would not be so serious a matter were it not generally the case that after they have joined a popular church, skilful and successful attempts are made to dampen their ardor, and blunt their consciences, and draw them into a sinful conformity to the world. They take up with the shadow, and neglect the substance; they settle down in the form, and deny the power. Many promising converts are killed in this way. Do not neglect to baptize your converts. Lead them forward to take upon them the full responsibility of the Christian profession. Make it as hard as you can for them to backslide. Throw around them every possible protection against the assaults of the world. Get them to go over fully on the Lord's side.

#### 68 CHURCHES, No Fellowship with Fashionable

Lot kept his religion in Sodom. How did he do it? "He vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." He did not compromise. He did not fall in with any of their bad practises. He did not adopt their modes of worship nor unite in their services.

If we would keep saved in the midst of fashionable churches, we must adopt a similar course. We must have no fellowship nor communion with them. However splendid the displays they make, our prayer must be, "Turn

away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way." We shall soon learn to relish what we view with admiration. The taste easily becomes perverted. We must condemn what we know to be wrong, or we shall soon get into such moral darkness that we shall not see that it is wrong. Joseph Cook says, "The churches of the present day care more for the flowers before the pulpit than for the sound doctrine within it. The love of right is the hatred of wrong. The *new light* believes in love, not conscience, and makes out the God of the Hebrew Scripture a tyrant. As the majesty of the pulpit is lowered by giving up Divine sovereignty, so its tenderness is lost by giving up the atonement of Christ. The expression, 'the atonement overworked,' strikes the funeral knell of the pulpit. Little by little, laymen are giving up the Old Testament, the writings of the apostles, and even saying that Christ was sometimes wrong, and did not know as much as his German critics."

#### 69 CHURCH, The, and the World

The church is in a fair way to be completely captured by the world. The distinction between the two is rapidly becoming obliterated. The *Presbyterian* says:

"A quarter of a century ago, and more, Dr. James W. Alexander wrote with great decision of influences then at work. He said: 'The door at which those influences enter which countervail parental instruction and example, I am persuaded is yielding to the ways of good society. By dress, books and amusements, an atmosphere is formed which is not that of Christianity. More than ever do I feel that our families must stand in a kind but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves like the Eddystone lighthouse. And I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence than to rise a little, but decidedly, above the par of the religious world around us.' If this was true in his day it must be acknowledged to be more undeniably and sadly true in our own time. The incursions of alien influences and customs upon the sacred

territory of the church has been steadily growing more marked, perhaps because less earnestly resisted."

We must keep an atmosphere of godliness in all our families. If you dress your children like the world, and send them to worldly Sunday-schools, you must expect that they will grow up to be worldlings. Let us come out and be separate.

#### 70 CHURCH ENTERTAINMENTS

It is Christlike to feed the hungry. On two occasions Christ performed a great miracle to give food to the famishing. He tells us that it is one of the fruits of a genuine piety that will be inquired into on the judgment day. But kitchens are not built in fashionable churches to feed the hungry. By no means. Those who are starving do not go there for relief. These church kitchens are built to afford entertainment for those who live in good houses and have plenty to eat at home. There is an instinctive feeling that people who go to church should be made stronger to resist evil and do good. But the fashionable pulpit deals out no meat for hungry souls. Even the little sweetened milk it passes around is so diluted that it is loathsome to the healthy taste. To feed babes with, it is no better than a mixture of chalk and sugar and water. So, as the spiritual nature is starved, an interest is kept up in the church by catering to the animal nature. The oysters that float in a bowl of church soup may be few, but they are genuine. They are not paper imitations. The church, in the kitchen, lays aside shams, and deals in realities. It is true her realities are not of a very elevating character, but they are not as debasing, after all, as hypocrisy and deceit. To eat delicacies which they like does not demoralize people as much as joining in devotions which they feel in their heart are all a mockery. Hence the kitchen in the fashionable church is becoming popular. If the class-meeting is neglected, the night is made up in the large attendance upon church frolics. If a pastor fail as a revivalist, he succeeds as a caterer. But it is too bad that such stuff

should be palmed off upon the credulous as Christianity! It is a partial relapse to heathenism!

#### 71 CHURCH ORGANIZATION

There is a perfect harmony between nature and revelation. They teach us in different modes the law of the one God. They illustrate each other. Neither nature nor revelation preaches the gospel of anarchy. Wherever you find life in nature, you find organization. The lowest form of either vegetable or animal life has its organs, each of which has its appropriate functions to perform. Useful animals and fowls go in herds and flocks; while beasts and birds of prey roam about alone and independent. In New Testament times, when a Christian could not find a church outside, he established one in his own house. Belong to the church he must. The early saints were not so afraid of sectarianism that each of them must form a sect by himself. They were knit together in love. So close was the union that "when one member suffered all the members suffered with it." If you are a Christian then, do not be afraid of the church. Find a branch of it to which you belong and unite with it, if you have to go a thousand miles for the purpose.

#### 72 CHURCH OFFICERS Should be of Humble Spirit

Even in apostolic times, when the gospel was taught in its simplicity, and no worldly considerations led men to seek office in the church, it was difficult to obtain good officers. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour" (1 Tim. 5:17). This implies that but few of the elders *ruled well*. Some, doubtless, were incompetent, some were prejudiced, some lacked discernment, some were wanting in practical wisdom. The same defects, with others added, exist to-day in the men who are called to control the affairs of the church. It requires a good degree of grace in those to whom government is entrusted in the church, to exercise their authority, "not as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." But it requires still more grace in many persons to submit

to the proper exercises of lawful authority. There is a spirit of insubordination abroad, which, subtle as the air, penetrates everywhere. It is manifested in the family, in the school, in the state, and in the church. Liberty degenerates into lawlessness. Where there is a lack of a spirit of submission, there is a lack of saving grace. A disciple of Christ is a person who has learned obedience.

### 73 CHURCH, Governing Power in

Even the apostles could not attend to everything. They needed assistants to look after temporal matters. If they had looked upon the ministry as the governing power in the church, they would themselves have appointed these assistants. But they did nothing of the kind. They laid the subject before "the multitude of the disciples." The disciples evidently did not think that they must adopt the plan because the apostles had proposed it. For it is written, "And the saying pleased the whole multitude." And they—the whole multitude—chose seven men for this special work. That women were included in the "whole multitude" there can be no question. For it is said, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). And these assistants were called for, to see that a just and equal distribution was made to the widows (Acts 6:1).

The choice of "the whole multitude" of believers was not conditional, but final. The word translated in the third verse, *we may appoint*, is in the original, in many of the best manuscripts, in the indicative mode, *we shall appoint*.

So we see that in the primitive church the governing power was: (1) in the people; (2) that the women shared in this power equally with the men. It is time that the Christian church outgrew heathen prejudices.

### 74 CHURCHES, Building

As a rule, it is not best to build a meeting-house in any locality unless there is interest enough in that locality to lead the people to pay for it. Cities where real estate is enormously high may be the exceptions. In the cities the

poor are virtually shut out of the aristocratic churches and left to wander as sheep without a shepherd. The charge for sittings, and the costly apparel needed to appear in the company of richly-dressed church-members, quite effectually exclude the poor. If these undertake to build for themselves a house of worship, where they may meet and wait on God in simplicity and sincerity, they deserve all the assistance that can be given them.

But under ordinary circumstances no attempt should be made to build a church edifice unless the people of the vicinity manifest a willingness to meet the necessary expense. They can build houses for themselves to live in; and unless they have enough love for Christ to build a house in which they can meet in his name, then one had better not be built. A ship needs a crew; a fort needs a garrison; and a church needs members alive with love to God and full of zeal for the salvation of souls. Where Christ has such disciples they will procure some place in which they may meet with the Master: where there are none, a place is not needed. A church is a battle-ground on which the war against Satan's kingdom is to be carried on with vigor; but patriotic, disciplined, courageous soldiers are of more account than any fortifications. Wherever there is occasion they can make a battlefield. Secure the converts and the church will follow. Let our main efforts, then, be directed to promoting revivals of religion—to get sinners converted, and believers to seek that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Then let churches be built where there is a real necessity for them.

The expense of building any church should be within the means of the people who build it. They should adopt such plans as they can carry through without distressing themselves. They should not place themselves in such a position that they are obliged to make appeals to the public, through the papers, for help. Such a course is wrong. We have no right to solicit money for religious purposes, and then jeopardize all that has been paid by recklessly running into debt.

If you have not means to finish the church, enclose it,

and use it in that shape until you can raise means to finish it. You had better be three years in building a church, and have it paid for, than build it in three months and have it sold on a mortgage.

One of our conferences was held this fall where the society first built a sod meeting-house. It was the birth-place of many souls. For a time it was the only public building in that part of the territory. United States courts were held in it. They now have a good frame church, and God is blessing their labors.

**75 CHURCHES, Do Not Borrow to Build**

Do not go to the bank, nor anywhere else, to borrow money to build a church with, relying upon any one's subscription but your own. It is much easier to collect money to build a church than it is to collect money to pay a bank note. If you can not get the money to start with, then wait till you can. Be prudent in such matters. Do not involve yourself in money obligations any further than you can without distressing yourself or your family. Better not build a church than build one and backslide over it. The Roman Catholics manage such things better. They get their people to pay so much a week towards building a church, and go on with the building as the money is paid in. In church expenses, as in personal expenses, let your motto be, "Pay as you go." Church debts should be avoided, for it is not the calling of the church to make money.

**76 CHURCHES: Property Title Should Be Clear**

In some places we are having trouble with the title to our church property. Greater care should be exercised in this respect.

Make it a rule never to raise money or pay any considerable sum of money for a Free Methodist church, or school, or parsonage, until you are satisfied that a good title has been given, or will be given, to the Free Methodist church for the property. Have the deed drawn up in substantial agreement with the form given in our book of Discipline. Expend no money on property for which

you have no title. If for any reason a deed can not be given at once, take a contract for such a deed, as our Discipline requires, and pay at least one dollar on the contract to make it binding. Do not, in such matters, take the verbal promise of the best man on earth. He may suddenly die; and his heirs may be of another mind. The title to property is governed by law, and we should be careful in all such matters to go according to law. A little prudence and firmness at first may save a good deal of trouble and expense afterwards. But above all, keep your title to Heaven clear.

#### 77 CHURCHES, Expensive Versus Inexpensive

The Methodist Episcopal Discipline of to-day reads: "Let all our churches be built plain and decent, and with free seats wherever practicable, but not more expensive than is absolutely unavoidable." *In practise* the rule appears to be, to build *just as expensively* as circumstances will permit. Is not this "holding the truth in unrighteousness"?

The New York *Tribune* says of one of the bishops of the Episcopal church:

"Bishop Huntington takes the position that a wealthy city congregation has no moral right to worship in a luxuriously-appointed church, while it allows its poorer members to worship in a cheap mission chapel. If this principle were rigorously carried out, there would never be any costly churches. For there are always poor and plain churches in some part of the country, which would thus become the model and pattern for the religious worship of the country."

But people who are joined to their idols do not want a "pattern for religious worship." They want to be let alone. The number who honestly embrace religious truth, when they see it, is exceedingly small.

#### 78 CHURCHES: Duty of Trustees

Trustees of churches are agents of the society. They have no personal right above any other members of the so-

ciety in the church property committed to their care. The charge of funds raised to build, repair or furnish church edifices, or parsonages, properly belongs to them. The charge of all other financial matters belongs to the official board. It is the duty of trustees to carry out the wishes of the society. They should take no steps to build, repair, pull down, or sell any church property, without the consent of the society, fairly expressed in a society meeting properly called for *the purpose* of expressing its wishes in the matter.

Our trustees should be men of God and men of sense. They should be men who know how to do business, and whose one aim, in doing business for the church, will be to promote its best interests and carry out the wishes of the society in the best manner. There should never be any conflict between the board of trustees and the official board. Generally there are so many of the same men on both boards, that conflict is hardly possible. But whether this is the case or not, both should so labor in their respective spheres to promote the welfare of the church, that there will be perfect harmony between them.

#### 79 CIVILITY to Strangers

When strangers attend your meetings, treat them with civility. Though your seats are free, they may not know it; so if you see them looking around for a seat, help them to a good one. Put yourself out of the way to accommodate others.

If strangers speak in your meetings, and are not dressed as plain as they should be; or if their testimony is not as clear and explicit as it should be, do not make an assault upon them. This can do no good, but may do much harm. If possible, get acquainted with them, and get their confidence, and put yourself in sympathy with them, and do them good. *He that winneth souls is wise*; but he that drives them away, beyond the reach of his influence, by uncharitable judging and provoking language, is very far from being wise.

**80 CLASS-MEETING Attendance**

The class-meeting is a good place to try the spiritual pulse of the church. A revival that does not result in increased attendance upon class-meetings is not likely to add permanently to the increased strength of the church. If there is life in the souls of the members, there is interest in the class-meeting. Those who have an experience of saving grace, love to talk of this experience. If one has any knowledge of divine things, he desires further instruction in divine things.

Those who prefer lawlessness to spiritual discipline do not like class-meetings. Unless they can be leaders, their choice is that there should be no leaders. In a spiritual, disciplined, effective Methodist church, class-meetings are well attended. There the weak are strengthened, and the strong become stronger. There backsliders are reclaimed, sinners converted, and believers sanctified. Reader, do you regularly attend class-meeting?

**81 COMMANDS, All, Must be Kept**

We must be Christians, not only in some respects, but in all respects. A man who makes his money by counterfeiting is not honest, though he pays all his debts and conducts himself in other respects as an upright citizen. So one who is habitually doing what God forbids, or neglecting to do what God commands, can not be in a state of acceptance with him. This the Bible makes very clear. What can be plainer than the words of Christ, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:19). Dr. Adam Clarke says this means that they shall not enter Heaven. This appears to be taught by St. James: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10). If we claim the right to select what commands we will keep and what we will disregard, how can we deny this right to others? But what does this amount to but a practical rejection of the Bible altogether?

**82 COMMENTARY, Choice of**

A commentary on the Bible is a necessity for every preacher. The better educated he is the more he will feel the need of a commentary. The more pious, and therefore the more conscientious, he is, the more afraid he will be of giving a wrong construction to his text, and of thus teaching the people false doctrine. Many inquire, "What is the best commentary?" We have given the matter such attention as we could, and we are free to say that we like Dr. Adam Clarke's the best by far of any that we have examined. Adam Clarke was one of the most learned men of his day. The great scientific and literary societies of Great Britain considered it an honor to them to have his name enrolled among them as a member. His piety was deep, fervent, and of the most thoroughly evangelical type. His comments are not dry, scholarly criticisms, such as an unconverted scholar might make; but he brings out the deep spiritual significance of the text. His commentary is not only helpful to the preacher, but to the devout Christian who seeks for a right understanding of the Word of God.

**83 COMPLAINTS: Do Not Print Them**

A newspaper is not a tribunal for the trial of either ministers or members. Therefore, if you have any complaints to make against a preacher or member, do not rush into print with them. Obey the command of Christ in such cases: "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (Matt. 18:15). If this is done in the spirit in which it is intended, it will generally end the matter. Make an honest effort to win the brother back to his duty; and generally you will succeed; you will gain your brother. But be careful to keep filled with the spirit of humble love. What is said in print, it is right to review in print, so that it be done candidly. But what is alleged to have been said or done in private, unless it be a flagrant offense, should not be put in the papers to the reproach of the person concerned.

**84 COMPROMISE, To, May be Fatal**

You make a great, and, it may be, a fatal mistake, if you compromise principle under any pretense whatsoever. Of course you could not do it for the sake of worldly gain and still claim to be a Christian. But you are in danger of compromising for another reason. An apparent angel of light suggests that if you would not be so strict, you might do more good. If you would dress just a little like the world, they would listen to you more readily. If you would join a lodge, you might reach the Masons. This is a subtle artifice by which Satan draws many souls to perdition. You yield to it at your peril. If you join in with the world, you will find that your influence with it is less than ever, except it be in a worldly channel. They may love you as a companion; but they have lost confidence in you as a Christian. In their hearts they despise you for the very concessions for which they flatter you. They will draw you, step by step, along with them in the broad road which ends in perdition.

**85 COMPROMISE, Danger of**

The Christianity of this country is gradually becoming like that which prevails in the State Church of Europe. People will belong to the church, and drink and swear and gamble and frequent theaters and balls. In short, they act like the world, dress like the world, live like the world, and go to the world for their pleasures, and yet are zealous members of the church and pay their money freely for its support. There are but few churches and but few preachers who draw the line of separation where God draws it in the Bible.

We must be careful and not allow this compromising spirit to steal over us. There is danger in every direction. When we unite with these worldly professors in commendable reforms we are liable to give way by littles until we too drift into the world in spirit. The only safety is to obey Divine direction, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate."

**86 COMPROMISE, Never**

Peace? I love peace. But I want the right kind of peace—peace founded on truth, not on falsehood; on realities, not on shams; on union with God, not on union with the prince of darkness. The peace of the grave is right for dead folks. But those who are full of life prefer the din of battle to the quiet of death. “What concord hath Christ with Belial?” They are not true soldiers of Christ, but traitors, who make peace with Satan. The conflict between sin and holiness can never cease till one or the other be brought under and subdued. No matter how badly you are treated, and how awfully you are threatened, make no truce, no peace, no compromise with sin. Take sides always with the right, that is, with God, and you will come off conqueror at last.

**87 COMPROMISE, There Must Be No**

We can not compromise God’s truth in the least. It is our business to proclaim it, in all humility and love, and yet with all boldness and fidelity. It will provoke opposition. There is no help for that. We must accept it in all meekness and firmness; but we must never, to please the worldly, make the conditions of salvation any easier than our Lord has made them. We must hold up fully the Bible standard.

**88 CONDITIONS OF SALVATION, Must Be Preached**

Preaching the gospel includes presenting clearly the conditions on which the gospel offers salvation to man. One who assures his hearers that all they have to do, to become Christians, is to believe that Christ accepts them, may make many converts; but he is deceiving them to their eternal undoing. Novel-reading, cigar-smoking, worldly-conformed professors are not disciples of Christ. “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). This certainly includes cigars and the fineries of dress. John Wesley wrote: “Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, howl out something about Christ, or his

blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!' Surely the Methodists have not so learned Christ! We know no gospel without salvation from sin." Do those who call themselves Methodists to-day receive this gospel?

#### 89 CONSCIENCE Must Be Tender

A tender conscience should be carefully cultivated and sedulously guarded. If you can feel perfectly easy while living in habitual disobedience to plain commands of God, you have great reason to be alarmed. Your condition is extremely dangerous. The insensibility which is stealing upon you is the certain precursor of spiritual and eternal death.

Be careful, then, how you violate your conscience. Attend to its demands, even in the slightest particular. Its sharp edge is easily blunted. Its still small voice is readily silenced. Its faithful warnings, if unheeded, fail to be repeated. You will be left the sport of circumstances, a compass without a needle, a ship without a rudder.

#### 90 CONSECRATION, Mistaken

The man most evidently possessed by an evil spirit, of all persons whom we have ever seen, was most frequently prostrated in meetings. He would seldom, if ever, hold a meeting without falling. Sometimes he would fall half a dozen times in the same meeting. No one thought he put it on. It was plain he was operated on by a superior power. He was a strong man physically and intellectually—a practical man of good judgment—one of the last men you would expect to be led astray. He had been clearly converted and sanctified. "I have," he said in a meeting, "consecrated my tools to God, never to do another day's work in my life." We took him one side and told him that such a consecration was not to God but to the devil. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work." Paul, than whom no man can be more entirely consecrated to Christ, said, "These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." He was not ashamed to work for a living when neces-

sary. From this time this man went on from bad to worse: yet he had a number of followers at first. He served a term in jail for the seduction of a young woman, whom he persuaded to go out with him to hold meetings. This opened the eyes of others, but his own remained blinded the same as ever. He became a religious tramp, and went away among strangers. His air of sanctity gave him, for a while, access to religious people; but as they found him out he went away to new fields, in search of new victims. What made this man fall? "The devil threw him down" (Luke 9:42).

#### 91 CONSECRATION TO GOD the Better Way

Extremes meet. The poor struggle to get a living: the rich struggle to live. The poor go about to get work: the rich go abroad to get away from care and work and worry. They leave a finely furnished home for a crowded hotel at some watering-place or seaside resort, in the hope of enjoying better health. They try the city and they try the country; they try the mountain and they try the valley; they try magnetic springs and they try hot springs; but nothing seems to fully agree with them. Thus, with them as with the poor, life is a continued battle for existence. The better way is to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, and care for them and use them as he directs. He only is always safe who "seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Freedom from consuming care is found only as we cast all our cares on God. Days illuminated with the steady sunshine of God's favor, and filled up with deeds of kindness, cease to be burdensome, but are a joy and a delight.

#### 92 CONFERENCE, Importance of Attending Devotional Exercises at

The prosperity of our work depends much upon our conferences. If they are occasions of spiritual profit, and all get baptized anew of the Holy Spirit into an increased love for souls, the work is likely to take a new start among us. But if a spirit of self-seeking or of division prevails, the work will suffer.

There should be much prayer for our conferences and at our conferences. It is a great help to have an outpouring of the Spirit at the devotional exercises at the opening of the daily sittings. We have noticed that some ministers, who have dropped out of the work, began to fall away, as far as we could see, by dropping out of the devotional exercises. He aims wrong who aims to be out at prayer and in at roll-call. We are much more likely to act together when we get blessed together.

Both ends of iron must be brought to a red heat to be welded. Let us make our conference sessions revival seasons.

### 93 CONFESSION

God promises to forgive us our sins, if we confess our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). But the confession must be a sincere one. There must be no covering up, no throwing the blame on others. That was what vitiated the confession of Adam—he laid the blame on his wife, and, indirectly, on God. If we have sinned, the guilt of our sins rests upon us alone. Others may have their responsibility in the case, but no matter what they do, that can neither condemn nor excuse us. We may yield to sin, but we can not be forced to sin. Without the consent of the will to any action, there is no sin in the action. Hence, when we confess our sins, it is not necessary to confess the sins of others, but we must acknowledge the wrong which we have done. We must humble ourselves; but at the same time we must be careful lest the transaction be vitiated by an attempt to humble some one else. A truly penitent spirit and an accusing spirit are not found together.

A wrong done to any human being is a sin against God. If any injury is wilfully done to the character, the reputation or the property of any—the lowest of the family of man—the law, equally binding on all, is transgressed and God is offended. The soul is under condemnation. If forgiveness would be obtained, the wrong must be acknowl-

edged and reparation made to the fullest extent possible. This is necessary, but it is not enough. God has been sinned against; and the sin must be confessed to God, and his pardon sought. His forgiveness must be implored, if the soul would find peace and have the penalty for sin remitted. So, if your heart is burdened with guilt, go to God with it. Ask him to forgive you for the sake of Christ, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). But you need not go to any other being except to God, and to the one that you have injured. Preacher or priest has nothing whatever to do with the matter. They may tell you the condition, but they may tell you wrong; so you must do as the Word directs, and come to God for yourself. Men may forgive wrongs done to them, but they can not forgive those done to others; but God only can forgive sins. This is his sole prerogative; the right to exercise it is never delegated to any human being. The guilt of a transgression committed against God can be removed only by God himself.

#### 94 CONSIDERATE, Be

One part of our religion should be to make others as little trouble as possible. We should be considerate. Instead of adding to the burdens of others—and especially of those already overworked—we should seek to lighten them. We should govern ourselves by the rule, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). We should be very particular, in cases where others show us a favor, to make the favor as little burdensome to them as may be. Whatever we borrow should be returned in as good condition as we found it.

Preachers whose piety we can not doubt write to us expecting an answer. They do not give their addresses. If written to about it, they justify themselves by saying, "You have my address on your mail-books in the office." If they would consider, they would see that this does not justify the omission. The mail-books are in another room, in care of another person. We have to stop our work to go and make inquiries. He has to stop his work to hunt

it up. Take it altogether, very much more time is consumed than would have been required for you to have given the necessary directions. Do not such neglects show that there is still some selfishness in the heart? Brethren, be considerate.

#### 95 CONSIDERATION of Others

Those who are inclined to sit in judgment upon their brethren should read carefully Romans 14. We are taught that we must receive one whose faith is weak, but not to go to disputing with him about things concerning which Christians may righteously hold different opinions. Matters that are not decided by the Word of God should be left for each one to settle with his own conscience. We must not judge one another. Nor, on the other hand, must we ostensibly continue in a course which we think is right, but our brethren think is wrong. We must be willing to sacrifice our own convenience to the convictions of others. Our love for our brethren must be stronger than our love for anything which we eat or drink, though we may be satisfied that it is perfectly harmless. We must care less for ourselves and more for others.

“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.”

#### 96 CONSISTENT LIVING

If the members and ministers of the Free Methodist church desire its prosperity, they can each contribute to it by living holy and consistent lives. All the attacks of our enemies do not hurt us as do our own inconsistencies. If we are indeed dead to sin, and filled with meek and lowly, and gentle love, if we are holy in conversation and prudent in conduct; in short, if Christ dwells constantly in our hearts, we shall grow and prosper. The best defense that can be made for us is the impression we make on others that we lead holy lives and die happy in God. If our members in any locality are full of life divine, “filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves [themselves] in psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs," the place in which they meet will be filled with people. But if they are contentious and bitter, no matter how eloquent may be their preacher, they will be left to themselves.

#### 97 CONSTANCY

The weather varies, but the sun is invariable. He is always in his place.

Some days we see him, and some days we see him not. But whether we see him or not, he is always in his place, exerting his silent, but mighty, influence. Our joy may vary; but our righteousness, like the sun, should never vary. Whether elated, or depressed, whether shouting from the mountain top, or in heaviness through manifold temptations, we should go straight forward in the line of duty. Come what may, we should do right under all circumstances. We should never be swerved from the path of rectitude by an influence from within or without. Neither flattery nor threatenings should make us deviate from the right. We should compel our enemies to say of us, as an enemy said of one old Roman, "It would be easier to turn the sun from his course than Fabricius from the path of honesty."

#### 98 CONTENTMENT, with Godliness, Great Gain

A man who has millions does not, at one time, sleep in but one bed, eat but one meal, and wear but one suit of clothes. It is doubtful if they afford him any more physical enjoyment than the temperate, frugal laborer derives from his plainer fare. The absurdity of men's acquiring great estates was clearly shown by a Roman poet in the days of its wealth and luxury:

"What though you thrash a thousand sacks of grain,  
No more than mine thy stomach can contain.  
The slave who bears the load of bread, shall eat  
No more than he who never felt the weight.  
Or say what difference, if we live confined  
Within the bounds of nature's law assigned,

Whether a thousand acres of demesne,  
Or one poor hundred, yield sufficient grain?"

—Horace, Sat. I, lib. i, v. 45.

The greatest enjoyment which this world affords is found in a life of godliness. "*Godliness with contentment is great gain*" (1 Tim. 6:6).

#### 99 CONTROVERSIAL SPIRIT to be Avoided

Avoid a controversial spirit. It is not the spirit of Christ. Of him it was said, "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets" (Matt. 12:19). It is dangerous business for one who enjoys religion to be always attacking his brethren. If he keeps it up, he is sure to backslide. We are slow to take up arms against those we love. If you have anything to say in a religious meeting, do not say it in a way that will reflect upon some one who has spoken. If you have anything to say through the press, say it independently, and not as a criticism upon the writings of another.

Get your inspiration from the Lord; and not from others who write. There is a chance to criticize anything that is said or written. A construction that was not intended can be put upon the language. But even when a statement, fairly construed, is wrong, the best way to correct it is generally to do it indirectly, and not by a flat contradiction. In writing and in speaking, as in war, success often depends upon one's skill in making flank movements. The way to expel darkness from a room is to flood it with light. So the way to put down error is to hold up the truth. *Let your light shine.* Never mind the other man's darkness. It will make no trouble in the circle filled with light. Put the best construction warranted on what you hear and read. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

#### 100 CONVERSION, a Miracle

The conversion of sinners draws sinners. It may be late in the evening; but if sinners are getting converted, the congregation stops to see it through. And no wonder. The

great object of religious meetings is the salvation of souls. When this object is secured, the people will, as a matter of course, be interested. A genuine conversion is a genuine miracle; and miracles always excite attention. A preacher who gives himself to the work of soul-saving can not be unsuccessful. He may not be talented; but if he has on his heart a burden for souls, he will excite attention. A stream never rises higher than its fountain—generally not as high. A preacher, no matter how loud he may vociferate, can not expect to excite in his congregation feelings deeper than his own. If he wants them to care for their souls, he must care for them. He who would have a revival among his people should have one in his own heart first. Where there is anything combustible, fire will spread. A blaze easily kindles a blaze. Reader, are you laboring to win souls?

#### 101 CONVERSIONS Must be Thorough

The popular, easy way of getting sinners converted is having a bad influence over us as a people. Formerly when sinners came forward to be prayed for we *prayed* for them in dead earnest. The saints with one accord cried to God aloud; the penitents joined in, and the voice of supplication reached unto Heaven. It seemed almost impossible for one to go forward without being all broken down. There was a good deal of noise, but seldom any confusion. It was like the roar of Niagara, in perfect harmony with the occasion. Generally those who came forward were powerfully converted, and came out shouting and praising God. We have seen altar full after altar full converted the same night, and the work carried on all night long.

Popular preachers did not want our converts. They did not know what to do with them if they got them. They could not manage them and keep them from giving a clear testimony and getting blessed in their formal, proper meetings. This would convict others.

But now, get sinners forward, and professors will flock around them, pray a little, but talk with them and sing to them a great deal. There is too often but very little of earnest, united pleading with God for them. They are told

to believe, and to profess that they love Christ, when there is no appearance of their having experienced any change. They are healed slightly. If they keep up their profession they will probably unite with some popular church; for all they have got is the popular religion. Brethren, the old way is better. Let us at once, and forever, abandon a mode of working that results in more self-deceptions than conversions. Let us do thorough work for God. It is not enough to present the truth in all plainness; let us enforce it, and insist upon its being carried out in all our meetings.

#### 102 CONVERSIONS, Superficial

Many, who profess to be converted, are not scripturally awakened. They are drawn into the church by personal attentions, and appeals to their love of pleasure. They are not warned to flee from the wrath to come. They have not seen themselves to be in danger.

#### 103 CONVERTS Must Turn from Sin

Recruiting officers are eager to get recruits. But before they send them to the front they subject them to a rigid examination. They will get neither credit nor money for those whom they enroll who are unfit for service. Their superior officers are not to be imposed upon.

God is not mocked. There is no use in bringing into his church a great number of converts, who have not been turned from sin to righteousness, with the expectation that he will recognize them. It makes no difference how zealous they are for the church, if they still go on committing sin. They may be what the preacher calls "his most useful members"; but Christ disowns them. His language is, "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:20). Many live and die in his church; and pride themselves on their great usefulness; and wake up in eternity to find they are forever lost, because they consented to take up with something short of a heart-work—of a thorough conversion to God! Oh, it is an awful thing to live and die deceived! Reader, is your heart right with God?

**104 CONVERTS Should be Invited to Join**

The Carthaginian guard, Hannibal, and the Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus, were the greatest warriors of their days, but they did not seem to know how to turn their victories to the best advantage. It is so with some preachers. They preach well, have good congregations, and good revivals; but they do not leave their circuits any stronger than they found them. They catch fish, and others string them and carry them away. They are too modest altogether. They are so afraid of proselyting that those converted under their labors do not know whether they want them to join their church or not. But the neighboring preacher has no such scruples. He visits every desirable convert, tells him what an interest he feels in him, how much he needs his help, makes unfavorable insinuations against the Free Methodists, and invites him to join his church. He keeps on urging him until he gets his name.

Brethren, it is not enough to cut the grain and tie it into bundles; but you need to draw it in. Your duty to people is not done when you get them converted; you should take them into the church, and build them up in faith and holiness.

**105 CONVICTION, An Evidence of**

People do not go forward to a Free Methodist altar because it is popular. As a rule, if they go there, it is because they have deep convictions. It is a step that requires no small degree of courage to take. No matter who comes forward to our altars, we should assume that they earnestly desire salvation, and we should act on that assumption. We should not discourage them, and weaken our own faith, by any word that appears to call in question their sincerity. Those who come forward should get what they come to seek. This should be the rule, and not the exception. The one who has charge of the meeting should make everything contribute to this one result. He should not look for disappointment in a single case. All who labor at the altar should unite in faith for the salvation of every one who has come forward to the altar. They should not be

content to take up with anything less. It greatly encourages others to come, when those who do come get what they seek.

**106 CONVICTION** Should be Yielded to

Conviction may be deep and overwhelming; but it is never irresistible. Those who will can always resist the Holy Ghost. St. Stephen told his hearers that they always resisted the Holy Ghost. Yet they would not own that they were doing it. Perhaps they did not know it. The habit of resisting the Spirit had become a second nature to them. If you are ever expecting to get right with God, yield now to the gentle drawings from above. They will probably never be stronger. But every time you resist them the power of resistance is greatly strengthened. Then yield now. God is working within: do you begin to work out. Make every confession that you feel led to make. Consecrate up fully to all the light that God gives you. In short, begin from this moment to obey the Holy Ghost.

**107 COURAGE**

A true Christian must have true courage. There is no place for cowards in the kingdom of heaven. Among the Greeks and Romans virtue was courage. In our own language the primary meaning of valor is value. It is the duty of every child of God to be brave. A heart right with God is a heart strong to do and dare, and strong to endure. To fight the good fight of faith, we must be valiant-hearted. We must not be afraid of the enemies of the cross of Christ, no matter what power they may possess. "And fear not them which kill the body," is the command of our Captain. The Apostle cries, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." Cowardice is weakness. We must keep from it, as we would shun hell. "The fearful... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Then trample fear under your feet. Let it not have dominion over you.

## 108 COURAGE Needed

What a conquering host the Free Methodist church would have been by this time if all who have received light and salvation among us had been true to their convictions and stood firmly at their posts! Had this been the case we should have acquired by this time a momentum that would sweep the track of all obstructions. The faint-hearted, the discouraged, the time-servers, the men-pleasers, do more harm than all the armies of opposers.

“We want no cowards in our band  
Who will their colors fly;  
We call for valiant-hearted men,  
Who are not afraid to die.”

No other person needs so high and so pure a courage as the soldier of Christ. However timid or shrinking we are by nature, the great Captain will, if we keep our eye on him, fill us with noble daring. Let us go forth from victory unto victory. Let us fight to the end. *Add to your faith courage.*

## 109 COURAGE, Praying for

“What are you at the altar for?” we asked, at a camp-meeting, of one of our young preachers, who, we had every reason to believe, enjoyed the blessing of holiness.

“For more courage,” was the reply.

He was a young Englishman who had landed on our shores during the war, and had enlisted in the Union army the day he landed. A total stranger to all our officers and soldiers, he won his way by his bravery to a captaincy before the war ended. After the war he became converted and sanctified to God, and was called to preach. And now, this veteran of many battles in which men were killed all around him, was at the altar seeking courage that he might do his whole duty as a minister of Jesus Christ! He got it, and preached with fidelity, not only from the pulpit, but to crowds in the streets.

A cowardly minister, whatever may be his talents, will be a failure. It will be a wonder and a mercy if he does not fail to reach Heaven through failing to declare *all the*

*counsel* of God. It will go hard in the day of judgment with men who, for the sake of popularity, or salary, or position, or from a want of courage, compromise the truth of God. "The fearful...shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

#### 110 COURTEOUS, Be

You must be sincere in all your discourse with your fellow men, but this does not imply that you are to be rough in your manners or unkind in your feelings. Quite the contrary. Christianity is love to God and love to man. *If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* But if we really love others we shall be good to them, patient towards their faults, and honest and persevering in our efforts to do them good. True love makes us ready to assist each other in every proper way. One of the greatest pleasures of life is to deny ourselves for those we love. Then do not think you are compromising because you are kind and friendly. Christ says, *If I lay down my life for you, ye ought also to lay down your lives for one another.* But what folly to talk of laying down our lives for one another, if we are not willing to give a seat to one another; or to help, as far as we may, one another to bear the burdens of life? *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* No matter what may have been one's advantages, or want of advantages, if we really love others we shall speak kindly to them and act kindly towards them. If we let them alone, we serve them just as we are commanded to treat the devil. And do you call that a course dictated by love?

#### 111 CRITICS, Troublers in Zion

A Christian loves the truth. He will not knowingly countenance error. But he is not afraid of it. He does not feel called upon to correct every one in his own church who writes something or says something that is capable of a construction which he can not approve. God's minister is a watchman, hearing the word at God's mouth and

declaring it from him. But he is not a watch-dog, barking at everybody that comes along, be he friend or foe. One such a critic in a church can kill the social meeting.

Of all the troublers of Zion he is the most difficult to manage. If he is opposed, he poses as a martyr, and excites sympathy and raises up a party to stand by him. As a rule, the only thing to do with him is to let him alone. In time he will make himself so intolerable that even those who sympathize with some of his views will give him up as a nuisance that ought not to be tolerated.

#### 112 CRITICAL, Do Not Be

The honey-bee gathers food from flowers, but does not hurt the flowers. The noxious and useless ones it lets alone. It does not waste its time and strength by seeking to destroy them. Christians should do the same with the sermons they hear, and the articles they read. If there is any good in them, get it; if there is that which is worthless or hurtful, let it alone. This should be the rule. Of course there are exceptions, but the exception should not become the rule. He who spends his time in attacks upon articles he does not like, and upon persons he does not like, will not have time for much else. It is better to be gathering honey, than to go about stinging. There is a great difference between a honey-bee and a wasp—between an humble Christian and a cross critic.

#### 113 CRITICISM, Spirit of, Destructive

A few years ago there was a flourishing Christian society here. The members were ultra-radical. There was nothing like a spirit of compromise among them. While they bent their energies to getting others saved, they prospered. But a spirit of criticism crept in among them. It grew stronger by exercise, and soon they began to put one another to rights. A long, hotly-contested church trial followed. One member was expelled, others withdrew, and the work of purifying went on till now there are but six members left. These, originally of the same faction, are falling out among themselves. They are evidently on the verge of

extermination. "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it is meddled with." This is the only safe course. Avoid contention. Shun quarrels as you would shun the devil.

114 DEATH, Triumph in

Because one dies in peace, it is no evidence that he dies in a state of salvation. It seems to have been true of the wicked as far back as the days of the Psalmist, that "there are no bands in their death." Their consciences are seared; they have no sense of guilt. They are utterly insensible to the things of eternity.

But the wicked do not *triumph* in death. The most that can be said of them is that they die as the brute dies.

Saints sometimes have sore conflicts at the hour of death. The enemy thrusts at them sore. Like the Savior, they may exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But these are the exceptions. Usually a godly life closes with a happy death. Said John Knox just before his departure: "I praise God for that heavenly sound." A little later he said: "Now it is come," and breathed his last.

Said William Kendall as he was crossing over: "I have been swimming in the waters of death for two days, and they are like sweet incense all over me." And later he repeated:

"Bright angels are from glory come,  
They're round my bed, they're in my room,  
They wait to waft my spirit home.  
All is well."

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

115 DEBT, Do Not Go in

No one can be happy who lives beyond his means. The fare may be good, but gloomy forebodings rob it of its relish. John the Baptist's food was "locusts and wild

honey," but he was happy, for he walked with God. The papers state that a popular preacher was sued on a note for three hundred dollars, and he allowed judgment to go by default. When the officers of the church looked into the matter, they found that he was in debt, here and there, for borrowed money, to the amount of eighteen thousand dollars! Yet he had a salary of three thousand and five hundred dollars which was promptly paid.

No matter what the income of some is, they can easily spend more. The appetite for luxuries grows by what it feeds upon. A simple way of living is the happiest way of living. Inordinate desires should be rooted out, not gratified. It takes but little to satisfy our real wants.

#### 116 DEBT, Preachers Should Not Go Into

We trust that all our people will see to it that their preachers do not go into debt. Let there be no necessity for it. If they have not the money to pay the freight on their goods, do not lend it to them, but go around and raise it for them. If you have not a parsonage, let the official board rent a house and become responsible for the rent. See that the wants of the preacher's family are supplied.

If the preacher wants to borrow money of you, inquire what he wants to do with it. If to procure the necessaries of life, see that it is paid to him for his labors of love. If to go into business, do not lend it to him, nor let others do it. If you lend to him, the probability is that you will lose your money, and he his credit. He is in danger of backsliding over spending your money, and you over losing it. Take no risks of the sort. They generally prove disastrous all around. Good preachers are poor farmers. The reverse is not apt to be true.

#### 117 DEBT: No Excuse for Not Giving

Where does any one get the notion that he is not to give for the cause of God when he is in debt? If being in debt should be considered a valid excuse for not giving, we fear that some would keep in debt all their days. In fact, they do; as soon as they get one farm paid for, they

buy another. No; if you are in debt to your fellow men, you are still more indebted to God. Meet the demands he makes upon you promptly and cheerfully. You can not get out of debt without his help. Giving is one of the ways that God has appointed to secure his help. "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 the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Prove him with what? With all the tithes. Who will try it?

#### 118 DEBTS Should be Paid

The next best thing to keeping out of debt is to pay one's debts. Be prompt in doing it: for not only is your own credit at stake, but also the credit of the church to which you belong. If it is impossible for you to pay as you expected, make haste to inform the party to whom you are indebted, that he may not depend upon it, and ask for an extension. Christians must have integrity all through them. Laxity in business matters implies laxity in religious principles. He who is not strictly honest can not be truly pious. Better go hungry than go in debt for luxuries; better go in rags than wear fine apparel for which you are keeping some one out of his pay. Better not promise to help on some religious or benevolent cause, than promise and not pay. The Psalmist said, "Integrity and uprightness shall preserve me." They are just as powerful preservatives at the present day. A small leak may sink a vessel; a little act of dishonesty lets in a flood of temptation that may be overwhelming in its consequences. The Scripture rule, from which it is not safe to swerve, is: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

When a man who has, in his career of sin, run deeply into debt, professes to be converted, but lets his debts go, and thinks he must devote all his time "in the work of the Lord," and be supported in it, his case looks suspicious. He should be encouraged to work with his hands, pay his debts and get money ahead to buy books, and a horse and

buggy, if needed. He could then come with confidence to God for his blessing; he would have boldness before his fellow men; and the probability of his holding out to the end would be greatly strengthened.

#### 119 DECEIVED, Danger of Being

To be deceived in regard to one's spiritual state is a very dangerous kind of deception. Yet many professors, and even ministers, are thus deceived. Christ has told us it will be so to the end.

#### 120 DECEIVED SOULS

It is a terrible thing for a soul to be deceived. Yet multitudes are. Bunyan's description of Talkative will apply to many. "He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth: but he knows them only to talk of them. I have been in his family, and have observed him, both at home and abroad; and I know what I say of him is the truth. His house is as empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savour. There is there neither prayer, nor sign of repentance of sin: yea, the brute in his kind serves God far better than he. He is the very stain, reproach and shame of religion to all that know him; it can hardly have a good name in that end of the town where he dwells, through him. Thus say the common people who know him: 'A saint abroad and a devil at home.' His poor family find it so. Men that have any dealings with him say, 'It is better to deal with a Turk than with him'; for fairer dealings they shall have at their hands."

Reader, are you deceived? If you have the Spirit, you must bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

#### 121 DECEPTION

Deception may for a time be successfully practised upon men, but it can not be upon God. No one is keen enough to deceive God, either as to his actions or his motives. His eye penetrates the deepest obscurity, and the hidden things of darkness he will bring to light. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his going" (Job 34:21).

Secker says, "Man may gild over the leaves of a blurred life with the profession of holiness; but God can unmask the painted Jezebel of hypocrisy, and lay her naked to her own shame."

**122 DEFINITE, We Must Be**

We shall never succeed as Christians until we learn to be definite.

If you want forgiveness, you must seek it distinctly and definitely. Holiness must be sought in the same way. Indefinite longings for it bring it no nearer.

**123 DELAY, Example of**

We should be prudent, but prudence carried to excess is no longer prudence. It may become cowardice.

In going to an appointment on our circuit, in other years, we passed a farm on which stood an old log house. The owner busied himself every winter in preparing to build a new one. One winter he got out the timber. To draw the logs and get boards sawed took two or three winters more. Another winter or two was spent in making shingles. And so the years rolled by. Before his preparations were completed the timber had rotted. The process needed to be gone over again. The last we knew of him he was still living in the old house. It was propped up to keep it from falling over. So some sinners waste their time in preparing to become Christians, and some Christians in preparing to become sanctified wholly. The best thing to do is to act promptly. He who will repent is as ready to repent as he ever will be; he who will consecrate himself wholly to God needs no further preparation to do it.

**124 DELUSION, Danger of**

When one gives to his inward, spiritual leadings a greater authority than he does to the plain teachings of the Bible, he exposes himself to every delusion of the devil. He is almost certain to be led astray. We are very clearly taught that the written Word of God is superior to any inward revelations which even the holiest of God's people may

claim to have. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). Yet they may claim to be full of light. All such claims should be rejected. St. Paul is very explicit: "But 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" (Gal. 1:8). Just in the degree that one gets away from the Bible, does he get away from Christ. If he is inclined to strictness, he is liable to become a Pharisee; if to laxity, he may take up with some of the various forms of spiritism. In either case he is in danger of losing his soul. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16).

#### 125 DEMONSTRATIONS, Political and Religious

We protest against the politicians finding fault after this with noisy religious meetings. If they ever had any right to do it, they have utterly forfeited that right. We have been in about as noisy religious meetings as are often held. We never witnessed any that bore any comparison with the political demonstrations made of late. We attended no political meetings during the last campaign, but it was impossible to be in a city and escape the noise. Principal streets were blockaded by political processions for hours, so that it was impossible for street cars or carriages to pass. But the police made no arrests on this account. The papers had no protests to offer.

A decent respect for the rights of Christians ought to keep our cities and towns from arresting a little band of pilgrims who go through the streets singing in an ordinary manner, and marching along without causing any serious obstructions. If any more arrests of the kind are made, all the papers of the land ought to cry out against them. Eternal things are of much greater concern than any elections. We do not read that the inhabitants of the heavenly world take any interest in political matters, but

we do read that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

**126 DEVELOPMENT Always Possible**

You may be in "close circumstances," but you need not lack room for expansion and development. However you may be hemmed in, there is always room to dig down and to build up. Near us, in Chicago, is a new building which has just gone up to the height of thirteen full stories. The lot on which the building stands is comparatively small, but in the building there are many rooms. So, if your sphere of labor is limited, you can raise your work to as high an elevation as you please. It was a small parish, among a rude people living in the narrow valleys of the Alps, where Pastor Oberlin labored; but his earnest, self-denying labors have made his influence felt in distant lands. Any circuit is large enough to afford opportunities for a preacher to win an imperishable crown. Not those who are listened to with rapturous applause by eager thousands, but those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

**127 DEVOTION, Fires of, Must be Kept Burning**

When the water is low in a boiler, or the oil is low in a kerosene lamp, there is danger of an explosion. So, when piety is low in the heart, there is no telling what havoc some passion, suddenly bursting loose, may make. The prospects of life may be blighted, the peace of a family be disturbed, the hope of Heaven be destroyed. Be careful then, and not decline in piety. Make use of all necessary means to keep the fires of devotion burning in your heart. Before you leave your room, seek the blessing of the Lord, in earnest, fervent prayer. The first thing you read in the morning, read a portion of the Scriptures. If you have a family, keep family prayer with perfect regularity. Your children need the influence of domestic worship. Let their home be to them a house of God. Get blessed with your family and your family will be a blessing to you.

**128 DISCIPLESHIP, Conditions of**

Experience often illustrates the Bible, but it never takes its place. Your watch may tell you when to look for the rising of the sun, but it never regulates it. No matter what your watch says, the sun rises all the same, at his appointed time.

Apparently converted persons may differ widely in telling how they were converted, but the conditions of discipleship remain the same. One may say he had to give up the lodge, and another may declare he did not; but it still remains true that "whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). No matter how high may be the profession, and how eloquent may be the discourse of a Masonic preacher, all does not weaken the force of the divine command. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

Worldly, time-serving preachers may say, "It does not make any difference how one dresses; a fashionable lady may be just as devoted a Christian as one who dresses plain." A devotee of fashion, in earnest tones, and with gestures flashing light from her jeweled hand, may tell of her wonderful conversion, and how she "finds that the pursuit of pleasure does not interfere with her rapt fellowship with her dear Savior," but all this does not abolish the command, "Be not conformed to this world," or do away with the force of these emphatic words, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). Let us not be drawn away from the plain teaching of the Bible. "But 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" (Gal. 1:8).

**129 DISCIPLINE Must be Sustained**

Members of the church guilty of flagrant immorality should be excluded from the church. Their example should be made a warning to others. But we have been surprised to see how, in such cases, good people will be carried away

by their sympathies, and stand by one who has forfeited all claims to the Christian character.

Some years ago a preacher came to us from another denomination. He professed to be fully in sympathy with our principles. For several years there was trouble with him at every session of the conference. Complaint was made that he used tobacco. He acknowledged that he had used it, but in the most solemn manner declared he had given it up. After conference he would again use it. At last he was turned out for grossly immoral, wicked conduct. The evidence of his guilt was conclusive. In a few months he became a common drunkard and outcast. Yet so many members of the church he last served stood by him, and took sides against the action of the conference in expelling him, that the society was utterly destroyed. There has never been one in that place since. Yet these people were very excellent people.

It is dangerous to become partizans. You should never stand by any one in a wrong. We may feel sympathy for those who do wrong, and be kind to them and endeavor to help them, but we should not do anything that looks like sympathizing with the wrong. We should not leave the church because unworthy members are turned out.

#### 130 DISCIPLINE Must be with Leniency

We can not see how it is possible for one to be eager to turn people out of the church, and at the same time love their souls. Suppose they are not right: will they stand a better chance to get right out of the church than they will in it? We read that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance, but we do not read that the severity of the church tends to produce this effect. But few church trials are conducted so fairly that those who are turned out do not go away with a settled feeling that injustice has been done them. They have friends on the outside who sympathize with them. The influence upon the community is such that it is very difficult to have a revival in that church for years afterwards. We know of a church from which, a few years ago, some half a dozen of those generally con-

sidered good members were turned out. We inquired of one who was active in prosecuting them, what they were turned out for, but in only one case could we get anything definite. There have been good preachers on that circuit since, but they have been barely able to hold their own. To have an extensive revival seems to be out of the question. The Free Methodist church is not so popular that people generally are anxious to stay in it, unless they have at least a desire for salvation. Perhaps another preacher can help those whom you are not able to influence for good. Give them a chance.

### 131 DISCIPLINE Versus Salvation

A chairman in the Kansas conference, some years ago, in representing one of his preachers, said, "He has not much salvation to offer, so he goes it heavy on discipline." Is not that the real seat of the difficulty with preachers who have so much more zeal and success in getting people out of the church than they do to get them to unite with the church? They have not much salvation to offer. They can see the disease, but do not furnish a remedy. A person who has the toothache will not make up any more faces if you cut off his head. But is that the best way to treat him? To destroy a church is not the best way to promote its purity. Piety, prudence and patience will go further towards getting people fitted for the kingdom of God, than will a furious zeal to turn them out of the church. Before you begin proceedings to turn members out of the church, read the chapter on Discipline in "Fishers of Men." Above all, read Matt. 18:15-17. Then pray for them, until your heart is filled with deep, tender love for their souls. In proceeding against them, act just as you would if the person complained of was your own brother or son. Remember that the great object to be gained is the salvation of the soul.

### 132 DISCERNMENT

All Christians should have a good degree of spiritual discernment. They should have eyes *to see*. This is espe-

cially true of ministers of the gospel. They should not be suspicious, on the one hand, nor should they be easily imposed upon, on the other. It is this needed spiritual discernment which Christ promised his disciples when he said, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:23; also Matt. 18:18). They shall have such discernment that, from the evidences given, they can tell whether one is truly converted and fit for church fellowship, or not. Just as of old, in the case of leprosy, literally, *the priest shall pollute him*; that is, pronounce him unclean; or, with other evidences before him, *the priest shall cleanse him*; that is, shall pronounce him clean (Lev. 13:8, 13). In both cases God does the work, but he gives his servants discernment to tell when it is done. A blind leader is a dangerous guide.

### 133 DISCONTENT, A Remedy for

Many professed Christians are victims of discontent and uneasiness. The old as well as the young—those who want for nothing in the way of bodily comforts, as well as the poor—are thus tormented. They seek relief by changing their circumstances and their associations; but, especially if advanced in life, seldom find it—only in the grave. They do not seem to have learned that

"The mind is its own place; and in itself  
Can make a Heaven of hell, a hell of Heaven."

The cause of this discontent is sometimes pride, and sometimes the consciousness of leading a useless life. Time will hang heavily upon the hands of those who have retired from the active business of life, unless they are doing something to make those around them better and happier.

The gospel has a remedy for all this unrest of spirit. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," says Jesus, "and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The yoke is the symbol of work. If, then, you would be contented and happy, forget yourself and live to do good to others. You will not find it so hard to trust in Jesus, if you are actively engaged in his service. As you bless others, God will

bless you in many ways. Stop complaining, and go visit the sick. Carry relief to that burdened one, and relief will come to you. As you help bear the burdens of others, you will find it easy to cast all your care upon the Lord, and you will find that he careth for you.

#### 134 DISCRIMINATION Necessary

There are many things about a white-clover blossom that a honey bee does not like. But it does not go to fighting and stinging these to bring them to its liking. The blossom has honey concealed in its depths. This the bee finds out, and proceeds to appropriate it to its own use. What it does not like it lets alone. We should learn to treat books, and periodicals and sermons in the same way. We should not swallow everything, any more than the bee does the stamens and pistils of the flowers that furnish it food. We should discriminate with care. What there is scriptural, and that will do us good, we should receive; what is hurtful or useless, we should reject. Many are unstable and sickly, because they devour everything that is set before them.

#### 135 DOING OR DOUBTING

Many are in doubt about their inward experience, because they are doing too little for others. If a living body does not have food from without, it feeds upon itself. So, if a truly converted person is not doing for others, he is troubled about himself. The reason why he feels that he is lacking in grace is because he has not used the grace he had. As water is drawn from a well, water from unseen sources comes running in. So, as grace is dispensed to others, grace multiplies, like the barley loaves which the disciples handed out to the multitude. In helping others we help ourselves. In bearing one another's burdens our own grow lighter. Any one of Christ's disciples who needs our help stands to us in the place of Christ. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25 : 40).

**136 DRESS, Worldly Conformity in**

Putting on gold to adorn the person by one who was once clear in his experience, is an indication that he has backslidden from God. So far as we know, all Methodist Disciplines are agreed in saying that the putting on of gold and costly apparel is "doing what one knows is not for the glory of God," and something that none can do who have a "desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." However the different branches of the Methodist church may differ, they are all agreed in their published position on these points. This is laid down in their printed constitution. It is also the plain teaching of the Bible. "Be not conformed to this world." Whatever else may be embraced in this general prohibition, it certainly includes all that the Bible forbids by name. So if you are by littles putting on things that you could not once wear, it is a sure indication that you are backsliding from God. You are gradually and noiselessly slipping away from him. Many things indicate this to others, though you yourself fail to see it. You are not as ready to give your testimony as you once were. It is no longer clear and definite and affecting. You may say the same things in a fashionable dress that you used to say in a plain dress, but there is not the same ring to it. The indorsement of the Spirit is wanting. Your words are powerless. Your appearance conflicts with your testimony. Consent to see and acknowledge that you are backslidden. Return unto the Lord, and he will return unto you.

**137 DRESS, Superfluous Ornaments Formerly Forbidden**

Years ago Methodists could not gain admission to their love-feasts without a ticket given them by the preacher in charge of the circuit. The rule of Discipline, by which he was governed, read: "Give no ticket to any, till they have left off superfluous ornaments. Allow no exempt case, not even of a married woman. Better one suffer than many. Give no tickets to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles, or rings."

If this rule were carried out to-day, how many sisters

would they have in their love-feasts? Were they *fanatical then*, on the subject of dress, or are they *backslidden now*? Times may change, but God does not change. His Bible does not change. It still reads, "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

138 DRESS, Worldly, A Hindrance

In trying to get to the Lord, the scissors can often be used to advantage. God has an order in which he works in the spiritual, as well as in the natural world. If we would have him draw nigh to us, we must draw nigh to him. This we must do by putting aside everything which he forbids. If you would have him take the pride out of your heart, you must put all appearance of it off from your person. God will not take the puffed-up ribbons from your bonnet. You can do that. At some of the camp-meetings we have attended this year, the scissors have been freely used. The effect has been good. Taking off superfluities, opens the channel through which the water of life flows to the soul. If you would get blessed, as you used to, and have the power you used to have, then dress just as plainly as you did then. You can not put on the world ever so little, without losing in your soul. In whatever degree you conform to the world, in that same degree you lose the transforming power of the Spirit of God from your heart. In order to be saved, you came out from the world; to keep saved, you must *be separate*.

139 DRESS, Command Respecting, to be Regarded

The right to disregard one command of the Bible implies the right to disregard any other command. They all possess the same authority. They rest on the same basis—the absolute sovereignty of God. The less temptation there is to break any particular command, the greater perversity

of heart must there be in the one who breaks it. He who steals to keep from starving may not be a willing criminal; but he who steals when no necessity goads him on, does it because he is a thief. Ask professed Christians who violate a plain precept of the Bible, and who encourage the extravagance of the age by wearing gold and costly array, why they do it, and they will tell you it is not because they care anything for it. They would as soon dress plain as not. Why not then obey God, and "be not conformed to the world" in things which God forbids? Why profess to be a Christian while living in disobedience to the plain commands of God? "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 7:46).

#### 140 DRESS Should be Plain

If you consecrate yourself to the Lord to dress plain, as he commands, then carry it out in all particulars. Do not let the costliness of the material of your dress be a compensation to your pride for the plainness of the style in which it is made. Do not pay more for one piece of cloth, because it looks better, than you would have to for another that would be equally serviceable. Be consistent throughout. If you do not put on gold or pearls, then do not put on any imitation of gold or pearls. Not only avoid evil, but avoid the appearance of evil. If you lay aside your necktie, do not button your collar with a large brass button that looks like gold. If you have abandoned cigars, do not put a dude smoking-cap on your head. If a young lady can not wear a feather on her hat, then she should not bunch up a quantity of ribbon to take its place. If you have renounced the devil, then renounce the devil's substitutes. If you are a child of God, then dress like a child of God. Formerly hypocrites were described as those who "steal the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in." Now the order is reversed, and professed saints steal the livery of the devil to serve God in. Do neither. Stand out in your true colors, an humble saint of God, clothed with humility, perfectly transparent, a living epistle known and read of all men.

**141 DRESS: Ornaments of a Christian**

Women of the world are seldom found without ornaments. At home or abroad they are adorned for the occasion. They wear rings in the kitchen and at the wash-tub.

Christians should always wear their ornaments. Strangers and friends, domestics and children, should always find them arrayed in their appropriate adornings. Their ornaments are, in the estimation of the best judges, the most valuable in the world. They outweigh gold in value; they far exceed diamonds in their brilliancy and costliness. The wealth of the greatest millionaire would not suffice for the purchase of the least of them.

St. Peter places, as chief among them, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pet. 3:4).

Have you this ornament? It comes from only one country—Heaven. God alone can bestow it. Without it you can never appear in his court.

**142 DRESS of Clergymen**

We do not read in the Acts of the Apostles that the tailor had any part in fitting out the primitive heralds of salvation. Not the slightest mention is made of the shape in which the garments were to be made that they were to wear when conducting religious services. The Epistles are equally silent. So far as we can gather from the New Testament, the early ministers of the gospel wore such clothes as were worn by others of their nationality. Mention is made in 2 Tim. 4:13, of Paul's cloke, but Dr. Adam Clarke thinks it was something like a *bag* or *port-manteau*. It is evident that it had nothing to do with his preaching.

The dress worn by Romish priests, and the imitations of this worn by the clergy of the church of England, when conducting service, were copied from those worn by the Jewish and heathen priests. This practise has not the slightest warrant in the New Testament. It is a fragment of priestly usurpation to which Christians should give no countenance.

**143 DUTY, Conviction of**

To be a true Christian you must be governed by a conviction of duty. If you go by impulse you will be fluctuating and unsteady. Bramwell says: "What is my duty? This is the point, without the least regard to consequences. For this reason, retire from every company, however friendly, a number of times in the day. Mind not what looks or words you may receive; stay in no place where you can not do this. Go to no parties without first knowing the persons and what is likely to take place. Claim your liberty by never consenting contrary to sound judgment. Let nothing hinder the full salvation."

**144 EARLY RISING**

God made light for the eye and the eye for light. View it candidly, and it looks like a reflection upon *his wisdom* for one, without special occasion, to sit up late at night, depending on artificial light, and then lie abed late in the morning, when God's glorious sunlight is flooding the earth. Great saints have been early risers. Law, in his "Call to a Holy Life," says: "I take it for granted, that every Christian, who is in health, is up early in the morning; for it is much more reasonable to suppose a person up early, because he is a Christian, than because he is a laborer, or a tradesman, or a servant, or has business that wants him. For if he is to be blamed as a slothful drone, that rather chooses the lazy indulgence of sleep, than to perform his proper share of worldly business; how much more is he reproached, that had rather be folded up in a bed, than be raising up his heart to God in acts of praise and adoration." The Psalmist says, "I myself will awake early" (Ps. 57: 8).

**145 EDUCATION**

It is a great mistake for a person to think that because he is educated, he is, therefore, called and qualified to teach the people of God. But it is an equal mistake for one to conclude that, because he has but little learning, he is therefore called to be a teacher in Israel. "God hath chosen

the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty"; but it does not follow, by any means, that *all the foolish* and *all the weak* are chosen. And those thus chosen do not remain foolish and weak. They do not demonstrate their call by declaiming against education and despising dominion, and speaking evil of dignities. (See Jude 8). In the fulfilment of Christ's promise is their claim made good: "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Luke 21:15). John Bunyan was an unlearned man, but he forced his way to recognition by such simple and sublime utterances as instructed and charmed all classes of mankind. Benjamin Abbott had no education, but under his powerful appeals strong men fell like trees before the wind.

Prove yourself a John Bunyan, or a Benjamin Abbott, and Free Methodists everywhere will gladly listen to you. They greatly need such men, and would give them a hearty welcome.

#### 146 ENEMIES, Christ Commands Us to Love Our

We must never lose sight of the fact that Christ commands us to love our enemies. Their conduct may have been most outrageous, but we must leave them with God. Vengeance belongs to him. It does not do for one who thinks of going to Heaven, to hold old grudges against any person. If others have sinned against you, that is no reason why you should sin against God. If you have been defrauded or wronged, even by a brother, the Lord has promised to be your avenger (1 Thess. 4:6). Leave yourself in his hands. Be of a forgiving spirit. Watch for their amendment with the solicitude of a parent over an erring child. If there is any change for the better, be ready to encourage it. "Charity hopeth all things." We should be willing to forgive all whom the Lord will forgive. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man

have a quarrel against any : even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3 : 12, 13).

**147 ENVY, Cure for**

Love is the cure for envy. The prosperity of one whom you love does not disturb you. You have an interest in all that concerns him, and his success is, in a measure, your own.

**148 ERRORS, Wisdom in Dealing with**

Jesus did not aim to tear down, but to build up. He supplanted the Jewish church, but he made no attacks upon it. He dispelled darkness by bringing in the light. The false teaching of the scribes and Pharisees he refuted by clearly stating the truth. He came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. If we would do good, we must follow his example. It is seldom that errors are removed by direct efforts to refute them. Gracious words go further towards reforming men than reproachful words. Those who are rooted and grounded in the truth are not liable to drink in error. If a tree brings forth evil fruit, our efforts should be directed, not so much to destroy the fruit, as to make the tree good. Preaching against wrongs and meannesses is not necessarily preaching the gospel. When we get men to throw away a false hope, we should do it by the bringing in of a better one. Dead formality is removed by coming to the people with the life and power.

**149 EVANGELIST, The Work of an**

The special work of an evangelist is to carry the gospel to the unsaved. It is his mission to go to those who are destitute of the means of grace, and offer salvation to the lost. He is what is called in our day a missionary. Evangelists should not spend most of their time, nor much of their time, with old societies; but they should go where there are no societies, and raise up societies. To do this there are plenty of opportunities. Everywhere there is need that the masses should be evangelized. In this greatly needed work all preachers should take a part. It was to

a bishop that Paul wrote, "Do the work of an evangelist." It was not enough that he looked after the work that was already established. He must plant churches in other places. Brother, look at the masses perishing around you. Go to them, and try to get them saved. "Do the work of an evangelist."

#### 150 EVIL SPEAKING

John Wesley says a Christian "can speak evil of his neighbor no more than he can tell a lie." This is none too strong. The Bible sustains the statement. The man who shall dwell in God's holy hill is, "He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour" (Ps. 15:3). There is no use in your talking and singing about Heaven, as long as you are talking about your neighbors. You will never reach Heaven if you are given to backbiting. An unsanctified tongue is a dangerous weapon wielded by an unsanctified heart. You may hurt others, and you doubtless will, by speaking evil of them, but you will hurt yourself more. You may hinder their promotion; but you will prevent *your own* salvation.

#### 151 EVOLUTION, Argument Against

Some writers assume that man was originally but little above the brutes, and has raised himself by his own efforts to his present state of civilization. Facts are against this theory. We know of no instance in which a nation has been elevated without the aid of outside influences. The tendency is in the opposite direction. Nations degenerate, and sink from civilization to barbarism. Such cases abound. Egypt was once the most civilized nation in the world. Now it is one of the most degraded. "Rev. S. Macfarlane, who has been for twenty-eight years founding churches, training teachers and translating Scriptures, in the south seas, says the natives of New Guinea have not come up out of original barbarism, but have clearly descended from an ancient civilization. They have, he says, come out of a

bygone enlightenment and possess a language in which are lingual traces of Oriental superiority." It is as true of nations as of individuals, that "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

152 EVOLUTION, Doctrine of, Little Proof for

Men of learning appear to be carried away by prevailing fashions about as readily as common men. The doctrine of evolution has scarcely any claim for belief except that it is fashionable. The earliest records we have of the human family show a high state of civilization. Rawlinson, in his history of ancient Egypt, in speaking of Seti, who reigned in Egypt about 1400 years before Christ, says, "The military triumphs of Seti were outdone and eclipsed by his great works. The grand 'Hall of Columns' in the temple of Karnak—the chief glory of that magnificent edifice—which is supported by a hundred and sixty-four massive stone pillars, and covers a larger area than the cathedral of Cologne, was designed in its entirety, and for the most part constructed, by him; and, if it had stood alone, would have sufficed to place him in the first rank of builders. It is a masterpiece of the highest class, so vast as to overwhelm the mind of the spectator, so lavishly ornamented as to excite his astonishment and admiration, so beautifully proportioned as to satisfy the requirements of the most refined taste, so entirely in harmony with its surroundings as to please even the most ignorant.

"Egyptian architectural power culminated in this wonderful edifice—its supreme effort—its crown and pride—its greatest and grandest achievement; and it only remained for later ages to reproduce the feeble copies of the marvelous work of Seti, or to escape comparison by accomplishing works of an entirely different description.

"The 'Hall of Columns' at Karnak is not only the most sublime and beautiful of all the edifices there grouped together in such sort as to form one vast, unrivaled temple, but it is the highest effort of Egyptian architectural genius, and is among the eight or ten most splendid of all known architectural constructions."

**153 EXHORT, Right to, a Common Privilege**

To have the right to exhort it is not necessary to have an exhorter's license. The direction is general: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). This is to be done, not merely once a week, but daily. In doing this duty properly there is a double benefit: those who exhort and those who are exhorted are kept from being hardened. They are thus preserved from an "evil heart of unbelief." No matter how fruitless this work may seem to be, it always benefits the one who, with tender solicitude, exhorts others. Lot had an audience of reprobates in Sodom; but he kept from falling into their sins because he "vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." Then *exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

**154 EXPERIENCE, Fresh**

The branch of the vine may be firmly united to the parent stock; it may be sound and healthy; but unless it put forth new wood it will bear no fruit. Grapes never grow on old wood. So if you want to help promote a revival of religion, you must get a new experience. No matter how long it is since you were converted and sanctified, you must get a new blessing if you would do good to others. Unless you do, your talk and your prayers may be good, but they will be dry. You will hinder where you wish to help. A young convert, who knows little about the way of salvation, compared with you, and whose language is not as good as yours, will do more good. The reason that, though he has less experience, it is fresh. His little pot of manna was gathered to-day, and so the people will eat it with him. Yours, laid up and carefully preserved, is a memento of other days, when it fell in showers. But it has been kept too long for present use. Beloveds, let us be renewed day by day.

**155 EXTREMISTS**

When the devil can no longer keep people asleep, he endeavors to push them to extremes. With him it is anything to hinder the work of God. When one consents to

be led by the Spirit, then Satan endeavors to make him think he is infallibly led. He who listens to the suggestion, soon gets into such a state that he does not want any one to teach him. He is, in his own estimation, so taught of God that he can not go wrong. Those who agree with him and indorse him fully, he fellowships; those who do not, he condemns. President Edwards says: "This error will defend and support all errors. As long as a person has a notion that he is guided by immediate direction from Heaven, it makes him incorrigible and impregnable in all his misconduct; for what signifies it for poor blind worms of the dust to go to argue with a man, and endeavor to convince him and correct him that is guided by the immediate counsels and commands of the great Jehovah?" (Works, Vol. 3, p. 365). Let us see to it that we always have a humble, teachable spirit.

#### 156 FAITH, Obedient

That we are saved through faith is a scriptural doctrine. But faith, when genuine, always results in appropriate works. All that passes for faith, but does not lead to hearty obedience to the commands of God, is downright presumption. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (Jas. 2:20). Many are not willing to know this great, fundamental truth. They shut out the light which God would give them, and sometimes pay preachers great salaries to confirm them in their delusions. Yet nothing is taught more clearly in the Bible, than the utter worthlessness of an inoperative faith. What can be plainer than these words of Christ?—"And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Why do you profess to be my disciples, and do not obey me?

However great may be the physical strength of any man, the moment he dies he is powerless. The dead body can do nothing. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). It is of no value whatever. Yet with what tenacity do many cling to their dead faith! Reader, have you a working faith?

## 157 FAITH, Saving

Very much that passes for faith is only the faith of devils. It is of precisely the same quality as the faith which devils have. There is not a truth of the gospel but that the devils believe. They have no doubts about the divinity of Christ, or that God answers prayer. Unless our faith is something more than an assent of the understanding to the truths of the Bible, it will not save us. The faith that saves goes beyond the intellect. It takes a firm hold of the affections and the will, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. 10:10). Saving faith is a voluntary reliance of the soul on Christ. The element of *trust* enters largely into it. We may believe in an individual and yet, for various reasons, not choose to trust him. But Christian faith is, as Dr. Horace Bushnell well says, "the faith of a transaction. It is the act of trust by which one being, a sinner, commits himself to another being, a Savior. It is not mind dealing with nations, or national truths. It is what can not be a proposition at all. But it is being trusting itself to being, and so becoming other and different, by a relation wholly transactional." This telling people that they are converted because they believe that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God," only tends to deceive them to their eternal undoing. It is assuming a terrible responsibility.

Beloveds, you need, in order to be saved, to place such reliance in Christ that you depend on him alone for salvation. You must sacrifice to him, standing, and property, and reputation; and look to him for all you need for time and for eternity. "So whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

## 158 FAITH AND WORKS

Works done from selfish motives, and by one not born of the Spirit, have nothing saving in their character. Such were the works of the boasting Pharisee. We have become so afraid of them that we have well-nigh lost sight of the great truth, so clearly taught in the Bible, that our eternal

salvation depends—not merely upon what we believe—but upon our actions and motives. It is not to them who live and die in the church that eternal salvation is promised, but to them who seek for it by “patient continuance in well doing” (Rom. 2:7).

Paul has much to say about salvation by faith; but, in harmony with the other inspired writers, he makes our eternal salvation depend upon our works of faith, and not upon any profession of faith, or mere intellectual belief of doctrines.

It does not seem possible to misunderstand the words of Christ: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:20). When profession and performance do not agree, the case is decided by the performance. If, then, you would gain Heaven, you must see to it that you not only profess Christ before the world, but that you do God’s will, in your conversation, in the disposition of your time, and in the use you make of your property. Be not deceived. The covetous, no matter how much religion they may claim to have, shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:10).

Read your Bibles carefully on this subject. Take a concordance and find the passages which speak on this point, and you will be surprised at the number which teach that our everlasting destiny depends upon our works.

In the last chapter of Revelation we read, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).

Notice how plainly Christ teaches that our eternal life, or, on the other hand, our final damnation, depends upon our works. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28, 29).

Reader, is your life consecrated to doing good?

## 159 FALLOW GROUND

When we made our garden a few years ago, we were saving of the ground. We had only about four acres; and about three-fourths of that was taken up with orchard and buildings. So we dug up the ground and set grape vines along the grass. Some of them lived, *but we never got any grapes from them*. Seeing that with all our care they did not thrive, we set out, some two years later, other grape vines in the garden. The soil was no better, but it was under cultivation. These vines gave us an abundant yield of grapes last fall. So our peach trees in the grass have barely lived; but those in the garden have become large trees and given us fine peaches.

We see similar results in religious matters. Some take the most important doctrines, and the most precious promises, and put them in a heart all sodded over with worldliness, and wonder why they do not reap a richer harvest of peace and joy. The fault is not in the doctrines or in the promises, or in their not being properly believed, but in their not being received in a broken and contrite heart.

Beloveds, break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns (Jer. 4:3).

## 160 FAULT, Dealing With One in

The directions given in case one is overtaken in a fault—in a trespass—should be carefully followed. The great thing to be done is *to restore* him: not to get him out of the church. Notwithstanding his fault, he has a soul to save, and those who have undertaken to help him should not give up so easily. If they do, it will make him more liable to give way to despair. It is true, he has disgraced the church; but to throw him out of the church to die will not remove the disgrace. Saving souls is of greater consequence than attempting to save the reputation of the church by letting souls perish from neglect.

*The spiritual* should undertake to restore him. The others are not likely to try; and if they did, it could but result in failure. The spiritual should be *allowed* to do this work.

They should not be interfered with while obeying the Scriptures. If they find it necessary to get him out of the church in order to restore him, then he should be got out of the church. But in order to restore him it is not enough that the spiritual go about this work in good faith; they must do this work in a proper manner. They must restore such an one in *the spirit of meekness*. They must have a feeling of sympathy with those whom they would benefit. Resentment repels; love attracts and conquers.

**161 FAULTS Must be Acknowledged to God**

For one who has lost grace to get back to the Lord, it is necessary that he should see his fault, and acknowledge it. But all sin is blinding in its nature. This is especially the case with the sin of covetousness. Hence it sometimes happens that, in business matters, one thinks he is right when every fair-minded person conversant with the fact knows he is wrong. This is a very dangerous condition for a person to be in. The most skilful doctors, when sick, call other doctors to prescribe for them. So when one is in such a moral state that he calls right, where his temporal interests are concerned, what the *spiritual* call wrong, he should accept their decision and follow their advice. He needs help. He should seek it and accept it. He should open his eyes to his fault, make confession and restitution, and pray, and have the spiritual pray, for his restoration. Because a man has gone wrong in one thing, it is no reason why he should go wrong in every thing, and lose his soul at last. He should be more anxious for his recovery than a sick man is to get well. But all that others can do for him will not save him unless he will do his duty. To his own Master he standeth or falleth.

**162 FAULTS Must be Corrected in a Right Manner**

If you think some brother has done something wrong, have the courage to go to him and tell him his fault privately and tenderly. This is Christ's command. Obey it in *manner*, as well as in *matter*. It is not enough to tell him his fault. Christ's word is explicit. "*Go and tell him*

*his fault between thee and him alone*" (Matt. 18:15). You grossly violate this command if you tell him his fault publicly, in the congregation. In doing so you disobey Christ. You have no right to tell it to any person, until you tell it to the offender *alone*. Do not attempt to mortify him before others, but give him a chance to mortify himself. Frequently those who have taken a wrong step are prevented from getting right by the injudicious treatment they receive. They are accused of much more than they are guilty of; and the fear of having it reported that they confessed to all that is said about them, keeps them from making any confession. Their salvation is hindered and great wrong is done. Some congratulate themselves for their fidelity in exposing sin, when, in reality, they are guilty of cowardice. It takes much more courage to go to the offender, than it does to denounce the offense in public.

#### 163 FAULTS of Others, Dealing with

It is a great defect not to be able to deal with the faults of others with plainness without manifesting a bad spirit. Under all circumstances we should speak the truth in love. We should be decided, without being excited in the heart by anger. "Remember," says Fenelon, "that real firmness is gentle, humble, and quiet. Anything like sharp, harsh, restless firmness is unworthy of God's work. We are told that wisdom 'sweetly ordereth all things': do you the like; and if you ever are betrayed into acting roughly, humble yourselves without reserve. Confess that you are often in error as to manner, and in substance keep to your rule. In other respects you can not be too obliging or too assiduous. There is no manner of reading or prayer which will teach you so much self-renunciation as this subjection."

We would learn to be uncompromising without any manifestation of roughness or self-will.

#### 164 FAULTS, Spying Out

We all crave pure food and drink. But we should all starve if we used a microscope of great magnifying power

to examine what we eat and drink, and set ourselves against taking anything except what was seen to be pure. A church should be pure. But the preacher who examines his members under a powerful microscope, and disposes of all in whom are found any defects, will soon find himself without members. It is better to use the telescope more and the microscope less. To give one's attention to spying out the faults of others is bad business. It leads to great inconsistencies. Those who strain out gnats soon get where they swallow camels. Men sometimes leave the Free Methodist church because of little things which they do not like, and unite with a church whose position on vital questions they plainly see to be radically wrong. Some of our straitest preachers have gone to the broadest of sects.

#### 165 FAULT FINDING

The most cruel criticisms upon those who are working in the cause of God are made by the men and the women who are neglecting their own duty. They are ready to magnify every mistake, real or fancied, of those who work; to make the least of their successes, and the most of their apparent failures. Preachers who never have revivals never weary of calling attention to everything objectionable in the methods of those who have powerful revivals. Men who hold on to money which they ought to give to schools and missions, and other salutary agencies, find fault without mercy with the way these agencies are managed. But they are not the ones to take hold and try to help to a better management. Will such not learn that the greatest of all mistakes is to sit still and do nothing? Meroz was cursed, not because he carried his gun on the wrong shoulder, but because he did not carry it at all; he stayed at home when he should have gone to battle. The man with the one talent was cast into outer darkness, not because he had made an unfortunate investment of his lord's money, but because he had made no investment. O ye fault-finders, beware lest, when your Lord come, ye be found smiting your fellow servants, instead of working with them!

166 **FAULTFINDERS** Must not be Heeded

No building was ever erected by part of the hands working to the plan and the other part tearing down the scaffolds on which the others work. A minister's reputation is his scaffold. Destroy that, and he has no standing from which to build. Chronic fault-finders are chronic sinners. They may wear the dress of loyal soldiers, but they are Satan's guerrillas. They cast off the resources, and render more toilsome and dangerous the onward march of those who are fighting the battles of the Lord.

Grant entered the army as a captain; he ended the war as general of all the armies of his country. He rose, not by criticizing in the papers his fellow officers, but by showing superior skill and courage in conquering the enemy. There were plenty to find fault with him; but Lincoln had the good sense and the courage to stand by him, in spite of adverse criticism, when he saw that he was doing effective work.

So, if your preacher is true to God, and diligent in his calling, give him your hearty support and co-operation. Do not lend your ears to those who would cripple his influence by lowering him in your estimation.

167 **FORMALITY** in Religion

The great danger to Christianity in this country is not from infidelity, but from formality. Men, to live peaceably together, must have some form of religion—something that restrains them when the eye of the officer of justice is not upon them. Atheism is too bleak and dreary to satisfy the longings of the human heart. The prospects which Christianity holds out for the future are too captivating to be easily set aside. The objection the world makes is not to eternal life, but to the conditions upon compliance with which it is promised. So when these conditions are in substance set aside, and the bliss of Heaven is promised to people on their own terms—when the people are persuaded that religion will not interfere with their business or pleasure—then everybody is willing to be religious.

## 168 FORMS, Religious, Their Value

All efforts to so spiritualize Christianity as to dispense with forms, have been utter failures. This earth is too material for the long-continued abode of anything wholly spiritual. When a human being takes the spirit form, he leaves this world. All our senses demand something tangible, though it be but a medium through which that which is intangible may work. Electricity diffused is unrecognized; but concentrated, it carries our messages with the lightning's speed, illuminates our streets, and propels our cars. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20). But still it is a kingdom, regularly organized, and not anarchy. Spiritual life, embodied in proper forms, multiplies and perpetuates itself, and is made a blessing to others; but disembodied, it disappears and, as far as can be seen, accomplishes but little good. If, as we say, the arm goes to sleep, we do not cut it off, but move it about and restore the circulation; so, if any of the forms of religion which Christ has established seem dry and dead, put new life into them, and they will again become of service to you. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13).

## 169 FORMS to be Retained

Forms in religion are necessary. If we adore and worship our Creator, there will be some mode of expressing our adoration and worship. Neither a stove nor a fireplace can warm us; but in a house we need one or the other in which to make a fire which will keep us warm. The table and dishes do not feed us; but we need them that we may put on them the food that will sustain us. Getting down on our knees, and saying over words, does not bless us; but unless we kneel before the Lord and use the language of supplication, we do not receive his blessing on our souls. Because we do not rely on forms, that is no reason why we should reject and despise the forms which God has ordained as a means of grace. "Hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13).

## 170 FORGIVENESS, Spirit of, Must be Maintained

To keep saved we must keep a spirit of forgiveness. No matter how others act, we must feel kindly towards them, and not cherish anything like resentment for their misdeeds. It may be

“Hard to feel the stranger’s scoff,  
Hard the old friends falling off,  
Hard to learn forgiving!  
But the Lord his own rewards,  
And his love with theirs accords—  
Warm, and fresh, and living.”

Nursing animosities is dangerous business for any one who has a desire to ever enter Heaven. One does not need to be a Christian to feel kindly towards those who do right. “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” To forgive another implies that we think he has done wrong. Where we know this is the case, we must still be forgiving and tender-hearted towards him.

## 171 FORGIVING SPIRIT

A Christian can not hold a grudge. We must be of a forgiving spirit. In dealing harshly with those who have gone astray we may say that we give them no more than they deserve. That may be true, and it may not be true. There may be animosity nestled in the heart, the presence of which we have not discovered. But if there is not, still we should leave them, as far as is consistent with our duty, in the hands of God. He is the judge.

We should be slow to condemn.

“Though justice be thy plea, consider this—  
That in the cause of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy.”

Our Savior’s words should be carefully studied: “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” (Matt. 18:35).

## 172 FREE CHURCHES Needed

Free churches are greatly needed in every city. Every seat in every church of Jesus Christ should be free. The system of renting or selling pews in houses of worship is wholly wrong. It is in direct conflict with the plainest teaching of the Word of God. It brings into the church some of the proud, fashionable, well-to-do people, and shuts out the masses. It fosters the meanest of all kinds of aristocracy—that based on money. It makes hypocrites and deceived professors instead of saints.

The Detroit *Evening News* says:

“The poorer classes—the great bulk of the people—are conspicuous by their absence from the most fashionable churches. Thus these supposed-to-be educational institutions are run by and in the interest of the already educated; for let a poorly dressed person present himself at the door of a church, and he is immediately met by a well-fed and well-dressed usher, who takes a mental inventory of the applicant somewhat as a hotel clerk does of a guest, and quickly consigns him to a back seat, which by reason of its poor position is ‘free.’ In the meantime, the well-dressed stranger is given the best seat, handed a hymn-book and, at the close of the services, the deacons and minister crowd around him and invite him to come again. The poor man passes out unnoticed and, in proportion as he has any self-respect, leaves that church alone. He sees ‘the church’ is supported by those of another class than his, and he immediately recognizes the fact that he will be nothing but an interloper.

“Not only are most of the churches and the people drifting away from each other, but the number of converts made in proportion to the money expended is so ridiculously small that if these establishments were run on business principles they would go into bankruptcy. Some of these converts cost \$1,000 apiece, some even more than this, and some less. Doubtless a soul is priceless, therefore, no cost is too great; but when a church saves one soul and, by reason of its exclusiveness and its departure from the teachings of Jesus, turns a dozen from Christianity, would it

not be better if the church were closed? Yet this is what many of them do."

God has raised up the Free Methodist church to remedy these evils. But it is easier to denounce wrong practises than it is to correct them. We find it very difficult to obtain a foothold in our cities. Property is high. It costs a good deal of money to buy the ground on which to build a plain church. Those who indorse our principles, and believe that the fashionable churches are all wrong, seem content with giving us their indorsement, and the fashionable churches their money. And then they wonder why the Free Methodists do not increase more rapidly!

#### 173 FREE CHURCHES in Wesley's Day

Free churches are an essential part of Methodism. A religious aristocracy, which virtually excludes the poor, has no right to style itself a Methodist church. John Wesley, in his "Thoughts Upon Methodism," says, "From the beginning men and women sat apart, as they always did in the primitive church; and none were suffered to call any place their own; but the first comers sat down first. They had no pews; and all the benches for rich and poor were of the same construction." Mr. Wesley began the service with a short prayer; then sung a hymn and preached, (usually about half an hour), then sung a few verses of another hymn, and concluded with prayer. His constant prayer was, salvation by faith, preceded by repentance, and followed by holiness.

#### 174 FREE CHURCHES: Effect of Pew Selling

Selling the right to the occupancy of a seat in a house dedicated to God, is destroying the foundation of all spiritual worship in that house. It is a formal inauguration of Mammon as master of ceremonies. The Spirit of God is put under restraint. It can no longer have free course there. Nothing must transpire calculated to offend the taste of those who have the money to buy the seats. They have purchased the right to dictate how God shall be worshiped there: and their wishes are generally anticipated

before they are expressed. Great care is taken that the influential, wealthy sinners, who have condescended to give their patronage to the house of God, shall have no cause of complaint. As they generally affect refinement, whether they possess it or not, the singing must be artistic. The uncultivated saints must keep silence; and men and women trained to operatic singing, perform this part of public worship under the inspiration of money or vanity.

The utterances of the pulpit, too, must be toned down to please the ears of unsaved men. A faithful declaration of the whole counsel of God is out of the question. Popular sins must be ignored, and those truths alone must be presented which are of a nature to give no offense.

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” To leave the edifice altogether is the only remedy left. “From such turn away.”

#### 175 FREEMASONRY a Foe to Christianity

He that does not know the location of rocks in a channel through which he must pass, is not fit for a pilot: so he who does not know what stands in the way of the work of God is not fit to lead and direct the work of God.

Any one who is willing to learn, can easily learn that Freemasonry is a rival and a deadly foe to the Christian religion. It is as clearly proven as any fact can be, that Freemasonry is a religion, with its priests, its baptism, and its ritual—that it promises to save from sin in this life, and to save the soul in the life to come—that it rejects Christ, and puts the Bible on a level with the sacred books of the heathen; and, finally, that it offers salvation by works.

Ignorance on this subject is without excuse.

#### 176 FREEMASONRY Anti-Christian

It has been demonstrated to a certainty that the system of Freemasonry, as practised in this country, is an anti-Christian religion. Yet many who profess to be Christians, and even Christian ministers, belong to its lodges. They acknowledge the validity of its horrid, barbarous oaths. Many

more who do not belong to it refuse utterly to examine into its character. They support Masonic preachers, take the sacrament at their hands, and stand connected with churches which are so far controlled by its influence that they do not dare to bear testimony against it. If Freemasonry is what Bernard and Stearns, and Finney and Ronayne and Blanchard, and others have proved it to be, then no one who wishes to be a true Christian should stand connected, or have any fellowship whatever with churches that shelter and foster this powerful and insidious enemy of the religion of Christ. We may unite with such people in putting down saloons, in raising barns and repairing roads, but *not* in holding meetings for the purpose of getting sinners converted to God. *Never*. Such people themselves need to get converted to Christ. What concord hath Christ with Belial?

#### 177 FREEMASONS AND MORMONS Compared

Freemasonry is just as completely an anti-Christian religion as Mormonism is. Does the former have a Bible on the desk of the lodge? The latter has one on its pulpit in its temple at Salt Lake, and its preachers often take a text out of it to preach from. Does the latter practise polygamy? The former makes provision for the protection of the virtue of the mothers, wives and daughters of the members of the craft only. All other women are unsheltered by its oaths.

Do Freemasons stand connected with Christian churches, occupy Christian pulpits, cater to Christian prejudices, and flourish on salaries paid by Christian people? Doubtless Mormons would do the same if their cause was sufficiently popular to enable them to do so.

Do Freemasons claim an antiquity dating back to the days of Solomon? The Mormons claim that polygamy had its origin in the infancy of the human race.

The Mormons formally accept Christ: but grand lodges of the Freemasons have judicially decided that prayers offered in the lodge in the name of Christ are unmasonic. In Masonic rituals the name of Christ is expurgated from passages from the New Testament which they quote. A

Christian, then, has no more right, as such, to support a Masonic preacher than he has a Mormon.

**178 FREEMASON REVIVALISTS Should Not be Assisted**

If Masons are conducting revivals, or holding religious meetings, you should have nothing to do with them. You need inquire no further. The work they do must be superficial. They may make many converts; but they heal slightly. You aid such work at your peril. "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord" (2 Chron, 19:2).

You may help a Masonic preacher, if he will permit you to help him, get to the Lord. Before he attempts to convert others he should himself be converted. You should not give him countenance as a minister of Jesus Christ until he has "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully" (2 Cor. 4:2). That will take and keep any man out of the lodge. If you stand by compromisers you will yourself become a compromiser. Remember Ananias and Sapphira.

**179 FREE METHODIST CHURCH, Friend of the Poor**

The Free Methodist church is a friend of the poor. It teaches that the grace of God, which brings salvation, is free for all. It requires that all the seats in all its houses of worship shall be *free*—as free as the grace it preaches. We know no other church, except the Friends, which, from principle, excludes all caste from its houses of worship. Most denominations have some free churches from policy. Others have some free seats; but the residents of the place are seldom willing to advertise their poverty or their penuriousness by occupying these free seats with regularity. Many people do not go to church because they are not able to dress in fashion. They can not appear as the congregation generally do, and so stay away. The Free Methodist church requires all its members to dress plain. So plain people need not be afraid to attend church with them. Christ said, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them."

If they do not hear the gospel where Free Methodists have churches, it is their own fault. They need not stay away because they do not wish to rent a seat, or because they can not wear fine clothes. Let them come as they are. They will be cordially welcomed.

**180 FREE METHODIST CHURCH Must Keep the Old Way**

God has called the Free Methodist church to keep alive among men the remembrance of the days of simplicity, plainness and spiritual power. We must be true to our calling. While there is much of activity in the churches, it is, for the most part, on the line of civilization, rather than on that of Christianity. Little is done that the natural man can not do. Worldly schemes and worldly policy are relied upon to secure the prosperity of the church. And they succeed in building up a worldly organization, which styles itself a church of God. But few of the so-called converts are even scripturally awakened. We must not be drawn, by their seeming success, into any of these plans of worldly policy. Let us stick to gospel work and gospel methods. Let us never unite in revival efforts with any who do not do clean work for God.

**181 FREE METHODIST PREACHER Must Have Settled Convictions**

A Free Methodist preacher who has not settled convictions that the truths to which we give special emphasis are important truths of the Bible, has no business among us. He will do us more hurt than good. Those who are weak will be still more unsettled under his labors. If he makes converts, the most of them will go to other churches. If he believes that men can be good Christians and belong to the lodge, and women can be saints and be adorned like the world, he should study the Bible, and seek the help of the Spirit, till he gets established in the truth. He should then hold it up so clearly and strongly that those who hear him preach shall understand that they can not serve God and love the world at the same time. If he has convictions, he should be true to his convictions. But if he leans to the popular Christianity of the times, he will sooner or

later fall where he leans; and the sooner he does it the better it will be for all concerned. It would have been better for Judas to have forsaken Christ as soon as he found out that his kingdom was not of this world. He who seeks religion for its worldly advantages should go to the richest and most worldly church he can find.

**182 FREE METHODIST: Prejudice Against the Term**

It is quite surprising to what extent the bad feelings of some are stirred by the word "Free Methodist." The sight of it or the sound of it seems to bring an instant change over their spirits. They want their children converted, but not at a Free Methodist meeting. One widow woman took her son, a wicked young man, from the altar of one of our churches. He went from bad to worse and soon landed in State's prison.

The same degree of spiritual power which is often manifested in our meetings, when no one can be persuaded to make a start for the kingdom, would, in other churches, result in the going forward or standing up of a large number. This is owing in part to prejudice, and in part to the feeling that they can obtain salvation on easier terms in other churches than they can in the Free Methodist church. We must insist upon it more clearly, and more strongly, that Christ has made the conditions of salvation the same for all, and the same in all places. This that men and women get in the popular churches, without abandoning their sins and renouncing the world, whatever it may be, is not the saving grace of God.

**183 FREE METHODISTS, a Separate People**

The Free Methodists are a nation by themselves. God raised them up to be such. Wherever they are true to their calling, they prosper. When they try to be like other people they get swallowed up. Just to the degree that other churches are conformed to the world, we should keep clear of them.

True Christians are not of the world, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a pe-

cular people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (1 Pet. 2:9). That such is the character of the popular churches, none but one who is utterly blind can claim. Spurgeon says:

"I sometimes fear that the only age to which we can be truly likened is the time before the flood, when the sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men, and when there ceased to be a distinction between the church and the world. It is but the part of candor to acknowledge that there is such a mixture nowadays, such a compromise, such a giving and taking on both sides of religious questions, that we are like a leavened mass, mingled and united together. All this is wrong; for God has always intended there should be a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, as clear and as palpable as the distinction between the day and the night."

184 FREE METHODIST, The, Suggestions to Contributors to

The excellency of our paper is due largely to the excellent articles contributed from week to week. They are from men and women who feel the fire burning in their hearts. They are in earnest and write in earnest. We hope they will continue in well doing. And others, who do not write, could help on the cause by writing short, pointed articles, full of the Holy Ghost and fire.

We can not publish everything that is sent us, because we do not consider it suitable for our columns. We may err in what we admit, and in what we reject; for we make no claim to infallibility. We simply use the judgment God gives us.

We venture a few suggestions to our writers, attention to which will help secure admission of their articles:

1. Be certain of your facts. If they are questionable, give the authority. It will not do to assume that everything is true that you see in the papers. There is much misrepresentation going on.

2. Avoid all offensive personalities. Most persons are

very sensitive over what they see in a paper, reflecting unfavorably upon them.

3. Do not use any slang words or phrases. A paper should educate its readers to use a pure language.

4. Write short. Leave out everything that can be left out without obscuring the sense.

5. Verify your quotations from the Scriptures, and give the exact language of the texts you quote. If you endeavor to prove your positions by quotations from others, give the place where the quotation can be found, so that those who choose to do so can verify it.

6. Avoid a controversial spirit. It is not necessary to review every statement which you can not accept. Generally, the best way is to state the truth, and let the truth correct all errors to which it is opposed. The Scriptures are remarkably free from controversial writing.

7. Write on subjects of practical importance—subjects that will help souls to get to Heaven. Ours is a *religious* paper; we want to have it intensely religious; therefore, many practical subjects are not suitable for our columns. But there are plenty of religious topics of great importance, and of practical bearing, to occupy all our space. Confine yourselves to these. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Then we may indulge in speculations. One of our devoted, earnest preachers writes:

"Now but few read these long continued articles touching the millennium. They are nothing but opinions, and prove nothing; therefore, of what use can they be? I would not raise the question of piety in these brethren. Will the millennial theory as ventilated help us to comfort the sick and afflicted ones about us? Will the idea of a Christ coming one thousand years sooner, or later, assist us to lead souls to the Christ who came 1888 years ago?"

#### 185 FRETFULNESS Discouraging

"Fret not thyself because of evildoers" (Ps. 37:1). If not because of evil-doers, then because of whom may we

fret? Shall we fret because of those who do well? Would this be right? Are not those who are doing the best they can entitled to good treatment? If we give them censure when they are entitled to praise, do we not discourage them? Are we not guilty of injustice? Often it makes a person feel worse to be robbed of his good name than it does to be robbed of his money. Children are sometimes driven to desperation by the fretfulness of a parent. They get so tired of being constantly found fault with in little things that they seek to put themselves beyond the reach of the tormenting tongue. A fretting master is not likely to have good servants.

**186 FRETFULNESS to be Put Away**

If fretting does no good—if it has neither reason nor revelation for its support—then should every child of God put it away, now and forever. “Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil” (Ps. 37:8). In its mildest form anger is wrong. Fretting men and women are gradually wearing their lives away.

If you have fallen into this bad habit, be determined to cure yourself of it. Resolve against it; fight against it; pray against it. Get your heart filled with humble love. Take a personal interest in every one with whom you have to do, especially in those who render you any service. Consider them, for the time being, as in a measure belonging to you. Try to do them good, to make them feel good—to render them more happy in time and in eternity for having come in contact with you.

**187 FRIENDSHIP Ties Must Not be Broken**

If you are tempted with a brother, you will naturally conclude that he is tempted with you. To one who looks through green glasses, everything looks green. A ball dropped lightly, rebounds lightly. A slight touch in shaking hands, is answered with a slight touch in return. If you avoid a brother, especially a preacher, at a public gathering, where many take his attention, the devil will try to make you think that he shuns you. If he knew how you were

tempted, he might take pains to speak to you, but he does not, and so, without his intending it, not a word passes between you; and your suspicions are strengthened that he has something against you. If you would take the pains, you would find out that the trouble is wholly with yourself. "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24). A friendly spirit, manifested in words and acts, makes friends. Try it. A selfish, suspicious, envious spirit alienates friends. Do not try it.

Our most valuable earthly acquisitions are our friends. They multiply our joys, and divide our sorrows. They add to our happiness and our usefulness. They help hold us up in slippery places and encourage us to be true and upright. We can not afford to lose a single one. Even Job's friends, though they were wrong in their theories, and so proved miserable comforters, drew from him some of the most sublime utterances that ever fell from human lips, and doubtless contributed towards the turning of his captivity. Bind your friends to you by the daily strengthening cords of acts of kindness. The great preventive of the needless alienation of friends is the charity that thinketh no evil.

#### 188 GENTLENESS

The tenderness of Paul was not assumed for effect; but it sprung from a deep and genuine love, which drew the hearts of Christians in strong affection toward him. To the Thessalonians he wrote: "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." It was this spirit that enabled Paul to go among the enemies of the cross, and preach the gospel, without any appropriation or any financial backing whatever. Its effect in our day will be similar. Compassion in the preacher will touch the chords of sympathy in the hearers. The way may seem dark for a time, but if he is true to God, the clouds will give way and deliverance will come. Like Paul, he may be sometimes "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger

and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:27). But if he remains true, God will stir up some of his servants to send help; and he will be able to say, "But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." A man that gives the people dead sermons and dry exhortations, in however loud a tone they may be delivered, may expect neglect; but "he that watereth, shall be watered also himself."

#### 189 GENTLENESS, The Greatness of

Strong words and exaggerated expressions furnish no evidence of unusual depth of piety. It is not the dog that barks the loudest that bites the hardest.

The Psalmist says, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (Psa. 18:35). That is no ordinary gentleness which God imparts. David attributes to it a power to elevate, above that found in talent and courage without it. God's standard of greatness is not that generally recognized among men. Man cries out,

"See, the conquering hero comes.  
Sound the trumpet, beat the drums."

But God declares, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32).

BE GENTLE—gentle with the perverse—gentle under provocation. Be not led away by those who talk strong but show a wrong spirit. "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16).

#### 190 GENUINE EXPERIENCE

Inferior wood will answer for parlor furniture that is to be veneered, and kept mainly for show and to be used with care; but when material is wanted for hard service, as for a plow beam or the keel of a ship, good, solid, sound

timber is demanded. In timber for such uses, facility to receive a polish is no compensation for inability to endure a strain. So a superficial piety will enable one to appear respectably at the ordinary services conducted from a fashionable pulpit, and to take an active part in the festivities furnished in the popular church parlor. But when it comes to the stern duties of life, and the sterner realities of the dying hour, a different kind of piety is needed. Nothing else will serve those purposes well but the old-fashioned, rapidly disappearing religion of the Bible. A few hard rubs in real life make veneered piety look shabby and worthless. It is not worth repairing, though much labor is wasted in patching it up. It is much better to get a genuine experience.

#### 191 GIFTS OF GOD Imitated

One striking evidence that God answers prayer to the healing of his children, as promised in the Scriptures, is the diligence with which Satan gets up his imitations. To one Moses there were several magicians. Elijah stood alone for God, while the prophets of Baal were four hundred and fifty. Mormonism, Spiritism, and lastly "Christian Science," falsely so-called, each in turn professes to heal the sick. They all derive their power from the same source as did the magicians who withstood Moses—from the enemy of all righteousness. We live in the days foretold by the Revelator, and the "spirits of devils, working miracles, go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." But let us, steadfast in the faith, resist all these influences of Satan, and not give up a single truth of the Bible, because of the counterfeits of the devil; and let us not be pushed by him to any extreme not warranted by the Word of God. That this self-styled "Christian Science" is closely related to the sorceries of Simon Magus, is evident on its very face; for its advocates not only think, but openly teach, "that the gift of God may be purchased with money" (Acts 8:20). They form classes, and undertake to teach, for a stated, liberal sum of money, the art of healing by Divine power, to all who will pay their stipulated price.

Beloveds, shun all such mercenary deceivers, as you would shun the devil. Have no dealings with them. Do not suffer yourself, in the slightest degree, to come under the influence of these "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." God bestows his gifts according to *his* sovereign will. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit." These gifts are not taught by men or women for money. "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Cor. 12: 8, 9, 11).

#### 192 GIVING, Rule for

We should give to the cause of God freely. The Jews gave a tenth. Many of the early Christians gave all. The rule for each Christian is to give "as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). What is given out of love to Christ, can not fail of having its reward.

#### 193 GOD, Delight in

A saint delights not in his gifts or graces, but in his God. The language of his heart is: "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance" (Acts 2:28).

"And while thou dost smile upon me,  
God of wisdom, love and might,  
Foes may hate and friends disown me:  
Show thy face and all is bright."

"True saints," says President Edwards, "have their minds, in the first place, inexpressibly pleased and delighted with the sweet ideas of the glorious and amiable nature of the things of God. And this is the spring of all their delights, and the cream of all their pleasures; it is the joy of their joy. This sweet and ravishing entertainment which they have in view of the beautiful and delightful nature of di-

vine things is the foundation of the joy that they have afterwards, in the consideration of these being theirs."

Though starvation stared one of the old prophets in the face, he declared: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

#### 194 GOD'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE

God, in addressing his people, frequently styles himself THE LORD ALMIGHTY. We should have an exalted opinion of his power. He is able to put down, not only one enemy, but all enemies. One king, or a thousand kings leagued against him, can not stand before him. In his own time, and in his own way, he removes them from the field of action. He brings to desolation the mightiest nation that exalts itself against him. The ground on which the great Babylon once stood was, for ages, unknown. Her proud palaces were buried under the sands of the desert.

He who makes the Lord his refuge has nothing to fear. The resources of the Almighty are boundless. He can feed his people in the desert wilderness, as well as in the Land of Promise. Their one care should be to hear and obey his commands. Elijah, sent into the wilderness by the Lord, is fed by the ravens; sent to the city, the widow, herself on the verge of starvation, finds an abundance in caring for the servant of the MOST HIGH.

#### 195 GOD'S MESSAGE Should be Delivered

One whom God sends with a message should always deliver the message. It may accomplish the end designed, and it may not. For this the messenger is not responsible. But he is responsible for its faithful delivery. It may be a "savour of life unto life" or "of death unto death." That depends upon how it is received. Paul and Barnabas said to the Jews: "Seeing ye put the word of God from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46). But this did not prove that God had not sent them to the Jews. They did their duty faithfully, and in a right spirit, and then God sent them into a more promising field.

Dr. Adam Clarke says, "God never sends any man on a message without giving him such directions as shall prevent all mistakes and miscarriages, if simply and implicitly followed."

**196 GOD'S ORDER** Best

He came to Dakota and took up land for his boys. He had a nice farm and a good amount of stock; but the boys are grown up and do not want to run the farm. They would rather teach or do some other work in town. Now he is left alone with a large farm on his hands which he does not know what to do with. He can not sell it to advantage. If he hires men to carry it on, they do not work to amount to much unless he is with them. He would like to devote his time to preaching, to which God called him when young; but how to get at it he does not know. If he fills appointments as a local preacher, it takes about one-third of the week to go and come. In the meantime the days and weeks are passing by, his life-work is left undone, and another is taking his crown.

It is an easy thing to get out of God's order. It is difficult to get into it again. Difficulties multiply, opportunities pass away, and life is gone. Oh! who will follow the Lord fully to the end?

**197 GODLY LIVES** a Source of Conviction

There is power in the godly lives of the saints, which forces upon sinners a conviction of the truth of Christianity. They may resist, but they are convinced.

Dr. Chamberlain, a Christian physician in India, says that a native Hindu, high in caste, in wealth and social position, sent for him to treat him for an ailment. The ailment was trifling, and he found that he had been sent for, in reality, to talk about Christianity. In the course of their conversation, the official said, "Sir, I am not a Christian. I am still regarded as a devout Hindu. I still perform enough Hindu services to avoid suspicion. But in my heart I dare not deny the claims of the Bible. *I see the power of Jesus Christ in the lives of his followers so dis-*

*tinctly that I can not deny his divinity.* He is not yet my Savior. Caste, wealth, family, position, all hold me back. But even now I never allow him to be spoken against in my presence. I have long been reading the Bible in secret. The more I read of Christ, and ponder over his life and teachings, and the power to conquer sin that comes from embracing his religion, the more I feel that in the end I shall have to accept him, at any cost, as my personal Savior. But how can I do it and bring ruin upon my family?"

Brother, sister, are you living so that you keep those around you under conviction?

#### 198 GOSPEL for the Poor

When John sent to know if Jesus was the Messiah, his disciples were told, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:4, 5). Human systems seek the patronage of the rich; the crowning proof of the divine origin of the gospel is the fact that it is preached to the poor. Dr. Stephen Olin, one of the greatest preachers of his day, said, "The gospel is preached to the poor—to the masses. It is made for them—it suits them. Is it not for the rich—for the cultivated—the intellectual? Not as such. They must become as the poor—as little children—as fools. They must come down to the common platform. They must be saved just like so many plowmen or common day-laborers. They must feel themselves sinners—must repent—trust in Christ, like beggars—like publicans. Sometimes we hear men prate about 'preaching that will do for common people, while it is good for nothing for the refined and the educated.' This is a damning heresy. It is a ruinous delusion. All breathe the same air. All are of one blood. All die. There is precisely one gospel for all; and that is the gospel that the poor have preached to them. The poor are the favored ones. They are not called up. The great are called down. They may dress, and feed, and ride, and live in ways of their own choosing; but as to getting to

Heaven, there is only God's way—the way of the poor. They may fare sumptuously every day, but there is only one sort of manna."

199 GOSPEL for the Poor—Free Churches

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel for the poor. It was given to them. It was meant for them. Christ says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden." He never once gives such an invitation to the rich. On the contrary, he declares: "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19: 23).

Then the edifice in which the gospel is preached should be built plain, and with all the seats free, with special reference to meeting the wants of the poor. Bishop Morris, of the M. E. church, one of the godly men of the past generation, says: "Where churches are built in costly style, with pews to rent or sell, the poor, who are unable to build, buy, or rent, are virtually excluded from houses of worship, and must worship without the means of grace, or worship out of doors, or meet in small companies in their own dwellings. Pewed churches are intended to accommodate select congregations; and a thinly attended house is therefore a natural, if not necessary, part of the system. It begins, progresses, and terminates in aristocracy." Therefore, do not give churches in which they sell or rent pews, any countenance or support.

200 GOSPEL: Progress Slow

When the gospel is preached in its purity it makes slow progress at first. It did in the primitive church. It did among the early Methodists. Of Fredericktown, Virginia, Bishop Asbury remarked: "At last, after more than thirty years' labor, the Methodists have a house of worship here, and thirty souls in fellowship." Reaching Holstein, Tennessee, and finding a gracious revival in progress, he wrote: "Fourteen or fifteen times have I toiled over the mighty mountains, and nearly twenty years have we labored upon

Holstein, and lo! the rage of wild and Christian savages is tamed, and God hath glorified himself."

But when the standard is lowered and the bars let down, in comes the world with a rush. Godless ministers rejoice, hell triumphs, and angels weep. Splendid church edifices are reared, instruments of music admitted, fairs and festivals inaugurated, and fun and frolic are the order of the day. They entertain the godless, but they murder souls! "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."

#### 201 GRACE Through Faith

We are saved by God. He alone can deliver us from the power and from the penalty of sin. When a prisoner is tried and found not guilty, the judge sets him free, because he *deserves* freedom. He owes his deliverance to the *administering of justice*. When a *convicted criminal is pardoned* by the governor, he owes his liberty to the exercise of mercy. So we *are saved by grace*. We pray God to blot out our transgressions, "because of the multitude of his tender mercies." The Pharisee went away unforgiven—he relied upon his own goodness; the publican went down to his house justified—he relied upon the mercy of God.

In using our Lord's Prayer, the plea is for forgiveness. The only claim we make for anything that can be called merit is, that we ourselves show mercy—"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." This is something that requires neither learning nor talent, nor strength, nor wealth. The poorest and the weakest can be merciful and forgiving, and penitent. The sacrifices of God—that is, the sacrifices which he prizes above all others—are a broken spirit and a contrite heart. These the poorest and weakest can bring.

Thus, though we are saved *by grace through faith*, yet the faith that saves is not fruitless. Every step taken towards God in faith, leaves behind it a plain track discernible by all. To those who appeared to seek God, John the Baptist cried out, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

**202 GRACE Tested**

We never read of drovers being robbed while going to market with their cattle, but when they have got the money for them they are sometimes followed hundreds of miles by villains, watching for an opportunity to rob them. One man, who had been followed two days and two nights on the train, was finally knocked off the platform as he was going, after dark, from one car to another, and robbed. So Satan follows those who have been to the Lord and received great spiritual blessings from his hands, to rob them, if possible, of their blessings. It was a wonderful token of God's favor when there came a voice from Heaven, saying to Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But immediately after was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. A similar experience awaits his disciples. Preachers are in special danger after God has signally blessed their labors. A great revival sometimes ends with the fearful backsliding of the man by whose labors it was chiefly carried on. We need to watch and pray always, but most of all after having been greatly blessed with a baptism of the Spirit. Satan will make his attacks upon us; but if we resist him firmly, he will flee from us.

**203 GRACE Transforms**

We grow out of self only as we grow into Christ. Changes in any other direction, are only changes from one form of depravity to another. Iron may be changed into steel which is capable of receiving as high a polish as silver. But it can never be turned into silver. Human nature may be highly refined; but it is only as it is made a partaker of the divine nature that it undergoes that transformation by which it becomes truly holy.

**204 GRIT VERSUS GRACE**

Said a preacher, when mildly expostulated with by one of his members for his denunciatory expressions from the pulpit, "I want you to understand that I am going through on grit." In a short time he did go through his pulpit and through his church. He took his place among those

who make no pretensions to grace. The vein of grit does not appear to be very thick. A self-willed man can soon work his way through it; and then he finds himself in the "horrible pit of miry clay." The more he flounders in it, the deeper he sinks, until he falls at last into the bottomless pit from which none ever escape. Beloveds, do not mistake consecration to your own will for consecration to God: do not think you are led by the Spirit of God, when it is clear to others that you are actuated by a spirit of resentment.

#### 205 GROWTH IN GRACE

No one should be satisfied with his present attainments. Christ is the portion of his people, but he will continue to satisfy their hearts only as they continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Life and growth are essential to fruit bearing. Dead trees do not have foliage or fruit. The fruitless fig-tree was cursed. Let us see to it that we bear much fruit: so shall we be his disciples.

#### 206 HABITS of Great Men Not to be Imitated

Young men who, from reading accounts of the habits of some of our great generals, are tempted to drink and smoke, would do well to bear in mind that in consequence of those habits these very generals came prematurely to their graves. Knowing this fact, it is a matter of surprise that literary men should be so fond of parading before their readers the fatal habits of the heroes they celebrate. The two greatest of our generals, who came out unscathed from the hardest battles fought in our Civil War, died in the midst of the enjoyment of the laurels they had won, from the diseases brought on by tobacco and by convivial habits. The young men of this generation should heed the warning which speaks out silently and solemnly from the premature death of many of our great men. If the poison of the cigar and of the wine-cup takes off those whose strong constitutions have been hardened by toil and exposure, how can those who lead a comparatively sedentary life hope to escape with impunity.

## 207 HEALING, Prayer of Faith for

Because the sick are sometimes healed in answer to prayer, it does not follow that they will always be healed by this means. While it is true that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (Jas. 5:15), yet no one can, at will, offer the prayer of faith. This kind of prayer is specially inspired by the Spirit, whenever it is offered. Even Paul could not offer it when he pleased, or he would not have left Trophimus at Miletum sick (2 Tim. 4:20). Among spiritual gifts which God divides to every man severally as he wills, is the gift of healing (1 Cor. 12:11). Those who make formal prayers can pray as requested. But when one prays in the Spirit he must pray as the Spirit gives him utterance. So when it is the will of God, in any particular instance, to heal the sick, he will give to one who lives in the Spirit to pray the prayer of faith. Dorothea Trudel, the modern apostle of healing through faith, and in answer to whose prayers hundreds were healed, herself died on her knees while praying, when only about thirty-eight years old.

If a person who claims to have faith in God for the body, sickens and dies without a doctor, what an ado is made about it! It goes the round of the papers; and it seems to be assumed that he died for want of medical attendance. Why is not an equal clamor raised over those who die in the hands of the doctor? The cases are far more numerous and distinguished. A few years since, Secretary Bayard's daughter took a common cold, through wearing a fashionable dress, at a fashionable reception. The father promptly called the doctors in whom he had most confidence, but in their hands she dropped away like a flower at the touch of frost.

A little later, Mr. Rice, a millionaire, in the strength of manhood, just appointed minister to Russia, was attacked with soreness in the throat. He was at his home in New York City, and the best medical skill that the country affords was employed, but in a few days he died.

Recently, the son of Secretary Blaine, in the vigor of early manhood, died under the care of Washington doctors. Similar cases are constantly occurring. Why are they not

brought forward as proof of the folly of having faith in doctors?

A lady of sound sense, in affluent circumstances, has had much sickness in her family. She has tried eminent physicians far and near. Recently she said to us: "I have lost faith in doctors so completely that now, when any of my family is taken sick, it never comes into my mind to call a doctor. I do not think of them any more than if there were no doctors."

Who can say that strong faith in God, careful nursing, simple remedies, and needed rest, are not more efficacious in restoring health than doctors and drugs? Yet after you have done the best you can, if help is not realized, we can not say you should not call a doctor.

We should carefully observe the rules of health, and so avoid sickness. We should have a steady faith in God for soul and for body, for temporal and for spiritual blessings. But we should not needlessly put ourselves under bondage. We should not say that we will never call a doctor or take medicine. We should, under all circumstances, leave ourselves free to act according to the light that God gives us for the occasion.

#### 208 HEART SEARCHING for Discouraged Preachers

I am sorry that you find things in so discouraging a condition—the church cold, some of the members backslidden, sinners indifferent, congregations small, and but little interest manifested in religion. This is a sad state of things, but it is by no means uncommon. It is no new thing for Christians to backslide. Some went back to the beggarly elements of the world in the Apostle's days, and the fatal fashion has had followers ever since.

Bad as matters are, they are not hopeless. God still lives. His Word has lost none of its efficacy. It is still quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. Try that. Begin with your own heart. Probe it thoroughly. See if you have not compromised; or been wanting in self-denial, or received honor of men. Seek to disguise it as he may, he who was once successful in saving

souls, but fails now, month in and month out, is back-slidden, more or less, from God. His power is gone. If this is the case with you, own it to yourself. Do not attribute your failure to circumstances. Lay it to its true cause—your want of grace. Then, whatever else you do, get the grace that will make you conqueror. Humble yourself before God. Ask until you receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire! Then pour the truth red-hot upon the consciences of professed Christians. Get them to breaking down and confessing. Then God will manifest among you his power to save. The people will come together. God will give you love for their souls. Give to each a portion in season. Proclaim God's law and vindicate its claim. Preach Christ, warning every man, and instructing every man in all wisdom, that you may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. You can not take this course and fail. God will be with you. There are some honest souls who will receive the truth. When all get saved who will, in one place, go to another. Make a bold strike for salvation. Have faith in God and live wholly for him, and failure will be out of the question. Your temporal wants too, will be supplied. The infinite resources of the Almighty Savior are pledged to this. He fed Elijah by the ravens—unclean birds—and he can make those care for you who are yet unsaved. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

#### 209 HELL on Earth

Perilous time are upon us. The papers record the most revolting, unheard-of crimes. Going to hell? Why, hell is coming to earth. It is here already. Demons from the pit, in human guise, would hardly seem capable of greater atrocities than are committed by men brought up within easy reach of the best and most elevating influences. Preachers would abolish hell; Satan is showing them that it can not be done. Hell has enlarged itself, and is extending its borders to their very midst. It is time for the people of God to cry out. Soft speeches and pretty phrases should

be laid aside. The most energetic expressions, the most awakening language, are demanded. Tremendous earnestness from all God's preachers and people is now in order. Where are the sons of thunder? Where are those who weep between the porch and the altar?

#### 210 HOLINESS by Faith

At Denver, Colorado, while waiting for the train, we conversed with a young man who had been to Fountain to attend the conference. We knew he had been seeking the blessing of holiness. So we inquired:

"What blessing did you receive?"

"I hardly know," he replied; "I was very much blessed."

"Were you clearly justified when you went forward?"

"Yes."

"What did you ask for?"

"For the blessing of holiness."

"You received something?"

"Yes, a great blessing; but I am afraid to say it is the blessing of holiness, lest I be deceived."

"If you asked your grocer for sugar, and paid him the price of it, you would have no hesitation in saying you had it, though you did not see it put up. Christ says, '*What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*' Believe that you receive *them*. Not something else—not an imitation, but the *precise things* that ye ask for. When then, being clearly justified, we pray for holiness and receive a great blessing, we should believe that we receive what we pray for. We dishonor God by doubting it. If we are indefinite in our profession, we shall soon be uncertain in our experience."

"I see it," he exclaimed; "I have the blessing of holiness, God does sanctify me wholly. I feel it like electrical fire all through my body, to the very ends of my fingers."

He praised the Lord in the depot and went on his way rejoicing.

Many doubt away the blessing that they receive in answer to prayer, until they form such a habit of doubting

that it seems next to impossible for them to hold on to what God does for them. *Have faith in God.*

**211 HOLINESS Hates Wrong**

True holiness implies, among other things, hatred of all wrong. In this it differs from mere amiability. One direction of the Apostle to the brethren, given after he beseeches them to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, is, "Abhor that which is evil" (Rom. 12:9). Again, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Ps. 97:10). One can not do this and be popular. Let a Roman Catholic priest hate the saloon, and make vigorous war upon it, and no parish will want him. Some able, godly Methodist Episcopal preachers have made issue with Freemasonry, that great rival of Christianity; but their appointments kept growing poorer, until they felt compelled to leave the regular work of the ministry. True holiness is the active, uncompromising enemy of all wrong. False holiness opposes that only which it is popular to oppose. After the battle against wrong is fought and won, it very vigorously denounces the wrong. True holiness takes part in the battle, and is not given to boasting when it is won.

**212 HOLINESS, Spurious, Does Not Antagonize Evil**

A holiness that does not take a plain and decided stand against popular sins is not the holiness of the Bible. It may have many things about it that are commendable. Brass highly polished, to one ignorant of values, looks to be worth more than gold. So, spurious holiness is more current in the world, and among worldly professors, than the genuine. It is not so troublesome. It deals in commendations, almost never in reproofs. It is silent in the face of anti-Christian practises that are popular. If it speaks against worldly conformity, it is in such an indefinite manner, and in such general terms, that no one is convicted. If it bears testimony against the lodge, it is so mildly that none are offended.

God's Word is: "Abhor that which is evil." "Ye that love the Lord hate evil." The saint of God exclaims, "I

hate and abhor lying; but thy law do I love" (Ps. 119:163). Reader, is your whole influence exerted against that which you know to be wrong?

**213 HOLINESS** Must be Commended by the Life

If you would commend the cause of holiness to others, be careful to commend it by your life. Profess out all that God does for you. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). But be able to appeal, as did the Apostle, to those among whom you live, to testify that your life is in harmony with your profession. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:10). Let all with whom you have dealings, feel that they can place the utmost confidence in you. An old writer says, "Sin indulged in a believer, is like a rent in a richly embroidered garment; or like a crack in a silver bell. A foul spot is soonest discerned in the fairest cloth. The world will sooner make an excuse for its own enormities than for your infirmities."

**214 HOLINESS, Profession of, Opposed**

While we should commend holiness by our lives, we must not make the mistake of supposing that *true holiness* will secure general commendation for us. A few saints may give us their qualified approval, but the world and worldly professors will generally oppose us. This we are taught by both Scripture and reason. "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52). "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).

This is the kind of treatment we might expect a truly holy person would receive, when we consider two things: (1) Everywhere sin and wrong-doing abound. (2) A truly holy person must, in every proper way, bear his testimony and give his influence against sin and wrong-doing. So did

Christ. So did Paul. So did the holy martyrs. It got them into trouble. A similar course will get the most loving and gentle and prudent man or woman into trouble at the present day. On this account many who begin to lead holy lives draw back, and then gradually settle down into popular holiness, which is as unlike the genuine as brass is unlike the gold it is polished to represent, as a basswood stick is unlike a file of hardest steel.

215 **HOLINESS, Practical**

True holiness will manifest itself perhaps more clearly in making a bargain than in making a prayer. It leads its possessor to look out for the interests of another, as well as his own. It does not take advantage of the weakness or ignorance of others. It deals as honorably with a woman or a child as with a keen, experienced man of business. Job, in maintaining before his fellow men his integrity, says: "I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame" (Job 29:15). Where one with whom he was dealing could not see an advantage that of right belonged to him, and Job could, he made it known to him. The holiness that does not lead to the strictest integrity in all business matters is of no value whatever, as far as saving the soul is concerned. It is altogether spurious. It has not the seal of God upon it. One who has true holiness has ingrained in his very being the rule laid down by our Savior: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

216 **HOLINESS, One Can Not Have, and Get Mad**

If you get mad, you have lost the blessing of holiness—if you ever had it. Nothing can be clearer. You may be naturally quick-tempered: that makes no difference. The very design of Divine grace is to correct what is wrong in our dispositions. If it does not do that, it does not do anything for us. We are mistaken in supposing we have it. We have taken up with a worthless imitation, offered to us

on easier conditions than those we must meet in order to obtain the genuine.

Charity beareth all things, endureth all things. Charity is not provoked. This is what the Bible says. The word *easily*, found in our common version (1 Cor. 13:5), is not in the original. If you have not, then, this grace that keeps you from getting mad, your religion is of little worth. It will not take you to Heaven. No matter how high professions you make, or how well you talk, you are but "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." It is an awful thing to be deceived.

#### 217 HOLINESS Must be Clearly Preached

A preacher can not keep clear in the blessing of holiness unless he preaches holiness clearly. A shining light must be permitted to shine. Put a cover over it and it goes out. Water keeps pure by running. A working man keeps strong by working. To one of his young preachers John Wesley wrote: "As long as you give yourself up to God without reserve, you may be assured he will give you his blessing. Indeed, you have already received a thousand blessings: but the greatest of all is yet behind—Christ in a pure and sinless heart, reigning the Lord of every motive there. It is good for you to hold fast what you have attained, and to be continually aspiring after this; and you will never find more life in your own soul than when you are earnestly exhorting others to go on unto perfection. Many will blame you for doing it; but regard not that; go on through honor and dishonor. 'This one thing I do,' is your motto. 'I save my own soul, and them that hear me.'"

#### 218 HOLINESS to be Definitely Preached

All our preachers should preach holiness clearly and definitely. It is not enough to preach it in a general way. Whole sermons should be devoted to the subject. Every person in the congregation should be made to see his obligation to be holy. It should be presented doctrinally, experimentally, and practically, in all its scriptural aspects.

John Wesley, in writing to one of his female preachers,

says: "You can never speak too strongly or explicitly upon the head of Christian perfection. If you speak only faintly and indirectly, none will be offended and none profited. But if you speak out, although some will probably be angry, yet others will soon find the power of God unto salvation.

"Speak to all, and spare not. Be instant in season, out of season: and pray always with all perseverance."

If you are not able to speak on the subject from a present experience, then get the experience. Set about it earnestly, at once.

**219 HOLINESS: Standard Must Not be too High**

We may as well not preach holiness at all as to place the standard higher than God has placed it. You had better save your ammunition than to shoot at the sun. God requires us to be Christian men and women, not angels. Never let go your hold upon a round in the ladder of Heaven until you grasp firmly another round above it. Many a hard fall has been experienced by grasping at something beyond the reach.

**220 HOLINESS: Standard to be Kept Up**

It is worse than useless to try to make true holiness popular. You may as well try to make flowers bloom in an arctic region, out of doors, in the winter. You would lose your flowers and lose your labor. To make holiness popular with worldlings is to destroy it. Ice, when warmed, does not remain ice; holiness, when brought down to the tastes of the ungodly, is no longer holiness. Sugar and alcohol are composed of the same elements. There is a small difference in the quantities of these elements in these two substances. But there is a vast difference in the two substances that result. So you put a little less of abhorrence of wrong, and a little more of worldly conformity, and a little more willingness to apologize for wrong-doing, into holiness, and you have a species of Jesuitism, as unlike holiness as alcohol is unlike sugar.

Hold up the standard of holiness where Christ placed it, and do not try to make it popular.

**221 HOLINESS, Regaining the Blessing of**

If you have lost the blessing of holiness, there is just one way to regain it. That is, by repentance, and confession, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You will never get it by any reformation of conduct. You may do just right now, and act as if you had never lost it; but you will not regain it in that way. You must confess to the Lord your loss, and ask him to restore unto you the joy of his salvation. It is not enough to seek more power. That will do but little good. You must be willing to humble yourself before God, and acknowledge that you have grieved his Holy Spirit. Any confession that he lets you see you should make to any person, or in public, you should humbly make. The Bible way to get up is to go down. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

**222 HOLINESS and Heaven**

Heaven is a reality, hell is a reality, holiness is a reality. If you were going to an imaginary Heaven or hell, then an imaginary holiness might answer. But Heaven is a real place, a solid, substantial world, inhabited by holy beings who never die, and who never become depraved. If you would go there you must become like them. Your character must be in harmony with the inhabitants of Heaven, or you could not be happy in their company. Rutherford, a devout Scotch Presbyterian, said, "This cross hath let me see that Heaven is not at the next door, and that it is a castle not soon taken. I see also that it is neither pain nor art to play the hypocrite." "Make tight work at the bottom, and your ship shall ride against all storms, if, withal, your anchor be fastened upon good ground, I mean within the veil." Let your prayer be, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Expect to have the prayer answered.

**223 HOLINESS, Real**

The holiness which God requires is real and not imaginary. It does not consist in a belief that because Christ is holy, and we believe in him, God will consider us as

holy though we are positively unholy. This delusive but damning doctrine is quite popular. Sin is no fiction; it will be punished in every one in whom it is found. Holiness is not an imaginary but an actual attribute of God's children. How clearly is this expressed by the Apostle! "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). This does not admit of a single exception. *Every man*; this takes in every one who professes to have a hope in Christ, no matter what may be his creed or church! If the hope is well founded, it results in personal purity. Reader, have you this hope?

#### 224 HOLINESS Counterfeited

We must always bear in mind that true humility is an essential element of true holiness. We can not be proud and be holy at the same time. The two qualities are not merely antagonistic, but, like light and darkness, the one is destructive of the other. If pride prevails, holiness dies; if holiness prevails, pride dies. The holiness that pleads for pride is hollow and worthless. It is not scriptural holiness. It is a counterfeit, more attractive to the world and to carnal professors, it may be, than the genuine article; but nevertheless a counterfeit, that never will gain admission to Heaven. For several years past the cause of holiness has been coming up in public estimation; and hence dangerous counterfeits are afloat. We must be on our guard against them. We should try them by the Word. If anything that passes for holiness has not all the marks which the Scriptures lay down as belonging to it, then it is worthless. Reject it.

#### 225 HOLY, Be Ye

When you see a man that does not care to learn, you may be assured that you see a man who never learned much. Knowledge begets a desire for knowledge. So grace begets a desire for grace. Not to want to be holy is a very clear sign that one is destitute of saving grace. Says Caughey: "It would not require much argument to prove that those

*Methodists* who do not enjoy holiness, *nor are pressing after its attainment*, either *have never been converted, or have fallen from a justified state*; and further, that they are in peril of that threatening, '*so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*' "

Reader, are you making it the main business of your life to *follow holiness*? If not, you have just ground to be concerned. Begin at once to seek for a holy heart. God's command is, "*Be ye holy.*"

#### 226 HOLY SPIRIT: First Need in Trouble

Spiritual influences are invisible to mortal eyes, but they are powerful. We need the Spirit of God more than we need money, more than we need learning. He is introduced to us in the Bible at the very beginning of the history of the creation, as the all-powerful agent by whom order was brought out of confusion. "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2).

If there is trouble and confusion in the church, and all looks dark and discouraging, the first thing you need is, not a church trial, but the moving of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of the people. Secure this, and they will cease from their dissensions, light will banish darkness, and each person will begin, as if by instinct, to take his proper place.

#### 227 HOLY SPIRIT Necessary

Instrumental music is not necessary to draw the masses. Crowds can be collected without fifes, or drums, or fiddles, or cymbals. The early Christians adopted no means of the kind to gather congregations. They had something more attractive. It was not eloquence, but it was a noise—a noise produced by the Holy Ghost in men. "Now when it was noised abroad, the multitude came together" (Acts 2:6). The Revised Version has it, "And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together." It was *this sound* that drew them. That was the secret.

There is something wonderfully attractive in *this*

*sound* at the the present day. In whatever church it is heard there will be a congregation. The minister may be learned, or he may be ignorant; he may be eloquent, or he may be slow of speech; that does not seem to have much to do with the matter. The preacher has little to do with it, only as he ministers the Spirit to others. If only the people of God are filled with the Holy Ghost, the room will soon be filled with people. But there must be no putting on appearances. All must be real. Noise made for the sake of noise, is generally repulsive. But when the Holy Spirit fills the hearts of God's people with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," or when he enables them to pray "with groanings that cannot be uttered," there is something that fills the meekest with awe, and draws them to the place where the saints are assembled.

228 HOLY SPIRIT, No Substitute for

A preacher can not possibly find any substitute for the Holy Ghost. There is not the slightest use in trying. Eloquence and argument, anecdote and wit, may entertain and even convince, but they can not convict. If you would have souls truly converted to God under your labors, you must have God with you. It is said that an African chief, a heathen, after hearing Bishop Taylor, went away, saying, "He is God's man, sure." This is the impression which every minister of the gospel should make. Whatever else the people think of him, they should feel that God is with him. Those who truly love God will be drawn to him: those who hate God will hate him. They will go away and talk about him; but they will come back to hear him. There may not as many profess religion under his labors, as often do under the labors of one who compromises and works for policy; but more men and women will be truly born of the Spirit and fitted for Heaven.

229 HOLY SPIRIT, Restraint of the

The wicked are not wholly destitute of the Spirit of God. Bad as they are, they would be much worse were it not for his restraining influence. Many a hand that has

been raised to kill, has been held back by the unseen power of the Divine Spirit. Men who never listen to a sermon, or read a good book, often hear a still, small voice endeavoring to persuade them to abandon their sins and lead a better life. It was to those who were hopelessly wicked that God said: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). When he ceased to strive with them, sudden destruction came upon them. So do not be afraid to go to the very wicked with words of warning and with offers of mercy. The Spirit of God has gone before you and prepared the way. Gain the confidence of a wicked man, so he will speak freely with you, and you will be astonished to find how much God has been talking to him. The Spirit has been striving with him when those who knew him supposed he was utterly hardened.

#### 230 HONESTY

Honesty lies at the bottom of the Christian character. No matter what one believes; no matter how zealous he may be for the church, and how much he may pay for its support; no matter how high his professions may be, if he is not thoroughly honest at heart and in his business, his religion is absolutely worthless. Integrity is one part of the righteousness which God requires of every human being. Little acts of dishonesty grieve the Spirit, and he who commits them, left without support, falls into grievous sins. In looking over our books I was struck with the fact that most of the preachers "who went out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us," have an unpaid account. In some cases these bills are quite large. Another thing we notice. We frequently get letters from those who have been owing us for years for the *Earnest Christian*, inclosing the pay. They tell us that the Lord has reclaimed them, and blessed them, and they are led at once to pay their debts. You need never be afraid of such leadings. They are always of the Lord. In following them you will never go astray. Be honest with God, honest with your preacher, honest with your publisher, with your neighbors and with all with whom you have any

business transactions. However some may hate religion, compel them to say that you are honest.

231 HONESTY, We Should be Able to Prove Our

“Provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Rom. 12:17). This is one of the practical directions which the Apostle gives to those whom he has exhorted to “present their bodies a living sacrifice” to God. A genuine, deep religious experience makes us more careful and conscientious in all the concerns of life. We must not only be honest, but we must make provision so that if necessary it can be shown to all men that we are honest. We should not only do right in business matters, but be able to show that we do right. Especially is this the case where we do business for others. If you pay out money for another person, or for a society, always take a receipt for it. It will greatly help the cause of God for Christians to do business in such a way that their honesty can not be successfully questioned.

232 HONESTY in Religion

Honesty in religion, as well as honesty in business, is required of every Christian. Men may succeed in obtaining money under false pretenses; but they can not gain Heaven in that way. There must be no deceptions, no shams, no putting on appearances not warranted by realities. We must not give our public adherence to doctrines which we do not heartily believe. If we are Arminians we must not join the Calvinists, no matter how much larger salaries they may promise, unless we want God to damn us. Not that men will be damned for being Calvinists; but they will be damned for acting a lie. While our name is with a church our hearts should be with it; and we should labor to build it up, and not merely to build ourselves up on it, and at its expense.

If we believe that Freemasonry is an anti-Christian religion we should not support Masonic preachers, though they be eloquent and apparently zealous for the church.

God requires truth in the inward parts.

## 233 HONESTY Characterizes a True Christian

Honesty is not religion, but the right kind of religion makes all who possess it honest. A true Christian carries a sensitive conscience into all matters of business. He does not misrepresent, nor exaggerate, nor conceal, for the sake of any personal advantage. His word can be depended upon. This is the plain teaching of the Bible. It lays the greatest stress upon the principle of honesty. "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). Our Discipline lays proper stress upon this principle when it forbids contracting debts without the probability of paying. It is better to turn an old garment inside out, and upside down, to darn and patch it, than to go into debt for a new one. Let us be careful to have "always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."

## 234 HONESTY, Heart

A man may be honest without being a Christian; but he can not be a Christian unless he is honest. Creeds may differ; but all who have any just claim to the Christian name are alike in being governed, in all business matters, by downright integrity.

Bishop Thomas Wilson, of England, wrote one hundred fifty years ago: "A man who borrows money which he knows he can not repay, plainly takes advantage of his creditor's ignorance of his circumstances. It is probable he may fancy himself less guilty than if he had stolen so much or taken it by force; but he would not think so if the laws had made these two crimes equally penal, as they are in fact equally unjust in the sight of God and man."

A brother who, for the last twenty years, has published religious books and periodicals, told us the other day that he was obliged to stop publishing because the religious people owe him so many thousands of dollars in small amounts which he could not collect.

No matter what may be the profession, if a man's religion does not make him honest it does not save him. He is still a child of wrath—an heir of hell.

## 235 HONESTY, Principle of

No amount of praying, no excess of zeal for sound doctrines, will atone for dishonest practises. He who wrongs his fellow man sins against God. He who obtains money by false representations, is, if he professes to be a Christian, a false pretender. The principle is not affected by the amount which is sought to be gained. Our Savior lays down the principle in these words: "He that is unjust in that which is least is unjust also in much." This does not excuse those who run off with thousands of dollars of other men's money intrusted to their care, but it classes with them the man who defrauds another of a few dollars or a few cents. In all business transactions a true Christian is strictly conscientious. The Apostle teaches us that one must not only pay to others the money that belongs to them, but the respect to which their position or their age entitles them. This is the rule as he lays it down: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:7). Pay your taxes; do not defraud the government by smuggling goods; render due deference to those in official position; and be respectful towards all.

The custom of some good people, not to take off their hats in the presence of any one, may have been in its day a testimony against servilely cringing to kingly authority, but in this country it is without significance. It has neither Scripture nor reason for its support. On the contrary, it is in plain violation of the command, "Honour all men" (1 Pet. 2:17).

## 236 HUMILITY

Cincinnatus showed his magnanimity of soul not more in the deliverances he wrought out for his country, than by his unwavering loyalty and patriotism after he had retired to private life. To be true to his country he did not need to be in office, or to be expecting an office. So if one is a true Christian, principle will weigh more than any personal con-

siderations. He is not fit for a class-leader who leaves the church because he is not made class-leader. It was a fallen angel who declared that it is

“Better to reign in hell,  
Than to serve in Heaven.”

Our Lord says, “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Matt. 23:11, 12). But there must be no sham humility.

#### 237 HUMBLE, The, Secure Christ's Presence

The presence of Christ in a congregation met for worship does not depend upon the place in which they are assembled. The character of the edifice has nothing to do with it. The place may be an upper room, it may be a log house—it may be a cathedral. This has not the slightest influence in securing the presence of Christ. The sunshine in a house depends, not upon its construction, but upon the opportunity the sunshine has to get in. So the manifested presence of Christ in a meeting depends upon the humble, consecrated souls who are willing to receive him. He comes as a King to rule, if he comes to stay. As such he must be received. From the proud and the self-willed he turns sadly away. With formalists and hypocrites he has no more sympathy than he had when he denounced in such burning words the scribes and the Pharisees—the men of the greatest literary and the men of the greatest religious pretensions. He makes his abode with the poor in spirit, and the pure in heart.

#### 238 HUMBLING YOURSELF, Need of

If the work of God does not move, on your circuit, as powerfully as it should, and you have failed in the use of other means, suppose you try one that I have never known to fail—humbling yourself, with your people, before the Lord. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit” (Ps. 51:17). These sacrifices he always accepts. When they are laid upon his altar he answers by fire. The Holy

Ghost falls upon those who offer them. Others are touched, and the work breaks out anew.

Under Wesley's preaching, the work in London, at one time, came to a standstill. He says, "We met at Fetter Lane to humble ourselves before God, and own he had justly withdrawn his Spirit from us for our manifold unfaithfulness. We acknowledged our having grieved him by our divisions—one saying, 'I am of Paul,' another, 'I am of Apollos;' by our leaning again to our own works, and trusting in them instead of Christ; by our resting in those little beginnings of sanctification which it had pleased him to work in our souls; and, above all, by blaspheming his work among us—imputing it either to nature, to the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even the delusion of the devil. In that hour we found God with us as at the first. Some fell prostrate upon the ground; others burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving; and many testified, openly, that there had been no such day as this since January 1, preceding." (Works, Vol. 3, p. 140).

A spirit of division will stop the most promising revivals; so if you have taken hold of anything concerning which saints may properly sustain a different opinion, and have pushed it to such an issue that you have got the people to discussing it, and taking sides about it, you should consent to see your mistake, call a meeting of the society and make your confession so humbly, and so sincerely, that others will catch the spirit, and the work of God among you will break out afresh. Oh, it is so hard to get down, and keep down, where God can use us all the while!

How often, even among us, is the work of God hindered by "imputing it either to nature" or to "the delusion of the devil." Good societies have been broken up in this way. What if some do find fault because some of the saints get blessed and act peculiarly? When you get everything down to a dead respectability, to please a few who affect superior refinement, these very persons will not come near your meetings. They will have nothing to do with you. They do not care anything about your fine sermons. They did not know what it was that drew them to your

services; but it was the Spirit of God, which you have grieved and driven away by persecuting those who gave themselves up to follow as he leads. Oh, in how many places a Fetter Lane confession is needed! Look at the matter candidly, and see if there is not help in this direction.

“What are our works but sin and death,  
Till thou thy quickening Spirit breathe?”

Let us look at once for the quickening Spirit throughout all our borders.

#### 239 HURRIED SPIRIT, Avoid a

Do not get hurried. Let your feet and your hands make haste, if necessary, but let your spirit be calm and quiet. If you find that you are getting hurried, stop short, cool down, and take matters deliberately. Things done hastily are often done improperly. They frequently have to be done over again. Sometimes a day is nearly lost by getting in a hurry. What is still more, a valuable friend is lost by hasty words, uttered in a hasty manner. Worst of all, sometimes one loses his religion by giving place to a hasty spirit. If you feel biting words struggling for utterance, hold them in, as with a bit and bridle. Put out unholy fires while they are smoldering. If allowed to break out they soon get beyond control.

#### 240 HYPOCRITES

A hypocrite is one who pretends to be what he knows he is not. Hypocrites are not confined to the churches. They are found everywhere.

There are many business hypocrites—men who put on every appearance of being honest, while they are secretly planning to rob their fellow men. We have known several instances of men who for years had such a reputation for honesty that many, who had money that they did not wish to use at present, would put it in their hands for safe-keeping, in preference to depositing it in the banks. After a while they would fail or run away to Canada with the money. Facts would come out which would show clearly

that they had been dishonest all along. There are men of downright business integrity. Such men may not prosper as fast as others; but their prosperity is much more lasting. And it does not end in destruction. "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them" (Prov. 1:32).

#### 241 HYPOCRITE, Religious

A religious hypocrite is the worst of all. Almost every week the papers give an account of some one who has fled from the country, taking with him some other man's wife and the money which had been entrusted to his care by a bank, or by the county, or city, or some confiding employer. In some cases these men belong to the church and are active workers in the Sunday-school. The man or woman who is secretly living in adultery or theft, and yet professing godliness, has good reason to fear all the horrors of double damnation. In many cases they begin to feel, even here, the torments of the damned. The gnawings of the worm that dieth not become so intolerable that they divulge their guilty secret in the hope of finding relief.

"Now conscience wakes despair  
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory  
Of what he was, what is, and what must be."

The word of the Lord to all such is: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"

"Lucifer" means light-bearer, from *lux*, light and *fero*, to bear, to carry. This applies with intensest force to backslidden ministers.

#### 242 IMPATIENCE

Inability to govern the temper is an indubitable evidence of a lack of grace. A Christian should never yield to anger. "Whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. 5:22). The words found in our common version, "without a cause," are not in the best original manuscripts. They should be omitted. "Love is not provoked" (1 Cor. 13:5). The word "easily" is not

found in the original, and has no business in our translation.

Upham says: "It is important to make a distinction between sorrow and impatience. We may feel sorrow without sin, but we can never feel impatience without sin. Impatience always involves a want of submission: and he who is wanting in submission, even in the smallest degree, is not perfect before God." The Spirit of God dwelling in us makes us long-suffering.

#### 243 IMPORTANT QUESTION, The

That you become a sincere Christian is to you a matter of the greatest concern. No other interests can compare with the interests of your soul. The question for you to settle is not one of creeds and ceremonies, but one of salvation or damnation. As sure as you are a living soul, the day of wrath will come, and then, if out of Christ, you will be left without refuge.

#### 244 IMPRESSIONS, How Decide Character of

One way by which you may tell whether an impression not in conflict with the Bible is from God or not, is this: If it is from God, as you think of obeying it you will feel encouraged; you will have clearer light, and your love will burn with increasing ardor. However difficult it may be, it will look easy to you. But, on the other hand, if it is from Satan, you will feel depressed and discouraged. It will seem to you that you must give up sometime, and you may as well give up now as ever. They that wait on the Lord to know his will, renew their strength; they that wait on Satan grow weak and feeble. As you take up the cross of Christ it lifts you up; as you bear the burdens of Satan they crush you.

#### 245 INDIFFERENCE, Religious

A great religious awakening is the great want of this country. Death reigns. The prevalent condition of the people is one of religious indifference. The multitude is marching on to hell unconcerned. "Give us money; give

us pleasure!" is the almost universal cry. The church carries on a sharp rivalry with the world in providing entertainments for those who are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Some popular church edifices are fitted up with kitchens to furnish feasts for those "whose god is their belly." Many of the marks of the last days are upon us. Beloved, are you awake to the vast concerns of eternity? If not, awake at once. Do not let the spirit of indifference bind you fast. Throw off the deadly slumber, and go to work to awaken others.

246 INDIFFERENCE, Spiritual, Damning

A loss of interest in the cause of Christ is one mark of a backslider. He who loves Christ loves the souls for whom Christ died. Every converted person wants to see others converted. He labors for their conversion; he contributes of his means, according to his ability, to support the ministers of Christ. The church-member who withholds his support from a man of God who ministers to him in spiritual things is backslidden. The evil spirit of covetousness has begun to take possession of him. Unless he gets rid of it this covetous spirit will drag him down to perdition. Indifference in the cause of Christ is damning. A lack of zeal is a lack of piety. He who ceases to make sacrifices for the cause of Christ is no longer a Christian, unless it be only in name. "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

247 INFIDEL Credulity

The greatest mental yield is produced by the mixture of a little science with a good deal of infidelity. We speak of the abundance only, and not of the value of the yield. Such a mixture will produce a prodigious amount of vanity, self-conceit, credulity, and contempt of all who believe in God and the Bible. Give such a person a few relics of the dwellers in caves, and he proceeds to demonstrate that the Bible account of creation is a fiction, and that man was evolved from a monkey! The fact that the earliest monu-

ments of the human race—that the pyramids and ruins of Egypt, and the wonderful remains of Babylon and Nineveh, prove incontestably a higher order of intellect, and a high degree of cultivation—weighs nothing with him. He still insists that civilized man came from the lowest depths of savagery by efforts of his own. The faith of the most devout Christian bears no comparison in magnitude with the credulity of the infidel!

#### 248 INFIDELITY Unprofitable

To reject the Bible will afford no relief to the guilty conscience. The infidel has a “certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Heb. 10:27). Even Voltaire called for a priest in his dying hours. He exclaimed, “Will not this God whom I have denied, save me too? Can not infinite mercy extend to me?” To his physician he said: “Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months’ life.” The doctor answered: “Sir, you can not live six weeks.” Voltaire replied: “Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me.”

The best that infidelity can do for a man is to take away spiritual comforts in life, and hope in death. The body does not prosper simply by not having bad food; and the mind derives no comfort or strength from mere negations. *“Have faith in God.”*

#### 249 INNOCENCE to be Preserved

Sin may be pardoned, but innocence, once lost, can never be regained. The thief may restore the money which he has stolen, and may find forgiveness of God and man, but he can never fully forgive himself. He may obtain the grace that will give him victory over temptation in all time to come; but he will carry a certain feeling of degradation with him to the grave. He may gain spiritual power and become useful to his fellow men, but he will never be what he might have been had he maintained his integrity from childhood. Gamblers and thieves and drunkards and libertines may, if they truly repent, become converted and,

by the power of the Spirit, be transformed into saints; but they are not likely to make Martin Luthers or John Wesleys. An edge-tool with a hidden flaw may look as well as any, and work as well as any for a time; but at length, at a critical time, when most needed, it gives way. The Psalmist said, "Integrity and uprightness shall preserve me." Boys, girls, preserve your innocence at the risk of everything. Lose your life rather than lose your purity. Deliberately make up your minds that you will never lie nor steal nor drink nor do an unchaste act, under any circumstances. Stick to this determination at all hazards.

**250 INSTRUCTION Provided for All**

The Free Methodist church makes special provision for the salvation of the poor and the ignorant. Its houses of worship are open to all who choose to come and conduct themselves in an orderly manner. The rich and the poor may freely meet together; for all the seats in all our church edifices are required to be forever free. But we do not propose to give any encouragement to ignorance. Our periodicals are filled with instruction on practical matters connected with every-day Christian life. Whoever reads them will grow in knowledge, and should grow in grace. They are excellent educators of those who are willing to receive instruction. Our contributors, as a rule, furnish the most reliable information—that gathered from experience. For our young people we are providing good, Christian schools, fully up to the demands.

**251 INTEGRITY, Value of**

Never put yourself in the power of another. Treat your enemies so they can become your friends; treat your friends so that, if they become your enemies, they will still be compelled to acknowledge your integrity.

Paul directs a certain class to "first show piety at home." It is a good rule for every one to observe. Conduct your affairs so that those familiar with your daily life will have no evil thing to say of you. "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known"

(Prov. 10:9). So the only safe course is to do just right under all circumstances. Join heartily in the prayer, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me: for I wait on thee" (Ps. 25:21).

#### 252 INTEREST in Others will be Genuine

It is very difficult for one to manifest an interest that he does not truly feel. It can only be done by a gifted and skilful actor. Some of these have said that, for the time being, they really seemed to themselves to be the characters they assumed to be. To deceive others they must first deceive themselves. Generally, where a preacher does not feel a deep interest for souls, if he pretends to it is seen to be a mere affectation. But where one feels, he makes others feel. They can not help it. They may resist it; but for the time being their hardness gives way and better influences come over them. Then, brethren, when we want to awaken an interest in others, let us begin with ourselves. Let us stir up our own hearts to lay hold on God. Let us bring ourselves up to the standard to which we would have others attain. Let us feel more than we express.

#### 253 ISSUES Must be Advanced Judiciously

Avoid, as a rule, all issues in a social, religious meeting. A person may be truly converted, and yet have some wrong notions. If he gets some of those wrong notions out, in giving his testimony, do not take them up on the spot, and, in a controversial spirit, try to correct them. The farmer keeps weeds from growing by sowing wheat or other grain. If he made it his sole business to fight weeds, he would probably starve. Yet killing weeds is a commendable work. But the method adopted by the practical farmer is the best. Keep out error by sowing the seeds of truth. Expel darkness by letting in light. Keep disease away by preserving your health and vigor. If a wrong impression has been made, and it is necessary to remove it, do not be in haste about it, but look to the Lord for direction as to the best time and manner of doing it. It requires great

carefulness, our Lord teaches us, in pulling up tares, lest we pull up the wheat also.

#### 254 JESTING Injurious

The Apostle says that "foolish talking and jesting" do not become saints (Eph. 5: 3, 4). With this opinion, sensible sinners quite generally agree. While apparently enjoying the jokes of preachers, they are very free to say, in their absence, that they do not think much of their religion.

Many, thinking only of making themselves agreeable, are carried by the current of levity too far, grieve the Holy Spirit, and lose their power. Alfred Cookman says that he lost the blessing of holiness in this way. "Conference came on; I found myself in the midst of beloved brethren; forgetting how easily the infinitely Holy Spirit might be grieved, I allowed myself to drift into the spirit of the hour; and after an indulgence in foolish joking and story-telling, realized I had suffered serious loss. To my next field of labor I proceeded with consciously diminished spiritual power." Let our cheerfulness have no mixture of levity; but let our serious spirit, and earnest words, or devout silence, impress all with whom we associate that we are living as in the sensible presence of God.

#### 255 JESUITS and Morality

The Jesuits are dangerous to any community in which they gain a foothold. They insinuate themselves everywhere. They wish their influence to be felt. They work in secret. It is one of their maxims that "the end sanctifies the means."

The teaching of the Jesuits is one cause of the great decline of business morality in this country.

#### 256 KINDNESS

Kindness is a marked trait in the character of every real Christian. A truly converted man carries a spirit of kindness with him wherever he goes. A preacher may, by the exhibition of a cross and hateful spirit, kill the influence of the best sermons. Faber says: "Every solitary kind ac-

tion that is done, the world over, is working briskly in its own sphere to restore the balance between right and wrong. Kindness has converted more sinners than either zeal, eloquence or learning; and these three never converted any one unless they were kind also. The continual sense which a kind heart has of its own need of kindness, keeps it humble. Perhaps an act of kindness never dies, but extends the invisible undulations of its influence over the breadth of centuries."

#### 257 LABOR AND REST

In the writings of Paul there is much that appears to be contradictory. This is in accordance with nature. What can be more contradictory than the soft, balmy air of a quiet day, and the resistless power of the cyclone? Yet, analyze each, and the elements are precisely the same. The only difference is one of motion. Paul evidently included himself when he wrote, "We which have believed do enter into rest." How could a man *rest*, who was so *abundant in labors*? It was his constantly being in a *state of rest* that enabled him to be so ceaselessly *active*. It was his habitual quietness of spirit that kept him from wearing out. Worry kills more than work. He was "in weariness often," but delightful rest made him forget his weariness. The anxieties of common lives about what they shall eat, and drink, and wear, did not disturb him. His resources were in Christ, his home was in Heaven, his one business to turn men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Overwork could not kill him—he died a martyr at his post.

#### 258 LAW, Vindictory

Blackstone says that a law consists of four parts. Of one of these he says, "The *vindictory* part signifies what punishment shall be incurred by wrong-doers; and *in this* consists the main strength and force of a law."

Preachers who fail to impress their hearers that the punishment which God has pronounced against those who violate his moral law will certainly be inflicted, go far

towards bringing this law into contempt. They rob it of its "main strength and force." Who cares for a law which he can violate with impunity? No one can question but that the Sermon on the Mount is as binding as ever. Yet how plainly does Christ point out the penalties that will be incurred by those who disregard the precepts and prohibitions he lays down with authority in this wonderful discourse! This easy-going religion, which gives the people to understand that they can live about as they please, and go to Heaven, if they only belong to the church, is but leading them down to hell. To suppose that fidelity to a church can compensate for sins against God, is a dangerous and damning delusion.

259 LEADINGS, Mistaken

It requires great watchfulness on the part of those engaged in the work of the Lord, lest that which was begun in the Spirit shall end in the flesh. The constant tendency is to drop from the supernatural to the natural. There is danger that those who, in the main, are led by the Spirit of God, may in some things give place to the devil. When he is suffered to have an influence he is very likely to obtain control.

A woman took part in a revival which resulted in the salvation of a number of young people. She professed to be led by the Spirit of God, but a spirit that would not brook control took possession of her. This was proof that it was not the Spirit of God. Her exercises became violent. She frequently fell. Then she took it upon her to get the young people married. "The Lord showed her," she said, "that this young man must marry this young woman." She seemed to be greatly burdened till her ends were accomplished.

Such work is not of God. One of the most interesting books of the Bible is the Acts of the Apostles. But nothing of this kind is recorded among their acts. We read a good deal in the New Testament about Christians taking up their cross; but there is no hint about taking up their cross to get married. No person ever ought to marry when it is a

cross to marry. Those whom God would join together do not need compulsion of any sort from others to come together. "Busybodies in other men's matters" ought not to lay their impertinent conduct to the Spirit of God.

#### 260 LETTER AND SPIRIT

One of the most damnable heresies of the day is the teaching that we can keep *the spirit* of God's commands while *wilfully* and needlessly violating the *letter*. It is true "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." But this does not mean that we are to pay no regard to the letter; but that we must not *rest* in it. We must *observe* the *letter*, and *get at the spirit* of the thing. Adam Clarke says some excellent things on this subject, which we transcribe: "The gospel has both its letter and its spirit; and multitudes of professing Christians, by resting in the letter, receive not the *life* which it is calculated to impart. Water in baptism is the letter that points out the purification of the soul; they who rest in this letter are without this purification, and dying in that state, they die eternally. Bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, are the *letter*; the atoning efficacy of the death of Jesus, and the grace communicated by this to the soul of a believer, are the *spirit*. Multitudes rest in this letter, simply receiving these symbols, without reference to the atonement, or to their guilt; and thus lose the benefit of the atonement, and the salvation of their souls....It may be safely asserted that the Jews in no period of their history ever rested more in the *letter* of their *law* than the vast majority of Christians are doing in the letter of their *gospel*. Unto multitudes of Christians Christ may truly say, 'Ye will not come to me that ye may have life.'"

#### 261 LIBERALITY Toward God

Many suffer loss, temporally, as well as spiritually, because they are not liberal toward God. It would be well for us to consider the word of the Lord which came to Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now

therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Haggai 1:3-6). If we provide for God's cause, God will provide for us. He will lead us in temporal matters in the way of prosperity. If we make our own interests first, and foremost, we are left to ourselves, and our labor and our pains amount to but little. They bring neither peace nor prosperity. And the soul dies within.

**262 LIBERTY Not Lawlessness**

Many of the foreigners who come to our country make good citizens. To such we give a cordial welcome. But some have strange ideas of liberty. They seem to think that liberty is lawlessness, that freedom is anarchy. These are generally from Germany, and from other countries crushed by despotism. They have much to say about "Personal Rights." They mean by this phrase the right to keep saloons, the right to make drunkards, the right to abolish the Sabbath by turning it into a day of drinking, and revelry and carousing, to the disturbance of religious worship and the annoyance of all good citizens. They should know that our civil institutions are founded on the Bible, that we owe to the influence of the Bible, and the blessing of God upon our fathers while they obeyed his commands, the freedom which we enjoy. If they do not like our institutions, the way is open, as far as this country is concerned, for them to return to the lands from which they came. Our country can get along without them—perhaps better without them than with them. If they stay they should be made to obey our laws.

**263 LIFE, Brevity of**

"Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," said Jacob to Pharaoh. And yet he was a hundred and thirty years old. He began life poor, and became wealthy. He was the honored father of a large family of

dutiful, intelligent children. Yet how short life looked to him in retrospect! How small an estimate did he put upon his great prosperity!

“For what is life? At best a brief delight.  
A sun scarce bright’ning ere it sinks in night;  
A flower, at morning fresh, at noon decayed;  
A still, swift river, gliding into shade.”

Man is made for eternity. The longest earthly existence is too short for his immortal longings. Its pleasures are unsatisfying, its honors empty and short-lived. He who lives for the present lives to no purpose: he is but wasting golden opportunities, chasing empty phantoms that often elude pursuit and always dissolve when grasped.

Reader, lay hold on eternal life!

#### 264 LIFE, Spiritual, The Importance of

What do our peculiar doctrines amount to if we are spiritually dead? We may hold them up and defend them, but all this will not save a single soul. It is still true that *“the life is the light of men.”* All that you say may be true; but, unless there is life in it, none will be brought under conviction. The most talented and best educated preacher is worthless to the cause of God if he is dead. He may fill the church with his eloquence, but what of it? He gets his salary, the expenses are paid, but preacher and people go down unawakened to eternal night.

But a live man or woman will cause an awakening among the dead. They may not be gifted or educated, but they will make a stir. Life begets life. “A living dog is better than a dead lion” (Eccles. 9:4). A little boy or girl, full of vigor, can do more than a giant sleeping in the arms of death.

#### 265 LIGHT, The, Of God’s Grace

God’s grace, like the sun, shines everywhere. To those who welcome the light which God sends to the soul, and have the courage to walk in it, the light shines with increasing brightness.

A Roman Catholic professor in the University of Paris, before the days of Luther and the Reformation, wrote as follows: "Religion has but one foundation, but one end, but one head, Jesus Christ, blessed forever! He alone trod the winepress. Let us not then call ourselves by the name of St. Paul, or Apollos, or St. Peter. Christians are those only who love Jesus Christ and his word. May everything be illumined with his light! Through it there may be a return of times like those of that primitive church which devoted to Jesus Christ so many martyrs! May the Lord of the harvest, foreseeing a new harvest, send new and diligent laborers!"

Without knowing it, he was one of those who prepared the way for the Reformation.

**266 LIGHT, Welcome and Walk in the**

Because you are under conviction it is no sign that you were always deceived. To become truly pious it is not necessary to become more wicked. To a backslidden minister the Spirit said, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God" (Rev. 3:2). The way to strengthen is not to give up and go back to the world utterly, but to call to mind the light once given, hold fast to it, and repent before God for not having walked in it. You hear a searching sermon, and new light breaks in upon you, or old light comes back with increasing power. Take it and go forward; but do not deny anything that God has done for you. If you do you will become confused; and perhaps be left to doubt whether there is any such thing as a reliable religious experience.

Conscientious people are inclined to give up their experience too readily. The presumptuous hold on to their profession in the face of the clearest evidence that it is not genuine.

**267 LIGHT Within**

A little blaze, where all is dark, attracts attention. Men instinctively are drawn towards a fire. Every minister of

Jesus Christ should be a burning and a shining light. The root of the matter must be in him. He must not only be illuminated, but be luminous. The command of Christ is: *Let your light shine*. Place the emphasis on YOUR. Many a pulpit is all ablaze with the light of historians, and scientists, and poets, while the preacher himself is shrouded in Egyptian darkness. The command implies that we have light. Every truly converted person has inward light. But it may be lost. It is often lost. The only way to keep it is to walk in it and let it shine. Fire-baptized preachers are in great demand among us. Dry, dead preachers, no matter what their talent or learning, are a grievous burden. Brother, get fired up before you enter the pulpit.

#### 268 LIQUOR TRAFFIC a Disgrace

The liquor traffic is a disgrace to our civilization; it is a reproach to our Christianity. It costs more than schools and churches—it kills more than pestilence, war and famine. One rumseller does more harm than a hundred missionaries can undo. The great plague of the world is strong drink; and its manufacture and sale should be suppressed by the most stringent of laws.

We copy from the *Missionary Herald* an appeal which a native chief made to an English official in South Africa:

“I fear Lo Bengula less than I do brandy. I fought with Lo Bengula when he had his father’s great warriors from Natal, and drove him back, and he never came again; and God, who helped me then, would help me again. Lo Bengula never gives me a sleepless night. But to fight against drink is to fight against demons, and not against men. I dread the white man’s drink more than all the *assegais* (spears) of the Matabele, which kill men’s bodies, and it is quickly over; but drink puts devils into men, and destroys both their souls and their bodies forever. Its wounds never heal.”

#### 269 LOVE is Self-Sacrificing

Genuine love is considerate and self-sacrificing. Those who love Christ do, out of love for him, all they can to

promote his cause. To secure their help it is not necessary to appeal to any other motive but love for Christ.

William Cobbett was a celebrated English poetical writer of the past generation. He was devoted to his wife. One time, when they lived in London, she was sick—ready to die. The doctor said if she could sleep she might live. She could not sleep unless the street could be kept quiet. William Cobbett put on woolen stockings, and in his stocking feet walked the street all night, to keep it quiet. She slept and recovered.

*Love beareth all things.* It is folly for one to profess to love Christ, when he is ready to forsake his cause because some minister or member does not treat him as he should. Abuse from her husband does not make the mother cease to love her child.

#### 270 LOVE to God, the Essential Thing

All our religion amounts to nothing unless we love God. Preaching may commend itself to man by its eloquence and fervor; but God does not accept the preacher if he draws his inspiration from any other motive than love to God and love to man. There are doctrines that are true, and there are doctrines that are partly true, and there are doctrines that are false; but the most cordial belief of the soundest doctrines can not save a person unless he loves God with all his heart and all his strength. No worship, however, costly and attractive it may be, or however simple it may be, is acceptable to God unless the heart is in it. It was of strict attendance upon Divine worship that our Savior said, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8, 9).

#### 271 LOVE Will Not Exaggerate

There is something defective in the holiness that can not state facts without exaggeration. We should never appear to be obliged to make allowance for what a holy person

writes or says. We should be able to rely upon his facts, though compelled in any given instance to question his logic. We should feel that we can depend upon his representations, though we can not assent to his inferences. To exaggerate or color facts, in order to set forth our own labors to a better advantage, savors of vanity; to do it in order to depreciate the labors of others is an indication that prejudice or envy reigns within. Let us acknowledge our defects without apologizing for them; let us, with all sincerity and earnestness, seek the gospel remedy—humble love.

#### 272 LUKEWARMNESS a Great Enemy

We are in greater danger from indifference and lukewarmness than we are from prejudice and persecution. Indifference and lukewarmness are our greatest enemies, and are most to be dreaded. They steal upon the individual and upon the church as noiselessly as the serpent's tread. They give no warning; they excite no fears. They occasion no reproach. This is the great element of danger to which lukewarmness exposes us. It does not bring upon us reproach like open transgression. On the contrary, it raises us in the esteem of the worldly. They begin to speak well of us. Backslidden church-members receive us to their fellowship. We conclude that we have been "too particular," that there is no need of being "so much engaged" in the things of religion. So it becomes very difficult to arouse one from a lukewarm state. He is too contented. He compares himself with others and concludes that if they go to Heaven he will. So he sleeps on.

When one person keeps alive in a society, he keeps the rest under conviction. They can see from him how they have declined in spirituality. In their meetings he brings the Spirit with him and ministers it to others. But where all have become backslidden, the case is more hopeless. It is very difficult to awaken them. There is nothing noticeably wrong in their lives, and yet their whole lives are wrong. They go through the forms of religious worship, but they lack that love of God, that fervor of spirit, which alone renders any worship acceptable in his sight. The most

searching sermons appear to have no effect upon them. They give no attention to truths adapted to their condition and necessary to arouse them to a sense of their danger. If they were openly backslidden they might be reached; but as it is next to impossible to fasten conviction upon a lukewarm person, Christ says to him, "I would thou wert either cold or hot."

#### 273 LUKEWARMNESS Leads to Loss of Soul

Lukewarmness, common as it is, and generally unnoticed as it is, will, if persisted in, result in the loss of the soul. To a lukewarm minister Christ said: "I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

Such a man is no more pleasing to Christ now than he was then. His only means of safety is to "be zealous therefore, and repent." But he is not very likely to do this; because he does not see that he is lukewarm. He will not admit it. He professes to be in a high state of grace. He says, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." How widely different is Christ's opinion of him: "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Reader, are you in this dreadful condition? If so, consent to see it. Do not be angry; but allow yourself to be warned. Break down before God. Come to Christ for light and life and salvation.

#### 274 LUKEWARMNESS Offensive to God

To serve God acceptably we must be zealous in his service. Unless we are earnest Christians, we are not Christians. Lukewarmness is offensive to God. The love that he calls for is all the love of which we are capable. To love him with a divided heart is to acknowledge that we are listening with pleasure to the advances of his rivals. Anything done in his service, which is not done out of love to him, is not done for him. The sacrifice which he accepts is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. A display of pride in his service men may look upon with admiration, but it is an abomination to God. No sacrifice which he demands

appears hard to one who is heartily engaged in his service. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

**275 MARRIAGE: Warning to Young Women**

It is no wonder that ungodly men like to get Christian wives. They can be depended upon. They are not governed by pride, or ambition, or impulse; but by principle. But, sister, you run a fearful risk when you marry a man who is destitute of Christian principle. If he is without the fear of God, he will be likely to give you trouble. Your life, in all probability, will be one of suffering. He will endeavor by degrees to draw you away from Christ. If he does not succeed in this, he may turn to oppose and persecute you. Difficulties will confront you at every step of your progress in Divine life. No matter how attractive you may be to him now, you may expect that he will find some other woman more attractive in years to come, and the very life will be crushed out of you as the sad conviction forces itself upon you, that he to whom you have given your all has become alienated from you in his affection, and given his love to another. Sisters, heed the admonitions of God's holy Word and "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

**276 MARRYING DRUNKARDS**

In one of the provinces of Germany the authorities are forbidden to issue a marriage license to a man who is known to be a drunkard. This is as it should be. But women ought not to make such a law necessary. No woman should entrust her life to a man who indulges in the use of intoxicating liquor. He may promise to reform; but if he will not reform before obtaining a wife, he will not be very apt to reform after he gets one. No unmarried woman is so poorly off, but that she will be worse off if united to a drunken husband.

**277 MEETINGS Injured by Light Spirit**

We have sometimes seen a good meeting greatly injured by a light spirit insinuating itself into the hearts of

the saints, until they were controlled by it for the time being. The Holy Spirit was grieved and the congregation lost its seriousness. William Kendall often had lively meetings. He would himself get blessed very much, and the people got blessed, as glorious victories were achieved in the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers. But he guarded carefully against a spirit of levity. As soon as he saw symptoms of any being carried too far in that direction, he would oppose them; he would make no issue, but, in the Spirit, he would lead off in singing one of the old, solemn, Methodist hymns. This would hurt no one, but would bring the meeting back into the right channel. He could not have done this if he had not himself been filled with the Spirit. Such a course is in keeping with the Apostle's direction: "Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (James 5:13). Do not let him strike up a lively ditty; but let him sing a good, solid psalm, or hymn. But do not let dead folks make this an excuse for opposing the saints when they get blessed. "*See thou hurt not the oil and the wine*" (Rev. 6:6).

#### 278 MEETINGS, Opening

The time that can be given to a religious meeting is necessarily limited. The one who has it in charge should see that no time is wasted. He should open promptly. His hymns and Scripture should be selected beforehand, and the people not kept waiting while he is hunting them up. All necessary consulting should be had in advance.

As a rule, make the opening exercises short. It is a shame for a minister to take half an hour to open a love-feast, and then urge the people to "speak short."

If you are to preach, come before the congregation full of matter. Make no apologies, no delays. Dive into the merits of your subject at once. Speak plain words and to the point. Get clear ideas of your subject and present them in a clear and forcible manner. When you get through, stop. Do not keep the saw running when the log is sawed. Try and get some under conviction and give them a chance to get to the Lord and get blessed.

**279 MEETINGS, Protracted**

Do not be in too great haste about closing your protracted meetings. Hold on till you see great results. If there is an interest, so the unsaved come out, keep the meetings going, even if sinners do not make any move toward getting saved. Patience and perseverance are very necessary to carry on the work of God successfully. Break down yourself anew before God. Get a deeper and more tender love for perishing souls. Get your working members baptized anew with the Holy Ghost. Put the plow in deeper. Have a stronger faith in God. Expect success. Do not scold. Do not talk discouragement. Begin your meetings promptly. Close in good season, so you and the people will not get all tired out. Be determined to have a complete victory, and you will have it. God bless you.

**280 MEETINGS, Strangers in Our**

People come to the Free Methodist churches to get help for their souls. Therefore we should be in a condition to help them. If good, substantial food is handed out, it will be relished, however plain the vessels are in which it is served, provided they are clean. Starved souls, if they are not past feeling, want the bread of life. To pelt them with stones is cruel. It drives them away, and hurts them, and hurts them who pelt them.

We should deal faithfully with the erring, but it should be always in love. Did we know all the circumstances of those whom we censure we should often pity as well as blame. Kindness may be undeserved, but it is seldom that it does not bring better returns than severity. Strangers who visit our meetings should always be well used. Nothing fits us to labor for others like perfect love. It disposes us to do good and instinctively leads us to adopt the proper means of accomplishing it. Wisdom is better than wit; sympathy is better than sarcasm.

**281 MEETINGS, Union**

Ministers who appeal to the love of pleasure to promote the self-denying religion of the cross, love to get even an

apparent indorsement of their ungodly course from a holiness preacher. Hence, though they secretly oppose you and talk against you, they are anxious to have you unite with them in union meetings. They do not want your *religion*, but your *influence*. People have begun to have confidence in your piety, and these compromising preachers desire, as far as possible, to turn this to their own account. Their paper is no longer good; yours is, and they want your indorsement. Be on your guard. Many a sound man has been ruined by indorsing others.

Have nothing to do, in any form, with sustaining meetings in which superficial work is done. If men are encouraged to think they are converted, while they are holding on to the secret lodge and to their tobacco; and women, while they still appear in their jewelry and their finery; then have nothing to do with such a revival. It makes proselytes to the church, instead of converts to God. It results in fatal self-deception. It leads souls along from the altar of God, from the sacramental table down to hell.

Give no countenance to any religious meetings where you can not do thorough work for God. If you would have prosperity in the church, then you must, the same as in private life, mind your own business.

282 MEMBERS, Patience with

Do not get tempted with your old members if they do not take hold as zealously in the revival meetings as you think they should. They will not hinder the work unless you yourself are the occasion of it, by getting tried with them, and by firing at them, and so drawing public attention towards them. They have stood by the work bravely, when others have quit the field and run away; and they will stand by it when some, who now seem burning with zeal, have burned all out and have blown away. Let them work in their own way. If you feel that you must say sharp things to them, do not say them in public; but take them alone; visit them; pray with them; get blessed together, and you will feel like bearing with them. It is no way to promote a revival, to say things in public that have a

natural tendency to undermine the confidence of those who hear, in the piety of your members. If preachers would attend class-meetings more, and do more faithful pastoral visiting, they would have less occasion to make periodical attacks upon their members in public.

**283 MEMBERS, Preachers Must Respect The Rights of**

The Free Methodist church is not an ecclesiastical despotism. The governing power in the church is not vested exclusively with the preachers. They have their part in the government, but they can exercise it only in conjunction with the members. The preacher does not admit members, nor does he dismiss them. This power belongs to the members. The preacher may preside at the society meeting which admits members, but it is the vote of the society which admits them. On the other hand, he has no right to drop members. They can not be disposed of in that way. Unless they die, or withdraw, or remove, they can not be got out of the church without a trial according to Discipline. Our members have rights which the preachers are bound to respect. Those who wish to lord it over God's heritage should seek a home somewhere else than in the Free Methodist church.

**284 MEMBERS Should be Given Work**

Our preachers often fail in setting to work members of their societies who have a heart to work and the ability to do efficient work. Not until some other organization pushes such unemployed members out, do these preachers realize what a loss they have sustained. In some places the Salvation Army has been manned almost entirely by Free Methodists. What a crowd they did draw! They possessed no more talent than they did before, but they had somebody to set them to work.

A preacher is an officer. If he can not lead others out into the conflict, he should resign. He who can not direct others should take his place in the ranks. In every neighborhood there is a great battle for holiness and righteousness to be fought. Every one capable of doing service

should be enlisted. Their work should be assigned them, and opportunity be given them to do it. Put forward the modest and the retiring. Great volcanoes are sometimes thrown up on a level plain. Those who were never considered gifted, sometimes, when they get filled with the Spirit, astonish their acquaintances by their powerful and timely exhortations.

**285 MEMBERSHIP Merely Will Not Save One**

Much of the preaching of the day takes it for granted that members of the church in good standing are, *by virtue of that fact*, in a state of salvation. In this respect there is but little difference among preachers of all denominations. In many cases this is a fatal assumption. There should be no effort to convert people to our way of thinking in matters of indifference, but we should hold up clearly the New Testament standard of salvation. Much of the preaching and most of the warnings of the Bible are addressed to God's professed people. It was to "the church of God," to those called "saints," that Paul wrote these words: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5). And it was to a minister in good standing that the beloved and loving John wrote: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17).

**286 MEN, True, Should be Recognized**

Every man should be accorded all the advantages to which his talents, his training, and his good conduct entitle him. These qualities have a commercial value. They are his property as much as the house which he has purchased by his industry and economy. Organizations that rob him of these advantages are no less guilty than those that rob him of his money.

The tendency of strong party spirit is to put forward

compromisers, time-servers, where men of principle are needed.

“God give us men. A time like this demands  
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands;  
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
 Men whom the spoils of office can not buy;  
 Men who possess opinions and a will;  
 Men who have honor—men who will not lie.”

We should be able to recognize such men, and be willing to do what we can to aid in giving them their true position. This is God's direction: “Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Rom. 13:7).

#### 287 MIND, Power of, Over Body

The mind has great power over the body. Bad feelings grow by being nourished and cherished. It has been repeatedly demonstrated that a well person may be made sick by being made to think he is sick. We are saved by hope, physically as well as spiritually. The Psalmist said: “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord” (Ps. 118:17). And he did not die. If you are tempted, do not talk about it, unless to some one who can help you. If you do not feel well, take the same course.

“Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,  
 In making known how oft they have been sick,  
 And give us, in recitals of disease,  
 A doctor's trouble, but without the fees.”

True faith in God begets a determined spirit, and often keeps off disease. Blessings that are worth having, are worth fighting for. Many do not live out their appointed days because they give up too easily. The spirit of infirmity overpowers them. But a strong spirit masters a weak body.

#### 288 MIND Must be Expanded

To grow in grace you must grow in knowledge. If the mind is contracted, the thoughts run in the same groove,

and the same forms of expression are used. Religion degenerates into formality. The words used may be good, but they are without power. Stereotyped matter does not interest either speaker or hearer. To expand the mind, to grow in knowledge, you must read, you must study. You may think you have not the time, but in this you are mistaken. Elihu Burritt, a blacksmith, while working at his trade, became one of the most learned men of his age. He understood more languages than any other man in this country. While learning them he worked the regular hours each day at his trade. Nor did he injure his health by work and study. You may have a large circuit and a great deal to do, but if you have a mind to study, you can, by systematic application, accomplish wonders. Devotion to God will make you eager to equip yourself in the best possible manner for his work.

289 MIND, Sound

The Spirit of God gives wisdom and direction to the children of God. But they are not to throw away their common sense. They are to use all they have, and get more. Common sense is one of the gifts of God. Paul says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). A locomotive fired up is very useful when kept on the track; but if it gets off the track it does great harm. The spirit "of power and of love" is very necessary for a Christian. Without it he is like a locomotive without steam. But if he has not with it a *sound mind*, he is liable to do more hurt than good. He becomes positively dangerous. The thing to be done is not to humor his caprices, and jump on to his train, but get him on the track as soon and with as little damage as possible. You do him hurt to encourage him in his erratic tendencies. Keep these triune graces, *power*, and *love*, and a *sound mind*. Either one without the rest will result in harm. See that you have all three. They are "received." Therefore you may come to God for them. It is time to put away folly. Weakness is cured by "POWER;" impatience and fretfulness by "LOVE," and

foolishness by a "SOUND MIND." Have *you* received them? If not, will you have them?

**290** MINISTERS Of Other Denominations, Inviting

A preacher of another denomination writes to us that he was specially invited to attend a Free Methodist camp-meeting. He says he went and labored, and went away, and they never offered to pay his railroad fare. We know nothing of the meeting—were not present at it—and had nothing to do with his going there; but he writes to us as if we were to blame for the treatment which he received. Perhaps we are. Our preachers and people ought to be more considerate. They ought to have better manners. If you specially invite any one to come and labor in a meeting, be particular and pay the traveling expenses, and take good care of him. "The workman is worthy of his hire."

As a rule, it is not best to invite ministers of other denominations to labor in our meetings. They can not enter heartily and conscientiously into our work. If they could, they would be of us. They are apt to sow the seeds of dissatisfaction and worldliness. They leave an influence which works insidiously against us. We had better mind our own business, and do our own work.

**291** MISTAKES Should be Acknowledged

One of the greatest means of grace is a readiness to acknowledge our mistakes frankly and without any efforts at self-vindication. The "old man" dies hard. When he joins the church, and especially when he professes holiness, he is very watchful over his reputation for intelligence and consistency. If he does not, in general terms, profess infallibility, yet in no particular instance is he known to candidly admit that he was mistaken. There is something wanting in the experience of such persons. They are lacking in mellowness, in gentleness under provocation, and in the unction of the Holy Ghost. We should never get where we can not obey the command, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."

**292 MISTAKES** Should be Confessed

It is a subtle artifice of Satan to make a saint believe that he must never confess when he has been mistaken in his judgment, or has taken the wrong side of a question. When we have done wrong, even from the best of motives, we should be ready to acknowledge it. Jeremy Taylor, in his "Rules for Holy Living," says: "Be not always ready to excuse every oversight, or indiscretion, or ill action, but if thou beest guilty of it confess it plainly; for virtue scorns a lie for its cover, but to hide a sin with it is like a crust of leprosy drawn upon an ulcer. If thou beest not guilty (unless it be scandalous), be not over-earnest to remove it, but rather use it as an argument to chastise all greatness of fancy and opinion in thyself; and accustom thyself to bear reproof patiently and contentedly, and the harsh words of thy enemies, as knowing that the anger of an enemy is a better monitor, and represents our faults, or admonishes us of our duty, with more heartiness than the kindness does, or precious balm of a friend."

**293 MONEY** Should not be Hoarded

Why should you wish to leave so much property to your children that they will not need to work for a living? Do you think they will be as well off in this world? Did the men around you, who occupy influential positions, start in life with a fortune at their command? As a rule, did they not begin low down and work their way up? Will your children be as likely to make good Christians, if they are left so they can fare sumptuously every day? You know the probability is that they will be like the world.

Then use your money for the promotion of the cause of God, and do not hoard it up for your children.

**294 MONEY,** Wisdom to be Exercised in Handling

In handling the funds of others we should not only be strictly honest, but we should take pains to make our honesty apparent to all. There should not be the slightest ground for suspicion. We should have the means at com-

mand to silence the accusations of envy and hate. See how particular Paul was, when he took up a contribution at Corinth for the relief of the poor and persecuted saints at Jerusalem. He would not take it alone; but had the churches appoint capable, trusty persons to go with him, and see that the contributions were properly administered. He gave the reason: "Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." See 2 Cor. 8:18-21. He could endure any amount of persecution; but he could not needlessly lay himself open to false accusations.

Dr. Paley well says: "He repeatedly professes that there should be associated with himself in the management of the public bounty, not colleagues of his own appointment, but persons elected by the contributors themselves."

A minister of the gospel should be a man whose integrity can not be successfully questioned.

#### 295 MONOPOLIES Characterized

In the gospel there is no privileged class. Just as the influence of the gospel prevails in civil affairs, the rights of all are respected. Monopolies are utterly subversive of the rights of the people. They rob the many to enrich the few.

Cromwell wrote from Dunbar, where his last signal victory was gained over the royalists: "Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth."

Noble words! Our nation needs a Cromwell. Conspiracy is the order of the day. The business of the country is growing to be more and more conducted on Satanic principles. The man who places you in a position so that he alone can meet your wants, and then demands an exorbitant price for doing it, acts on the same principle as the highwayman who, with a loaded, cocked revolver at your head, demands your purse or your life.

**296 MORAL STANDARDS** Must be Kept Up

Just as the church lowers the standard of salvation, the world looking on lowers the standard of morality. Gambling at church festivals, gambling in stocks by church-members, makes gambling respectable and popular. The voting of church-members for license to sell liquor makes saloon-keepers bold and defiant. Sin needs but little encouragement to break through all bounds, and assert its right to dominate.

**297 MORALITY, One Standard of, For All**

God has one standard of morality for all. "Thou shalt not steal," is as binding upon the non-professor as upon the professor. So are all of God's commandments. One who is disobedient and rebellious will not have any heart to say in the day of judgment, "Lord, I never professed religion." No such excuse will avail. Open rebellion is not less damning than secret hypocrisy. Spurgeon says to one who prides himself on his making no profession: "You imagine that when you stand before God, if you tell him, 'Lord, I never professed to love thee, I never pretended to serve thee,' God will accept your impudence as honesty—that he will look upon your presumption as sincerity! Why, sir, you can not mean what you say; you must have deceived yourself most terribly if you do. Your honesty in avowing yourself to be a slave of Satan! Your effrontery in declaring that you are steeped up to the very throat in sin, is this to be an apology for your sin? O man! be wiser."

**298 MOTIVES**

We shall not make much out in trying to follow Christ, if the question of profit and loss determines the service we shall render him. Mercenary considerations should have no weight whatever in deciding the Christian position we shall undertake to fill. Such a motive is akin to that which actuated Judas, when he betrayed his master for thirty pieces of silver.

Our inquiry should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me

to do?" The answer to that should decide our choice. It may involve a life service of self-denial. What of that? The greater will be the reward in the eternal world. Christ did not die rich. The apostles did not die rich; yet how they triumphed over poverty. "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." What millionaire ever felt like that?

299 MOTIVES, Worldly, Fatal in Choosing Christ

The crime of Judas did not consist in the amount of money which he received for betraying Christ, but in the fact that he betrayed him at all.

Dr. Stephen Olin was right when he said: "Whoever stops to inquire whether it may cost him sacrifices to be a Christian, with any intention to hesitate if it does, has admitted a consideration utterly incompatible with his becoming a Christian at all. Whoever chooses his creed or his church with any, the slightest, reference to the honor, or the ease, or the emolument it may give or withhold, does, by such an admission, utterly vitiate all his claim to have any part or lot in the matter of saving piety. I do not speak of those who, knowingly and deliberately, make these their chief ground of preference; but I affirm that it is wholly anti-Christian, and an insult to a crucified Savior, to yield any, the smallest, place to worldly motives in choosing the Christian position which we will occupy. Let Christ and conscience decide in this matter. 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' The gospel will admit of no compromise here. This is its point of honor, which it can not, and will not, yield by a single iota. I feel called upon to use the language of unmeasured denunciation against a mistake so often fatal to hopeful beginnings in religion—so very often fatal to the religious prospects of young men."

This is Christianity as we learned it when a young man. It has not changed. A person whose religious principles are in the market has no claim to the name of a Christian. He lacks the primary element of the Christian character.

**300 NEW YEAR, A Happy**

We wish a Happy New Year to all our readers! May the richest blessings from the Father of mercies rest upon you! To a great extent, our happiness depends upon ourselves. If the conscience is not at ease, there is no such thing as happiness. You can not have a good conscience until, as far as possible, you have made all wrongs right, and had, through the atoning blood, your "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." Give yourself at once to God to be right at any cost. Health and happiness are connected. By obedience to God's natural laws, health is preserved. If it has been injured by sin, come to God by repentance and reformation and faith, and strive to secure for yourself the promise, "For I will restore health unto thee." But above all, if you would be happy, you must have the Comforter to abide with you forever. This you can not have unless you walk closely with the Lord. He can support you in trials and afflictions, make you patient in tribulation, guide you aright in all the affairs of life, light up the valley of the shadow of death, and minister to you an entrance abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Whatever else you have at this opening of the year, be determined to have the indwelling Spirit.

**301 NO-SECTISM**

An association of forty-five years with members of churches has brought us in contact with some sectarianism and church bigotry. But we have never found sectarianism pure and unmixed in any of the churches. In the church there is, with it, some charity for those of other denominations.

But for genuine, unadulterated sectarianism; for unmitigated, ferocious bigotry, that tolerates no dissenting opinion, that goes to the extent of the law in its efforts to kill off those whom it assumes to control but who do not submit to its dictation, we must go to a leader of a no-sect sect. Here we find it in its pure form, restrained by none of the

amenities of life, guided by no principle. If you come in collision with it, it will assume as fact anything which it wishes to believe concerning you, and then proceed to anathematize you "with bell, book and candle," as heartily as if your condemnation had been pronounced by an infallible tribunal. No-sectism is a prolific breeder of sectarianism. It is the soil on which bigotry thrives.

### 302 OBEDIENCE Demanded

If we love God we shall obey him, not only in some things, but in all things. We shall keep his commands because they are his commands. He who does anything because it is fashionable, is really obeying fashion, although what he does is in accordance with the will of God. The thing done may be right, but the bad motive robs it of its virtue. A soldier who undertook to obey only such commands of his officers as he chose to obey, would not be tolerated. The true test of obedience is found in our willingness to do what we know is right, when it is contrary to our inclinations. The miracle in the case of the kine which, yoked to a cart and left to their own guidance, took the road to the land of Israel, consisted in the fact that they went away from home, and away from their own calves. When you do for your religion only what is fashionable, or what appears to be for your own interest, you do no more than any worldling. Publicans and sinners do the same. Anybody who can afford it, can wear fine clothes to church. But to dress plain because God commands it, manifests a desire to please God. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

### 303 OBEDIENCE A Test of Friendship for Christ

The freedom of the Spirit is not a spirit of insubordination. Said a Grecian philosopher: "The glory of a Spartan is in knowing how to obey well." Hence the Spartans made a record unequalled in the history of the world. Three hundred of them, under Leonidas, 480 years before Christ, at Thermopylæ, a narrow pass in the mountains, stopped an army of about a million under Xerxes,

the king of Persia. Christ makes universal obedience the test of friendship. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). A religion which makes great professions of love for Christ, but pays no attention to any of his commands but such as are, for the time being, popular, is not the religion of Christ. A true Christian obeys Christ at the loss of all things. He proves his faith genuine by obedience, when obedience brings scorn and obloquy, loss of position, and loss of life, if need be. He has the martyr spirit. We must not expect that anything less than this will take us through to glory.

#### 304 OBEDIENCE to God's Commands Mark of Christian

No one has a right to claim to be a child of God who does not obey God. God's Word does not need, in order to secure the obedience of his children, any indorsement from popular opinion or from the minister. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

The old declaration and promise still hold good. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: and a curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God" (Deut. 11:26, 27).

Christ gives *universal* obedience to his commands as the mark which distinguishes his friends from his enemies. He declares that those who do not obey him have no right to profess to be his servants. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). This sentimental religion, which makes a great deal of Christian ordinances and festivals, and pays no attention to what Christ says about self-denial and a life devoted to the good of others, has no saving efficacy whatever. It deceives to the loss of the soul.

#### 305 OBEDIENCE to Our Superiors

As Christians we must not only obey Christ, but we must render proper obedience to those whom Christ in his

providence has placed over us. The Apostle lays down the order with all plainness: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). To the Corinthians he wrote: "For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things" (2 Cor. 2:9).

The obedience must be in all cases in the Lord. If our spiritual, or even our civil rulers, require us to do anything which plainly conflicts with the commands of Christ, our duty is plain. Whenever there is a conflict of authority, "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). But it should be clear that there is such a conflict. We must not mistake the dictates of our own pride or self-will for a spirit of obedience.

#### 306 ORDER Essential

There may be power without order, but it is often useless and sometimes injurious. There is power in the cyclone—but it leaves ruin in its path. It is the steady breeze that sends the vessel on joyously to the harbor. There is power in the torrent which an insignificant stream sometimes becomes; but it carries desolation with it. The steady rivers turn the mills and float the ships. The Apostle commands us to *be filled with the Spirit*, but in the same breath enjoins us to be under control. There may be so much system in our meetings that they become mechanical; there may be so little that they run themselves out, leaving no results but wasted energies and disappointed hopes. An unorganized rabble; no matter how great may be their number, or how wild and desperate their valor, are no match for a few well-disciplined soldiers, ably commanded and standing together.

#### 307 ORDER AND POWER

A meeting can not be run successfully unless the one having it in charge has the ability and skill to give it proper direction and keep it well in hand. Men who can

not submit to control are never fit for control. Lawless zeal may excite the admiration of some, but it does not convert sinners into saints, nor reform society. A comet may attract more notice than the sun, but it does not make the corn grow, or the buds open into blossoms, and the blossoms mature into fruit. A well-organized church, though with but little apparent life, will last longer and do more good than a mere association which seems ready to take the world through its exuberance of life. Some have died prematurely because they had not body enough for their souls. If we would work successfully in the cause of God we should take for our motto, ORDER AND POWER.

**308 OPPOSITION, The Godly May Experience**

Jonathan Edwards was one of the most godly men of his day. He is generally regarded as one of the greatest theologians of any age. His biographer says: "For many years Mr. Edwards was very happy in the love and esteem of his people, and there was, during that period, the greatest prospect of his living and dying so. Indeed, he was almost the last minister in all New England that would have been thought likely to have been opposed by his people. Yet, after laboring with wonderful success at Northampton for twenty-four years, he was ignominiously dismissed by his people, because he maintained that no persons ought to be admitted to the Lord's Supper 'who do not make a profession of real Christianity.'" Continuing to reside in the town for some months after his dismissal, they, though they had no pastor, refused to allow him to occupy the pulpit which he had filled with such marked ability and success. Yet he was an amiable, prudent man, willing to concede anything that did not imply surrender of Christian principles. He was afterwards chosen president of New Jersey College, which position he filled with great ability and to general satisfaction.

**309 OPPOSITION, Stand Firm Against**

Do not be intimidated by opposition. It can not harm you if you stand firm. The tree constantly shaken by the

winds strikes deeper its roots. If there is a spark of fire left in a brand, run with it against the wind, and you will have a flame. So if there is any slumbering grace in your soul, take your stand against fashionable vice and folly, in yourself, in your family, and in your church, and you will soon feel

“that flame of living fire  
Which shone so bright in saints of old.”

Lie down in quiet, and the fire divine will utterly go out.

Where devils hasten to the assault, angels will hasten to the rescue. Christ has not promised you freedom from persecution, but he has promised untold joys in the world to come to those who endure it bravely for his sake. Then stand firm though wicked men and devils rage.

The conversion of no one in these times is clearer or more thorough than was that of Saul of Tarsus. Yet he did not think, because he was supernaturally converted, that therefore his eternal salvation was secured. He felt quite the contrary. After he had been a successful minister for years he wrote: “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away” (1 Cor. 9:26, 27). Mark! He did not run and fight, and subjugate his body, simply that he might be more useful, and not bring the cause of God into reproach; but that he might not lose his own soul!

The salvation of us who preach the gospel is not by that fact secured. One may drop from the pulpit into the pit. He who has persuaded others to come to Christ may lose the Spirit of Christ from his heart.

### 310 OURSELVES, We Should Know

Hidden diseases are often dangerous diseases. A person may think he is in health until he is past help. One, too, may think he is in a good spiritual condition until he wakes up in eternity to find out that he had been deceived into thinking he was all right when he was all wrong. It is a difficult thing to know ourselves. It is only in the light of

the Holy Spirit that we are able to see our true spiritual condition. The Psalmist asks the question, "Who can understand his errors?" We can much more readily understand the errors of others than we can our own. The man who writes and talks most bitterly against another may be really guilty of the very offense of which the other is only accused, but is really innocent. One often condemns in another what he excuses in himself. Let us adopt the petition, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

**311 PARENTS AND CHILDREN: Right Training**

Christian parents should have Christian children. This is what is naturally to be expected. Mohammedan parents never expect that their children will be anything but Mohammedans. Romanists take care that their children are Romanists. Those who are truly pious should spare no pains to train up their children in the paths of piety. God requires this. The happiness of the children requires that they should be trained up in the service of God. Their eternal salvation requires this! Christian parents who oppose their children in their efforts to lead a devoted Christian life are assuming a fearful responsibility. Christ says: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:6). The case is aggravated when the little one turned out of the way is the child of the one who causes it to stumble.

**312 PARENTS AND CHILDREN: Overtenderness Cruel**

The overtenderness of some parents for their children is a great cruelty to the children. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:27). The yoke makes one serviceable. It is a great and permanent injury to any child to be brought up in habits of idleness. A Christian worker said, "When I was young I worked out by the month; and I went to college; and to this day I am in doubt as to which did me the most good. By work-

ing out I formed habits of application, and of submission, and my physical constitution became strong and capable of enduring toil and hardship.' So because you are on a circuit, and have boys able to work, do not think it necessary to buy or take a farm in order to give them employment. Let them learn a trade, or hire them out to a good brother to work on a farm.

### 313 PARENTS Should Not Compromise

If you can not get your children converted to God, you should not let them convert you to the world. It is a sad sight to see a mother, who was uncompromisingly true to God, and plain in her dress, and simple in her habits, when her children were small, become, when they are grown up, conformed to the world in order to please them. She may think that she will retain her hold on them by this means and get them saved; but the probability is that they will drag her with them down to perdition. Parents never gain any real, religious influence over their children by compromising. If you keep on the rock, you will be much more likely to bring them up to you by reaching down a helping hand, than you will be to push them up, by going down yourself to them amid the waves and billows of the world. Besides, the worldly advantages that you would gain for them by such a course are not likely to be realized. Where it looks as if promotion would be so easy, there are competitions, and strifes, and envyings, that you little dream of. The daughter that you would have wed a prosperous business man, may marry a reckless libertine. Where she expects to find a home, she may find a hell. It is better to marry *in the Lord* than in the world. But if worldly advantages are realized, too much is paid for them, if the soul is lost in order to secure them. They are not worth the price. Then, mother, do not dress up like a worldling to please the children. Do not, as you near eternity, get so short-sighted that you fail to see what tremendous interests are at stake. In the first great battle of life you have been victorious; hold with a steady courage, and be victorious to the end.

**314 PARSONAGE PROPERTY**

Make the place where you live more pleasant and attractive for your living in it. We never lived in a parsonage but that we made repairs upon it, and left it in a better condition than we found it. We knew we could stay but two years at the most, but we set out fruit trees for the express purpose of having others enjoy the fruit. We all should be willing to confer benefits upon others, even when they do not know who it is that blesses them. God knows, and he assures us that for the benefits we confer upon others secretly he will reward us openly. If you believe it, then act accordingly. If you let the parsonage property go to decay, the fences fall down, and the garden become full of weeds, because you do not expect to stay upon the circuit more than a year or two, then do not profess holiness; do not profess religion. True holiness makes us considerate of others. It causes us to care for their welfare. . "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

**315 PASTORAL VISITING**

Preachers who settle down on a little circuit, and content themselves with preaching twice on the Sabbath, and occasionally making a social visit, can not wonder why they are not supported. They sow sparingly, and it is God's order that they shall reap sparingly. His direction is that "if any will not work, neither shall he eat." The little that they do can hardly be called work. One who works at his trade as they do at their calling, would soon be out of work. Nobody would employ him.

Brother, get up in the morning, get your chores out of the way, and do a good, honest, ten-hour day's work for God, and see if you will not be supported! If you have not members enough to keep you busy visiting, go and visit sinners. Talk with them, pray with them, and make from three to ten pastoral visits every afternoon. Put in preaching appointments week-day evenings, in the schoolhouses around, and stir up the people to seek God. Be wholly given up to the work of saving souls.

**316 PASTORAL SUPPORT and Visiting**

Generally there are two sides to a question. If a preacher has not been supported properly, perhaps he has not done his duty faithfully. The people, if they could be heard, might complain that the preacher had failed to visit the members of his congregation; that he had manifested but little interest in the salvation of souls; that at the best he had merely performed his duties in an official, formal, perfunctory manner. Before we blame others, let us carefully consider whether we are not, in part at least, to blame.

**317 PATIENCE, A Useful Grace**

Patience is one of the most useful of the Christian graces. Scarcely an hour in the day passes without there is a call for its exercise. Growth in grace is always marked by growth in patience. We should be so filled with humble love that we can bear provocations without being provoked. We should have patience with our own blunderings, as well as with the mistakes and perversities of others.

**318 PATIENCE Will Have Its Reward**

A farmer planted a large pear orchard. The trees grew vigorously but bore no fruit for a number of years. Tired of waiting, the owner cut down the larger portion. The next year those that were left bore so abundantly, and such choice fruit, that he was amply repaid for all his labor. He was then sorry that he had not waited longer.

Good Christians sometimes forget that "we are saved by hope" (Rom. 8:24). They deprive themselves of much comfort by always looking at the dark side. They anticipate the worst, and their fears sometimes bring upon them the calamities which they dread.

"Be hopeful, cheerful. Faith will bring  
 A living joy to thee,  
 And make thy life a hymn of praise,  
 From doubt and murmurs free;  
 Whilst like the sunbeam thou wilt bless,  
 And bring to others happiness."

In the thickest darkness we must exhort ourselves as did the Psalmist: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God" (Ps. 42:11).

### 319 PERFECT LOVE

Perfect love is a Bible term. It means the same as entire sanctification, or holiness. But we prefer it, for the reason that, if a person professes perfect love, he will more readily see his inconsistency if he manifests any temper contrary to love! Besides, it will more readily be seen to be attainable. One conscious of his ignorance and imperfection shrinks from speaking of himself as holy; but any one can love; and it will be hard for him to give a reason why he may not love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. It is also a comprehensive term. Wesley says, "Perfect love implies: (1) Entire humility. (2) Absolute self-renunciation. (3) Unreserved resignation. (4) Such a union of our will with the Divine as makes the Christian one spirit with God." Reader, do you enjoy perfect love? Do you manifest it in the family? Towards those who oppose you?

### 320 PERFECT LOVE Essential

If you intend to get through to Heaven, then you must seek to be made perfect in love. You may be free, fearless, strong, and uncompromising; but unless you get the love that beareth all things, you will fall out with some one, indulge in hard feeling, and backslide. You may keep up your profession for a while, but you will soon get where you will indorse what you once unsparingly condemned. There is no trouble in making a bag stand, if it is filled with wheat, and tied tight; but an empty bag falls down unless it is held up. If you would stand straight for God always, then keep filled with gentle love. Some of the greatest fighters we ever knew, but who were wanting in the "love that never faileth," went over at last to those whom they had all their lifetime been opposing. We shall

reach places in our experience where we shall fail unless we have the God-given charity that "beareth all things," and "endureth all things."

### 321 PERSECUTION

The greatest uninspired religious book was written in jail. No other book except the Bible has been published in as many languages as has the "Pilgrim's Progress." The crime for which John Bunyan was sent to jail by professed Christians was preaching Christ. They tried to limit his influence, but God made it the occasion of giving him an influence unlimited by time or space. They offered him his liberty if he would promise not to preach. His noble answer was, "I am resolved to stay here till the moss shall grow upon my eyebrows, before I will promise not to declare what God has done for my soul." The tongue was for a season silenced, but the pen was unfettered, and his words of wisdom have gone forth to the ends of the world.

Let us, then, be fearless for Christ. Persecution may open for us a wider field of usefulness than prosperity could. Let our care be to maintain our integrity, and God will take care of our influence.

### 322 PERSECUTION, Firmness Under

Never swerve from fidelity to Christ. You may be persecuted; but be firm and true, and you will either be delivered, or you will win a martyr's crown. Besides, your firmness under persecution may be the means of winning others. Eusebius records the following of James, the brother of John, whom Herod killed with the sword: "Concerning this James, Clemens, in the seventh book of his Institutions, relates a memorable history, speaking as he had heard from his predecessors. For he says, 'that he that accused him before the judgment seat, seeing him openly and willingly testify and declare the faith of Christ, was moved thereat, and professed that he also was a Christian. And so,' says he, 'they were both together led away to suffer. And, as they were going, he beseeched *James* to pardon him; who,

after a short deliberation, said, "Peace be to thee," and kissed him; and so they were both beheaded together.'"

### 323 PERSECUTING CHRIST In His Disciples

Persecuting the disciples of Christ is persecuting Christ. Saul of Tarsus said, "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women." When Christ appeared to him he did not know him, and inquired who he was. The reply was, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest" (Acts 22:8). Yet there is no evidence that Saul ever saw Jesus before this time. Personally, Jesus was beyond the reach of persecution. But persecuting his disciples he counted as persecuting himself. It is still the same. Every indignity offered to a follower of Christ, *because he belongs to Christ*, is an indignity offered to Christ himself. Remember this, ye who treat with derision and scorn the humble ones who endeavor to follow Christ fully. When he sits upon his throne, judging mankind according to their works, he will say to you, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me."

### 324 PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance is quite as necessary as valor to a soldier of the cross. It matters not how valiantly you fight, you will not be crowned if you run away before the war is ended. There was no braver man in our Revolutionary army than Benedict Arnold. But his treason spoiled it all. It is to them "who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality" that God shall render eternal life (Rom. 2:7). Many a revival that is started with great promise fails of glorious results for the want of perseverance in those who are carrying it on. They are too easily discouraged. A little privation and a little hardship overcome them. They do not like the cold. What soldier ever did? But do valiant soldiers mind the cold? They do not like to be out nights. Yet perhaps before they were converted they were often out much later in the service of the devil. Let us hold steady to our work till the crown is won.

## 325 PERSEVERANCE Will Secure the Reward

To gain Heaven we must endure to the end. Persevering efforts, and not spasmodic efforts, win the prize. A good plan is a good beginning for a house, but if it goes no farther it will afford no shelter. Secker says: "That mariner has no praise who sinks his ship before he comes to the harbor; that soldier obtains no glory who lays down his arms in the heat of the battle. Some say that the chrysolite, which is of a golden color in the morning, loses its splendor before the evening; such are the glittering shows of the hypocrites. Though fiery meteors fall to the earth, yet fixed stars remain in heaven."

Trains that run fastest are wrecked the worst if they do not keep the track. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 2:6,7).

## 326 PERSONAL LABOR, Manner of

If you have a duty to do to the church, do not do it before the world. Some preachers, in sermons about their members, especially at camp-meetings, make the impression that they are all a set of hypocrites. This they call "hewing to the line." It is simply wholesale slander. Such sermons do harm. Preachers who talk in this way need not wonder that they have small congregations. Destroy the confidence of the world in your church, and sinners will say, "Get your members converted, and then preach to us." It takes more grace and courage to go to your members personally, and tell them what you think wrong in their spirit, and conduct, than it does to denounce them publicly; but it will do you and them much more good. Think of these things, and ask God for the wisdom that cometh from above.

## 327 PERSONAL LIBERTY Plea a Subterfuge

Where there is shame there is still hope. One who is ashamed of his course of life may forsake that course.

This makes it look as if there might be hope in the case

of the paid advocates of the saloon. They never plead for the saloon. They never speak directly in its favor. They do not mention it. They ignore its existence. The battle for the saloon is called the battle for "self-respect and freedom." The champions of the saloon are called "liberty-loving, law-abiding, absolutely temperance citizens, native and adopted." The advocates of prohibition are called "maniacs," and of them it is said, "When they become a majority it will be time for decent people to emigrate to a more sympathetic despotism—Russia for example."

If such language is used from shame by those who have sold themselves to advocate the liquor interest, then there is hope in their case. But we fear it is adopted—not from shame, but from policy. They know that to meet the real issue would be to court defeat. So they assume to defend that which no prohibitionist has attacked—"*personal liberty.*"

### 328 PERSONAL WORK Commended

Harlan Page was a great soul-saver. He was only a private member of the church, and never felt called to preach, and never attempted to preach. But he was the means of the conversion of thousands, and he raised up many strong churches. He died at the age of forty-three. On his death-bed he said:

"I look upon *personal conversation and prayer with individuals* as among my most successful endeavors, and hope I have done some good. But it is not me. It is all of grace in Christ." In his early Christian life he "*Resolved*, whenever possible, to address my brethren and sisters on the concerns of eternity, and endeavor to stir up both them and myself to diligence and engagedness in the great work of saving souls." Reader, would it not be well for you to form a similar resolution?

### 329 PIETY a Power

The piety of a church is the measure of its spiritual power. Its political power is usually in an inverse pro-

portion to its piety. In voting, members prevail; in intercessions with God, faith and holy living prevail. One Abraham outweighs, in God's balance, a dozen Sodoms with all their millionaires. Stephen Olin, a man of great intellect and of deep piety, said: "A band of a hundred, or of fifty, or even of ten, living Christians, strong in mutual affection and confidence, and entire in their devotedness to Christ and to the salvation of souls, would, I am confident, wield an amount of religious influence immeasurably greater than is usually exerted by our largest and most flourishing churches." This was the deliberate opinion of a man competent to judge.

Why may not every Free Methodist society be such a band? It may be; it should be. Reader, will you do your best to make your society such a band?

### 330 PLEASURE-LOVING PROFESSORS

Paul gives as one of the marks of the last days that professors of religion will be "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

That these days are upon us many unmistakable evidences plainly show. It is getting to be quite the fashion to build churches with rooms specially fitted up for the purpose of gratifying the love of self-indulgence. Kitchens and dining-rooms, and parlors, are finished and furnished in houses of worship built by a denomination which says it was raised up "to spread scriptural holiness through the land." These are used, not to feed the hungry, but to provide entertainment for the saints and sinners belonging to the congregation. The *Holston Methodist* says: "Drinking, dancing, card-playing Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians are doing more to bring Christianity into disrepute than the whole cohort of infidels in the land." There is no doubt but that the great hinderance to the spread of the gospel is the want of saving grace in the great mass of professed Christians. We must be careful how we encourage in their delusions those who think they are Christians, when they give good evidence that they are not.

**331 PLEASURE AND PIETY**

The popular churches appear to be going extensively into the amusement business. In the winter season church frolics are provided, sufficiently worldly and sensual to satisfy any decent sinner. In the summer pleasure resorts are fitted up by ocean and lakes, where piety and pleasure can be combined by saint and sinner, according to the taste of each. Even so staid a people as the Free-will Baptists have hitherto been are being drawn into this insatiable maelstrom, in which so many staunch ships of Zion are being wrecked. They have purchased a tract of land on the border of Lake Keuka, in Central New York, for a denominational summer resort.

Everything indicates that we are in *the last days* spoken of by the Apostle, when "men shall be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Reader, are you connected with such a church? If so, the command of God to you is, "From such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5).

**332 POLITICS AND SPIRITUALITY**

When political excitement runs high, those who would save their souls must watch and pray, or they will be carried away with it. No one can become absorbed in politics and maintain his spirituality. While a child of God should take a proper interest in civil affairs, he can not become engrossed in them without endangering his own salvation. As Christ's kingdom is not of this world, his servants cannot fight political battles with common, carnal weapons. If they say anything on political matters, it should be in a quiet manner and with the utmost candor. A saint must hold to the truth. But in political matters there is so much misstatement and exaggeration that it is often difficult to tell what is truth. Whatever interest we may feel in the election of any one, we must have a deeper interest in making our own calling and election sure.

One of the best workers we ever knew outside of the ministry utterly backslid through meddling with politics, and

died in a backslidden state. He was a man of good ability. His convictions were deep, and he had the courage to stand by them. The utmost that persecution could do, could not induce him to take sides against those who were endeavoring to promote the work of Bible holiness. He defended them with tongue and pen and means. In all their conflicts he stood with them, shoulder to shoulder. It was at a time when the issue of slavery was before the people. He took the side of the oppressed. His zeal and ability made him prominent. He was drawn into politics by degrees, and put in office. He held to his religious convictions, but lost his experience. The last time we saw him, he said he did not enjoy any religion. But, grasping our hand warmly, and with eyes full of tears, he exclaimed, "O Brother Roberts, stand firmly. If the Free Methodists should give out, I do not know what would become of the rest of us." Not long after this he was, by a sudden accident, called to the spirit world.

### 333 POSITION Not to be Sought

The efforts often spent in striving for position, if employed in doing present duties well, would be much more likely to secure it.

### 334 POPULAR CHURCHES: Fatal Error in Teaching

Calvinism, in its more repulsive features, may have had its day. But the most insidious and dangerous part of it—the final and unconditional salvation of believers, that is, the elect—is still in vogue. We doubt if it ever had a greater currency, or more dreadful effect, than at present. Generally, in the popular churches, the preacher takes it for granted that those who belong to the church are all believers, in the New Testament sense. If believers, they are taught that they must not doubt that their eternal salvation is assured. No inquiry is to be instituted as to whether they were ever born of the Spirit. No notice is taken of the fact that they never met the conditions of salvation as laid down by Christ, and that they are still, the same as ever, conformed to the world. If they back-

slide utterly, they need feel no alarm, as they are sure to be brought back to God; as taught in a hymn generally sung:

“If I forget him and wander away,  
Kindly he follows wherever I stray;  
Back to his dear, loving arms do I flee  
When I remember that Jesus loves me.”

This doctrine is deluding thousands to their eternal undoing. It is sending multitudes from the churches down to hell! No, it is dangerous to forget God, and wander from him ever so little. Falling bodies acquire momentum as they fall. Every minute it takes more to stop them. Believers need still to heed the warning that David gave to his truly converted son, “If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever” (1 Chron. 28:9).

### 335 POWER, A Gift of God

The Apostle declares that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Creeds are words; therefore, a belief in a creed, however, correct, does not, of itself, constitute a Christian. Professions are words; therefore, professions do not prove that one is in a state of salvation. If we are saved, we have power—power over our tempers, over our appetites and passions, over all the power of the devil, over sin in all its forms. This is of greater importance than the ability to make fluent prayers and preach fine sermons. Have you this power? It can not be obtained by reading. No amount of learning will produce it. It is the gift of God. It is bestowed in answer to persevering, penitential prayer. “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city” (Prov. 16:32).

### 336 POWER of God Exhibited

When Herod put Peter into prison, the saints had but little hopes of his life. The king had killed James, and seeing that it pleased the people, he aimed to add to his popularity by killing Peter also. He thought he made it

impossible for him to escape. He put him in prison. He had each of his hands bound to the hand of a soldier, so that Peter slept with a soldier each side of him. Guards were stationed before the door of the prison, by night and by day. The great iron gate added to the security. Escape seemed impossible.

But when God undertakes to deliver a man, chains and guards and prisons are of no account. Impossibilities vanish, like mist before the sun. The strongest chains are no more than spider's webs. The highest walls are like the smoothest pavement. The guards are no better than so many statues. At the touch of the angel, the chains fell from Peter's hands; the guards slept on undisturbed; the bolted door and massive iron gates opened of their own accord; and the servant of the Lord was led out into the free light of Heaven.

Nothing can withstand the power of God. He is the Lord Almighty! *Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

### 337 POWER by Restraint

Power results largely from restraints. Powder spread thinly on the ground, and set on fire, makes a harmless flash; but confine it in a gun, behind a bullet, aim it right and apply a spark, and it does deadly execution. Cover a hillside a mile wide with water an inch deep, and it only washes off the soil and leaves it barren; confine it in a narrow channel, and bring it in contact with the necessary machinery, and it turns the largest mill. Some people who seem to be honest, and want to do good, are wasting their lives in idle vaporings, because they can not bear restraint. They may belong to a church to the principles of which they are strongly attached; but if a conference of men, as godly as themselves and understanding the Scriptures as well as they do, disagree with them as to the best mode of reaching a result at which they all are aiming, they promptly withdraw and set up for themselves. In trying to influence everybody they influence nobody. After a few flashes that excite momentary attention, they subside and are heard of no more.

## 338 POWER, Enduement of

The great want of our preachers is the enduement of power from on high. Oh, that they would consent to see it! But that is one of the lamentable features of a destitution of the Spirit, that those who are without it do not know that they have not all the influence of the Holy Spirit that they need. They are like people who are asleep, but who do not know they are asleep. The direction which Christ gives to this class of preachers is, "Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Until this is done, they grope in the dark, ignorant of their own condition and of the condition of those entrusted to their care. They think they are all right, when in reality they are lacking in that which is essential.

If one is going on a journey he is careful to see that he is supplied with everything necessary for the journey. Why should one then attempt to make the journey of life without having so much of God's blessed Spirit as will make the journey joyous and the end glorious? Especially since every one who will obey God may have the fulness of the Spirit.

Beloveds, do not go before the people with dry sermons, and preaching prayers, and scolding exhortations. Go to God in earnest prayer, till he send upon you the fulness of the Spirit. Stay at the mercy-seat until endued with power from on high.

Long openings of meetings, long prayers and long testimonies, and long sermons, are unerring indications of a lack of the Holy Spirit. It does not take long to start an engine when the steam is up; one stroke of a pump in constant use will bring water. So it does not take a long time for one who is filled with the Spirit to get things moving in the congregation. It was a short sermon which Peter preached when the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. (Acts 10:44). It was a short prayer he made when Jesus stretched out his hand and took him safely across the yielding waters to the ship. Pray more in secret, and you will not need to pray so long in public. A man may pound in the dark without hitting a nail, and when he does hit it

he is more likely to spoil it than he is to drive it; but he who works in the light can, with a stroke or two, drive the nail in a sure place. Go to the people from directly communing with God, and then you can speak short and to the point, and with power.

### 339 POWER To Speak

To speak with power, we must have power. The schools may teach us words and how to array them in proper order, but we can not use them so as to silence gainsayers and conquer the candid, unless we are filled with the Holy Ghost. Dr. Adam Clarke, a great scholar, says: "He who is taught in spiritual matters by Christ Jesus has a better gift than the tongue of the learned. He who is taught in the school of Christ will speak to the point, and intelligently, too; though his words may not have that polish with which they who prefer *sound* to *sense* are often carried away."

Incoherent, random talk is never inspired by the Spirit of God. Those who speak in the Spirit use plain language, but it is appropriate to the occasion, and with convincing power.

### 340 PRAISE OF MEN Destructive

If you want the praise of men, and must have it, then abandon all idea of being a Christian. Did not the Master say, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you?" Who that ever served God with fidelity was the favorite of the generation in which he lived? "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52). Are we better than they? Then do not compromise the truth of God to please men,

"But speak in words of living power;  
They fall like drops of scalding rain  
That plashed before the burning shower  
Swept o'er the cities of the plain.

"Then scowling Hate turns deadly pale,  
Then Passion's half-coiled adders spring,  
And, smitten through their leprous mail,  
Strike right and left in hopes to sting."

If you are true to God and stand to your convictions you will doubtless get stung. But the wound will not be fatal. An application of the balm of Gilead will heal it at once. And in the end you will come off victorious. Scars upon the conqueror are counted glorious, for they show how hardly contested were the battles which he has won. Then be just as plain in your dress and outspoken in your language as God would have you.

341 PRAYER, Manner of

When people pray as an intellectual and moral exercise they can pray by rule. A man who is used to it can make a speech on any given subject on his knees, or on his feet with his eyes shut, as well as he can standing with his eyes open. But praying in earnest is quite another matter. He who prays in the Spirit must pray as the Spirit leads. Balaam, when he spoke from inspiration, could not say what the king had employed him to say, even though he himself wished to say it. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). Then let us have no programs for prayers. The prayer-meeting should be the place where earnest souls hold audience with Deity. Let it not be turned into a place of entertainment. Let it not be made an occasion for exchanging compliments or of paying off old grudges. Let it be the vestibule of Heaven, where we come with boldness "unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

342 PRAYER, Answer to, Recognized

No earthly interest can compare in value with the salvation of the soul. This life is short: eternity is long. He makes a tremendous mistake who sacrifices his eternal interests for anything or everything which this world can give.

A mother was greatly distressed for the salvation of her son, who had been raised to the pinnacle of earthly grandeur,

as superintendent of finance in France, in the days of its power and splendor. When, after years of prosperity, he was arrested, his pious mother, upon hearing of it, threw herself upon her knees and said: "I thank thee, O God; I have always prayed for his salvation, and here is the way to it!" The mother was both sane and sensible. The son died in prison, but the venerable mother had good reason for hope in his death.

Reader, are you doing all you can for the salvation of your family and your friends? Christ says, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

**343 PRAYER, Ardent, The Lack of the Church**

We must not only believe in God, but we must believe what God says. We must take his declarations, one by one, and place full confidence in each. We can be truly happy only as we are happy in God. The poet Young says:

"A Diety believed, is joy begun;  
 A Diety adored, is joy advanced;  
 A Diety beloved, is joy matured.  
 Each branch of piety delight inspires;  
 Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,  
 O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides;  
 Praise, the sweet exaltation of our joy,  
 That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still;  
 Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream  
 Of glory on the consecrated hour  
 Of man, in audience with the Deity,  
 Who worships the great God, that instant joins  
 The first in Heaven, and sets his foot on hell."

The great lack in all the churches of the land is ardent prayer.

**344 PRAYER, Want of Fervency In, Accounted for**

Professed Christians do not pray as much and as fervently as they should. The cause of this is, doubtless, in good part, the prevailing materialism of the age. But God has the same control over matter as he has over mind.

So we are to go to him with all our wants. Christ, when upon earth, did not confine his good offices to the souls of men. He did much for the bodies of many. The Apostle puts no restrictions when he says, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). Your requests may not always be granted. It may not be best for you that they should. But this glorious result will follow—the peace of God will reign in your heart. God knows what will do us the most good. When we commit all to God's wisdom and mercy it is easier to joyfully submit to his providences.

**345 PRAYER Must Not be Neglected**

When work hastens, do not let prayer slacken. The more we have to do, the more clear-headed we should be. False motions exhaust the strength more than do well-directed motions. Badly-aimed blows may hurt the one who gives them. Getting mad at men, or boys, or teams, or tools, hinders work more than family prayers. A team, to do good work, must have time in which to eat. Then, if you would have worldly business go off right, see that your business with God is rightly done. Wherever you pitch your tent, there build an altar. Take time to pray, to read your Bible, and to get blessed. Let this be your first and most important business. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Prov. 10:22).

**346 PRAYER, Prevailing**

If you would be a man of God you must be a man of prayer. After Jacob had wrestled all night in prayer, the angel said to him: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:28). He who would, as a Christian, have power with men, must have power with God. If you prevail with God you will overcome all who oppose. Giants still fall before the little Davids who go forth, strong in the Lord of Hosts. The

most effectual fighting we do, is done on our knees. Victories won in our closets are harbingers of victories to be won on the great battlefield of life. "Prayer ardent opens Heaven," not only for ourselves, but also for others. Preaching accomplishes but little unless it is attended with a good deal of praying. It is Divine power we need; and Divine power comes in answer to earnest, obedient, fervent prayer.

**347 PRAYER, Simple-hearted, Prevails**

Prayers, whether public or private, should be made to God, and should not be addressed to the ears of men. When we prevail with God in our prayers, men are moved. Jacob had power with God, and Esau was unmanned. Successful praying removed the necessity of fighting.

Win the battle on your knees, and you need not fear your foes. Do not make prayers when you pray. Rhetoric and eloquence are of no account whatever before the mercy-seat. David says, "God heard my cry." Figures of speech were of no account, but the simplest expression of heartfelt want brought immediate relief. In simple language, but in strong faith, make your requests known unto God.

**348 PRAYER, Christless, Unavailing**

An old man felt that he must die soon and was not ready to die. He had led what is called a moral life, but he saw that this was not sufficient. For many years he had been an "accepted Mason," but this did not assure him of his acceptance with God. He became truly concerned for the salvation of his soul. He began to pray. He seemed to pray with great earnestness, but peace did not come to his soul. His wife, a devoted Christian, noticed that he never mentioned Christ in his prayers. He always prayed to "Our Father." She explained to him the meaning of the words, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." He caught the idea. He came to God through Christ, and found pardon and peace, and died in holy triumph.

"Up to that time," said his wife, "I could see no harm

in Masonry. I now see that it is a soul-destroying snare—a well-baited trap of the devil to catch souls.”

349 PRAYER, Time Must be Secured for

It is well to look at the reason which the apostles gave in calling for assistants. It was not that they had too much to do and wanted to make it easier. It was not to escape the odium that one must almost necessarily incur in deciding upon conflicting interests. No selfish consideration prompted them to call for help. They were inspired simply by love of souls. They wished to devote themselves wholly to spiritual work without any hindrance. “*But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*” Adam Clarke says: “Even apostles could not live without prayer; they had no *independent* graces; what they had could not be *retained* without an increase: and for this increase they must make prayer and supplication, depending continually on their God. A minister who does not *pray much, studies in vain.*”

The great want of the church in these days is praying preachers. The apostles placed praying first. It was not public nor occasional. CONTINUALLY. Preachers who follow this example succeed in their work.

350 PRAYER, Importance of Continuing in

Much praying in secret opens the way for short prayers in public. It does not take him long to get to God who is accustomed to go to God. A pump that is in constant use does not need to be primed. A few strokes bring water. If a preacher goes into the pulpit backslidden, he had better, before he attempts to preach, pray till he is reclaimed. But he should have done this in the closet. If we talked with God more we should need to talk with men less, to persuade them to right action.

Bramwell wrote: “Pray! Pray! and continue in it; plead in it, weep in it, groan in it.” Christ says that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Pour out your complaints freely to God, and you will have fewer complaints

to make to your fellow men. More knee work will leave you less head work. The more prayer, the less perplexity there will be. When seas open and afford a passage, a bridge is not needed. Prayer not only supplies wants, but it lessens wants. He who has God has all.

### 351 PRAYER and Prudence

No amount of praying, and no assurance, however clear, that our prayer is answered, can supersede the necessity of our doing our part to bring about the desired result. If a farmer wants a crop of corn, praying will not take the place of plowing. Paul, when in the hands of his enemies, had a visit from the Lord, who said to him, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11). But when he learned that the Jews had formed a conspiracy to kill him, he took the same prudent means for the preservation of his life that a wise, courageous man naturally would, who had no assurance of divine protection.

### 352 PRAYER-MEETING, Primitive

Intense prayer was made for Peter by the church. There was a large prayer-meeting held for him at the home of the mother of John Mark. It was kept up till late in the night. They appear to have prayed with more fervor than faith. For when a young girl of their company, who had heard a knocking at the gate, and gone out to see what it meant, came in and told them that their prayers were answered and Peter stood at the gate, they could not believe her. They said she was crazy. When she insisted upon it that she was right, and that she had seen and heard the apostle, and left him standing at the gate, they said, "It is his angel."

How faithfully we imitate the primitive church in our *doubts*, if we do not in our *fervency*! We pray, and when, in an unexpected manner, we receive the thing for which we pray, we think it must be something else. In all sincerity we ask the Lord to sanctify us wholly. A great

blessing falls upon us, but we conclude it is only an appearance, and not a reality! And so the blessing is lost.

Again, we pray for bodily health, or for help in business, and we receive that for which we prayed. We can not doubt the reality, and so we begin to doubt that it came in answer to prayer. We are unworthy of having our prayers answered, and so we conclude that the event would have been the same if we had not prayed. Thus God is dishonored, faith paralyzed, spirituality dwarfed, and worldliness encouraged.

Beloveds, when you receive the things for which you pray, believe that they come in answer to prayer, and give glory to God. *Have faith in God.*

### 353 PREACH Gospel Truth

Some professed preachers of the gospel have evidently mistaken their calling. They manifest the instinct of detectives rather than that of men of God. Their scent for wrong-doing is supernaturally strong. They will associate familiarly with others, that they may, like the disguised detective, make out a case against them. Some prowl around back yards, and scan clothes-lines with a critical eye, to see if they can not find something that will convict the family of pride. They take delight in showing that those who, to others, give good evidence of leading a self-denying, Christian life, are, notwithstanding, in the way of death. When they preach, it is to accuse; when they write, it is to condemn. If any object to their methods, they say it is because they will not stand the truth. Beloveds, remember that there are many truths which are not gospel truths. Much that is, in police courts, proved to be true, is not fit for the pulpit. Give the people the clean, clear-cut truths of the gospel, and generally they will receive them. You can not state them too strongly for those who are honest. But hungry souls, longing to be fed, very properly object to being served to a dish of scandal. Those who are thirsting for the water of life turn in disgust from the mixture taken from the sewer, even though it is offered to them by a minister of the gospel. Be on the lookout for the good;

the bad will manifest itself as soon and as fast, and you will be able to correct it.

**354 PREACH** the Gospel Constantly

God has called Free Methodist preachers to preach the gospel. Let us be true to our call. Let no zeal for reforms, however needed, lead us to neglect in the least that work of the Spirit in the human heart which lies at the bottom of all reforms.

If you fail to get a congregation in the church, go, as soon as warm weather comes, to some suitable place out of doors. But wherever you go, be sure to carry "good tidings of great joy to all people."

**355 PREACHING, Definite**

When you preach, have something to say. Do not keep your hearers wandering around in a wilderness of words, without bringing them out into the light. Get at something. If you have nothing to say, stop. Do not rattle away, trying to pump water from a dry well. Better melt snow, if there is any at hand. If you are backslidden, either in heart or life, confess it, and get back to God. Let your dry, stereotyped prayer go, and break down before God and cry to him in earnest, and you will get a new start. So will your meetings. Others will catch your earnest spirit, and you will soon see manifestations of saving power. A live preacher will attract attention anywhere, especially among those who are spiritually dead. But a people must be very full of life among whom a dead preacher can not have a dead meeting.

**356 PREACHING, Definite Purpose in**

A preacher should appeal to conscience, but he should never strive to take the place of conscience. He should not attempt to go into all the details of private life. His sermons should not be made up of "glittering generalities" on the one hand, nor should they, on the other, go into every minute particular. The apostles did not. They laid down general principles, ministered the Spirit, and

left their hearers to apply the truths they heard to their daily lives.

While some preachers may err in going too minutely into particulars, the more common error is to be too indefinite. The statements of truth which they make are vague and unsupported; the conscience is not awakened; and what instruction is given makes but little impression. This arises largely from the want of a definite purpose to be accomplished by the sermon. What do I wish to persuade the hearers to do? is a question the preacher should ask himself. He should then adopt means which have a tendency to produce the desired results. Random shots are quite as liable to do harm as good. A great din and rattle does not necessarily win the battle. There must be good ammunition and correctness of aim, if the labor would not be lost.

#### 357 PREACHING: Fresh Truth Required

No matter how good old hay may be, sheep will leave it for green pasture, however poor. The hay may be more nutritious, but they will turn from it to nibble the green grass.

Christ's sheep act very much in the same way. They will go away from an able, dry sermon, to hear young boys and girls, who have recently tasted the joys of salvation, tell what the Lord has done for their souls. Such preferences may seem like perverseness, but there is no help for them. We preachers will have to submit. Our only way to keep the attention of the people is to have something good and fresh for them. We must ourselves go on into green pastures, and they will readily follow us there. A preacher who steadily grows in spirituality will not grow wearisome. A dry soul can but be dry in expression. He who can hardly endure himself, because of his spiritual deadness, ought not to wonder that the saints do not care to hear him preach. FEED MY SHEEP.

#### 358 PREACHING HYPOCRITE

One of the best sermons we ever heard was preached by a man who was hopelessly backslidden from God. He had

prepared the sermon when he enjoyed religion, and had preached it until it was familiar. He had enough conviction to give him feeling, and the congregation appeared, for the time being, to be carried away by him. He afterwards went to State's prison for crimes he was then committing.

Fletcher says of the preaching hypocrite: "He may have some feelings, but they are over with his sermon or prayer; some warmth for the church, as Jehu, because it is his party. But the Christian minister hath more zeal in his bosom than on his tongue. Elijah-like, the 'word of the Lord is as a fire in his bones.' His soul 'mourns in secret places' for the sins he reproves openly. He can put *probatum est* (it is proved) to what he preaches; and his zeal hath a very large measure of gospel love; it saves others while it consumes himself."

#### 359 PREACHING Must be in the Holy Ghost

Men may learn to preach the truth. The study of theology will enable them to do that. But there is one thing that no school can teach. And this is the essential to success in all preaching. This is to preach *in the Holy Ghost*. A preacher may get warmed up with his subject; he may have strong social qualities, and be able to touch the sympathies of others. This may draw his hearers to himself; but it will not draw them to the cross. It may make them his partizans; but it will not make them saints. To get souls saved you must have the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This will set your words on fire. Those who hear you will be pricked to the heart. One and another will cry out, "What must I do to be saved?"

#### 360 PREACHERS: Evidences of Their Call

To be an agent in the hands of God of saving souls from the power of sin, and of lifting them up to a life divine, is the noblest work in which a human being can engage. God calls men personally to this service. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of

God, as was Aaron" (Heb. 5:4). But how may a man know that he is called of God to the work of the ministry?

1. He will, in his soul, hear the Spirit's call. There will be an abiding impression on his heart that this is to be his work.

2. The spiritual ones among God's people will feel that he has a work to do for God, and will encourage him in it.

3. However unlettered he may be, God will bestow upon him such gracious gifts that his language, though it may lack accuracy and polish, will have weight and power. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Every uneducated man called of God to preach, makes a similar impression.

In a large town, a county-seat, a gentleman said to us, "More of the professional men, lawyers and doctors, go out to hear your preacher than go to hear all the other preachers in town."

"Why is it? He is an uneducated man, lately from the farm."

"I have been out to hear him, time after time, on purpose to be able to answer that question. I have come to the conclusion that it is because he preaches from inspiration."

4. Saints will be edified and sinners converted under his preaching. He may stir up fierce opposition, but he will do good; he will build up, and not tear down.

It is no evidence that a man is called of God to preach, because he can stir up a bad spirit in bad men and formal professors. Sinners can do that. If Christ is with a man, he can not only *stir devils*, but he can *cast them out*.

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John 15:5).

### 361 PREACHERS: Gifts and Graces

If a man does not possess the natural and gracious gifts which, properly cultivated and used, will make him a successful minister, then it is evident that God does not call

him to the work of the ministry. Dr. Adam Clarke says: "When under the influence of the grace of Christ, everything is turned to a man's advantage. The man whom he calls to his work he will take care to endue with every necessary qualification. And is it too much to say that God never did call a man to preach the gospel whom he did not qualify in such a manner that both the workman and the work should appear to be of God?" But the man called of God to preach is not always and in himself a sufficient judge. Many think they are called of God, when they give no satisfactory evidence of it to others, especially to the spiritual. Others are hardly willing to admit that the call of God is upon them, when the saints generally feel that God speaks through them, and has called them to his work. This was the case with John Knox, Whitefield, Dr. Redfield, and many others.

**362 PREACHERS Called of God Are Often Slow and Diffident**

Some very able and courageous ministers have been very slow to enter upon the work of the ministry. It was all the church could do to get them at it.

John Knox resisted the most earnest solicitations to preach. At last the minister and the church gave him a public call. The minister, after preaching a powerful sermon showing the authority of a church to license ministers, turned to Knox and said: "Brother, in the name of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, and in the name of all that presently call you by my mouth, I charge you that you refuse not this holy vocation, but as you tender the glory of God, the increase of Christ's kingdom, the edification of your brethren, that you take upon you the public office and charge of preaching, even as you look to avoid God's heavy displeasure, and desire that he shall multiply his graces unto you." Then, addressing the congregation, he said: "Was not this your charge unto me? and do ye not approve this vocation?" They all answered: "It was, and we approve it."

Knox was unable to speak, but, bursting into tears, he retired from the congregation.

**363 PREACHERS: Neglect of Calling Perilous**

A man that God calls to preach should preach. He may do other things, but he should not allow anything to interfere with his preaching. If he does, he is likely to get at cross-purposes with God's providences. He may chase after the world, but his chariot wheels will drive heavily. He may count on one of two things: he will either lose his soul, or he will lose the property which he acquired by neglecting his God-given work—perhaps both. A man can not habitually neglect the work which Christ calls him to do without falling into condemnation. But there is no condemnation to one who is in Christ Jesus. He may be in the church, but if he is not in Christ he is a candidate for perdition. No forms of religion, no reputation among men, no amount of property, can save one who is living in wilful disobedience to the commands of Christ. A buried talent is a misused talent. He that gathereth not with Christ scattereth abroad. It is folly for such an useless one to dream of Heaven. Christ pronounces his doom: "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

**364 PREACHERS, Recommending**

Our quarterly conferences should exercise great care in recommending preachers to join the traveling connection. Their recommendation is not a matter of form. It carries great weight with it. It should be well-nigh conclusive. For the quarterly conference is supposed to know intimately every person whom it recommends. Then they are acting for themselves, as well as for others. The person recommended is liable to be sent back to the circuit as its preacher.

Generally it is a trial to one who is recommended to an annual conference not to be admitted. In such a case he often feels that justice has not been done him. Those who know him well, among whom perhaps he has lived for years, have voted for him; and now, when strangers reject him, he is apt to conclude that he has not been fairly represented or dealt by. Sometimes those who are recommended

make preparations to join conference which involve pecuniary sacrifices. Then, if they are not received, they feel that they have been wronged. If they do not backslide over it, their religious enjoyment is disturbed and their capacity for usefulness lessened.

Therefore, while quarterly conferences should encourage all suitable persons, they should be very careful and not recommend any but those who are, *in all respects*, suitable to enter the traveling connection.

In particular, they should see to it that every person recommended is :

1. Possessed of the necessary spiritual qualifications. He is to do spiritual work. He should therefore be a spiritual man. First of all, he must be a man of approved piety. Unless he knows *from experience* the way of salvation, he can not lead others in that way. No man of doubtful piety should ever be put forward in the church of Jesus Christ. Preachers of the gospel should be converted and sanctified before they begin to preach. No matter what other qualifications one may possess, if he does not live the religion which he professes, he should not be recommended by a quarterly conference.

2. He should possess the necessary gifts for the work. He should have correct ideas of the simpler truths of the gospel. A man can not teach what he does not know. He should have the gift of utterance. He is to declare to the people the words of eternal life. He should therefore be able to express himself clearly and forcibly. Proper use may strengthen faculties, but it can not create them.

3. That he be successful in the work. Neither the New Testament, nor our Discipline, contemplates the thrusting out into the responsible work of a minister, raw and inexperienced men. Our Savior called men from their fish-nets to carry his gospel to the world; but he gave them a practical training of three years' duration before they entered fully upon their work. Even after this he told them, before they finally went out upon their mission, "But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

St. Paul, speaking of those about to enter upon the higher duties of the ministry, wrote, "And let such also first be proved."

Our Discipline, in giving directions for the "Examination of those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach," asks, "Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin and converted to God by their preaching?"

Then do not recommend any to be received by an annual conference until they have demonstrated, by their zeal for the salvation of souls, and by their success in winning them to Christ, that God has called them to go before men as his ambassadors. The utmost pains should be taken by our people to secure for themselves a capable and efficient ministry. And the proper place to guard this point is at the gate by which men are admitted to the ministry, and not at that through which they are sent to their respective circuits. Of the former the people are the proper custodians; they should leave the latter to those to whose fidelity it is entrusted. Men had better labor as local preachers, or under a chairman, until they have satisfied themselves and the church that God calls them to devote themselves exclusively to the work of the ministry.

Some minor things should also have an influence in deciding whether one should be recommended for the traveling connection.

Has he suitable health? The calling is a laborious one. It makes large draughts upon one's physical and nervous energies. Has he a family? If so, will they be a help to him, or will their influence go far towards neutralizing his labors? The Primitive Methodists of England admit none but single men to their conference; and they are required to travel four years before they marry.

Is he in debt? Our preachers are given at best but a moderate support, and none should be recommended who have debts hanging over them, which they are unable to pay. The preacher who asks admission to a conference should also have a horse and saddle, or buggy, and a moderate supply of books.

If more of our men would enter the ministry better

prepared, they would stay in it longer. It is a great hindrance to the work of God for men to drop out of the ministry just when they are prepared to become most effective.

We hope every member of our quarterly conferences will carefully consider these things, and act intelligently and conscientiously in the matter of recommending preachers.

365 PREACHERS, Recommending—Continued

Again we call the attention of our quarterly conferences to this subject. The question of granting licenses to preach, and of recommending preachers to the traveling connection, is one of the most important questions that comes before a quarterly conference. It is an act that should be done with great care, and candor, and conscientiousness. Prejudice and partizan feeling and personal sympathy should be carefully guarded against, and not be allowed to have any influence in deciding who shall be licensed to preach, and who shall be recommended to go into the regular work of the ministry. The fear of God, and an ardent love for his cause should control the judgment in these matters. The cause of God may suffer serious loss by keeping those out of the ministry whom he has called to this work. It may suffer greatly by introducing improper persons into the ministry, or by pushing forward prematurely those who are really called to preach. As a rule, it is better for the man and better for the work, that he enter upon it later and continue in it longer, than that he go at it early and quit it early. We need all the sense we can command, and all the heavenly wisdom we can obtain, to be able to put forward the right men at the right time.

In addition to what we have already said, we wish to add the following: See that every one you recommend is not only truly converted, and really called of God to preach, but that he is a Free Methodist *in principle and in practises*. Many a person is called of God to preach who is not called

to preach among us. A duck may be as useful a fowl as a hen, but it requires a different yard. A preacher, to develop fully and do all the good of which he is capable, must be connected with the people to whom he properly belongs.

Before we take the first step towards introducing one into our ministry, we should be satisfied that he is, in his inward convictions, a Free Methodist. If one can be just as much at home in another denomination as with us, then he had better go there on the start, for he probably will after we have had the trial and our trouble of training him. There are so many difficulties in the work of the faithful minister of the gospel, that one who is not fully satisfied that he is in his proper place will be quite likely to want to change his relations whenever there is a favorable opportunity. Our people, as a rule, have deep religious convictions. They are aiming, not so much to build up a denomination, as to spread abroad a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. A preacher who does not share these convictions with them, is likely to prove unacceptable everywhere he is sent, and that without any apparent reason. He may keep his doubts to himself, but he is not likely to succeed among us, whatever may be his ability, unless his intellect, his affections, his conscience and his will are in the work. After weakening, if not destroying, several societies, he will probably seek more congenial relations. We should then see that one has intelligent and clear convictions of gospel truth, *as we hold it*, before we send him out to preach among us.

If there is any reasonable doubt in the case of any one, it is generally better to let him travel under the chairman until these doubts are removed. If he feels that he should, he can then drop out with less injury to the work and less discredit to himself, than he could from the traveling connection.

Therefore, let no one be recommended by our quarterly conferences unless there is a strong and reasonable probability that he will make an acceptable and useful preacher among us.

**366 PREACHERS, Licensing**

Not every one who can talk and pray fluently is called to preach. All who feel called to preach are not called to preach among us. God has given us as a people our special work to do, and we should stick to it. To do this, it is of the utmost importance that all our preachers, evangelists, and public teachers be of one heart and one mind in the things of God. When a person comes up for license, the chairman should institute a careful examination as to doctrines. No matter what may be the gifts of any one, he should not be licensed to preach, or hold meetings among us, unless he is sound in the faith. If he is not in full accord with us, he should go somewhere else. Our people are properly very particular as to what they hear. They can stand a good deal of false syntax, but they can not stand false doctrines. They are exceedingly exacting in this respect. However crooked the sentences may be, they want the doctrines straight. Let all who have to do with granting licenses be careful not to license any one who will bring any other gospel than that which you have had from the beginning. It may afflict to refuse; but to grant the license will only make trouble. It will afflict more to take it away, as you will be obliged to, than it would to refuse at the start. Be kind, but firm.

**367 PREACHERS Should be Consecrated to Work**

Some seem to think they can not be entirely consecrated to God unless they can spend all their time in attending meetings. This is a great mistake. God may call some to spend more of their time in holding meetings; but comparatively few are thus called. Even Paul, incessant as he was in his labors in the gospel, yet found time to work at his trade, to support himself and those that were with him. Because God calls a man to preach, that is no reason why he should never work with his hands. As a rule, it will help him to preach, to work with his hands several hours a day. It will give him greater bodily and mental vigor. On one of the most important, able and liberal appointments we ever had, we got another horse and

put with ours, and drew up our wood for the year. We sawed and split it in the winter. In the summer we made, with our own hands, a good garden which contributed materially to our support. Yet we held, we presume, on an average a meeting a day, throughout the year. We had appointments week-day evenings at the schoolhouses round about. God gave us powerful revivals. We did not break down under it, but grew in grace, and in bodily strength. Spirituality and industry go well together. Only keep your mind stayed on God, your eye single, your affections set on things above, and working with your hands will not hurt your enjoyment. You can get blessed holding the plow or swinging the ax, if you will.

#### 368 PREACHER'S Heart Must be in Work

If you are laboring for souls, you must put *your heart* into the work, or it will amount to but little. Many a preacher does his duty in a general way; you can not find out anything that he leaves undone, but it all appears to amount to but little. The most that can be said is, that the church does not run down; but it makes no sensible progress in bringing the world to Christ. There are few conversions, and they are of a very weak character. The trouble is, the preacher's heart is not in the work. All under his influence soon come to partake of his indifference. There may be pride in keeping up the show of external prosperity in the church, but spirituality dies out. Preacher and people drift away quietly to perdition. Everywhere there is need of heart work. Put your heart in your sermons, in your prayers, in your exhortations, in your singing, and above all *in your pastoral visiting*, and you will soon see a marked change in the religious condition of the society. Even under the Mosaic dispensation, with all its forms, it was heart service upon which God laid the stress. "I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." It is greatly to be feared that the warning words of Christ will apply to many in our day. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth

me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8). No matter how gorgeous and imposing may be the service of such people, God says, "In vain do they worship me."

#### 369 PREACHERS Should Have Deep Convictions

See to it that every one who is admitted to an annual conference is a Free Methodist, in his deep, abiding convictions. We are called to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints," and if one is just as well satisfied with the faith of popular churches, he can not possibly do our work. He will do us more harm than good. The Free Methodist church is not a primary school for apprentices to practise in till they learn how to preach, then go to some popular church that can pay a higher salary. We want men composed of the stuff that martyrs are made of—men so devoted to the principles of the New Testament that they are not only willing to endure privations and labors for them, but to lay down their lives in their support. These are the men we want for preachers. Such men are still to be found; and God can raise up others. Some of them may be uneducated, but no matter for that; a man called of God to preach, and who follows him fully, will develop with astonishing rapidity. You will be astonished to see how soon, with proper application, he will be able to fill acceptably any pulpit from which they want the truth preached. Let all our preachers be Free Methodist preachers.

#### 370 PREACHERS: Men of One Business

A preacher, to succeed, must have his heart in his work. If he is taken up with farming, or book-selling, or literary labors, or with anything else, no matter what may be his ability, he will fail as a preacher. What he is doing may not be at all inconsistent with the work of a minister of the gospel, but if it engrosses his attention, it spoils him for soul-saving. Newton, when asked how he made such great discoveries, replied: "By always thinking about them." The preacher who puts his mind on the great matters of sal-

vation can not but make what will be, to him at least, new discoveries in the things of God. He will be able to do things not provided for in the standard formulas. He will grow in knowledge, as well as in grace, and will not be either barren or unfruitful.

### 371 PREACHERS Are Watchmen

God pronounces the severest denunciations against unfaithful ministers. "His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they can not bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Isa. 56:10, 11). By "dumb dogs" is meant preachers who do not warn their people of dangers that threaten them. They are "blind watchmen" and can not see that there is any harm in persons who profess godliness "adorning themselves with gold and pearls and costly array," although God has expressly forbidden it. They are "ignorant watchmen" who say, "I know nothing about Masonry," and so fail to show their people that there is as great inconsistency in a man's belonging to the church and the lodge at the same time, as there would be in his professing to be at once a Christian and a Mohammedan. To every one of his ministers God says, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me" (Ezek. 3:17).

### 372 PREACHERS Should be Good Generals

Preachers should be good generals. No general does all the fighting. He plans for his men and leads them on to successfully execute his plans. So a preacher should not attempt to do all the work. Nor should he leave his people without the opportunity of doing anything in meetings and then scold them because they do not work. In most societies there are persons having the ability, if properly developed and directed, to hold interesting and profitable meetings. Mission ground should be occupied and such persons set

to work. The way should be opened for them to take a part in the regular meetings. The preacher should be quick to see what each of his members can do to help on the cause of God, and set them at it and keep them at it.

### 373 PREACHERS Must Feel for the Lost

One who had a wide observation among farmers, and some experience in farming, said, "There is no fertilizer for a farm like brains, and you need to keep the brains on the farm." The preacher who puts his whole soul into his work can hardly fail of success. Nothing flavors a sermon like a deep interest for the souls of the hearers. Plain speech seldom gives offense, when it springs from love, and is uttered in an affectionate manner. Preachers more generally fail from lack of feeling than from lack of learning. "He that goeth forth, and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

### 374 PREACHERS of Righteousness

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. The great need of the day is preachers of the same kind. It should be insisted upon in every pulpit in the land, that no correctness of creed can compensate for the lack of uprightness in the daily life. Nothing can be plainer than the following: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil" (1 John 3:8, 9).

Ponder well these weighty words. They express in plain terms the tenor of the whole of the teaching of the New Testament. Not a single passage can be found which promises Heaven to the *religious*. It is "*to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, [that God shall render] eternal life*" (Rom. 2:7). Your religion, then, must be so thoroughly experimental that it is intensely practical. Christ says, not church-members, but *the* RIGHTEOUS, shall go away into *life eternal*.

**375 PREACHERS Must be Faithful to God**

The Prophet says: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully" (Jer. 48:10). In the Revised Version it is "negligently." Though this is spoken of *executing* temporal judgments upon those whom God had condemned to death, yet it has application to those who are called upon to *declare* the judgments of God. They are to do it faithfully. The truth which they proclaim is not theirs, but God's. They have no right

"To smooth down the stubborn text to ears polite,  
And snugly keep damnation out of sight."

Preachers of the gospel are ambassadors for Christ. It is treason to Christ for such men to make alliances with his enemies. Nor have they the right to dictate terms of peace. These Christ has laid down. He never varies from them in the slightest to accommodate the mightiest sinner that ever sued for pardon. He demands of all an unconditional surrender. He accepts nothing but entire submission to his will.

**376 PREACHERS Should be Humble**

Spiritual pride is one of the dangers that beset us in every stage of our religious experience. The better and greater our experience is, the greater is our danger from this source. The Apostle says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" (1 Cor. 8:1). Therefore it is of the greatest importance that our charity keep pace with our knowledge. Unless it does, we are in danger of becoming proud and self-willed. Many preachers lose their power of doing good just at the time when they might do most good, if they would keep filled with humble love. But they know so much, and so insist upon having their own way, that God leaves them, and their brethren leave them, and they become useless, or worse than useless, at that period in their lives when they might, by keeping humble, be most useful. "A man's pride shall bring him low; but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Prov. 29:23).

## 377 PREACHERS Must be Active

He who attempts little accomplishes little. A preacher who settles down with his family and simply fills his appointments, and preaches over and over his old sermons, and makes only *social* visits, can but fail in his work. He does not win souls. He does not expect to; he does not try to. He is like a blind horse on a treadmill.

But he who settles down to his work, and expects to succeed in it, does succeed. He proposes to do something, and he wisely adapts his means to the end to be attained. His work is not in vain in the Lord.

John Eliot, one of the first missionaries to the American Indians, wrote: "Prayer and pains, through faith in Christ Jesus, will accomplish anything." The faith that does not produce prayer and pains is downright presumption. If you have faith for a revival, then go to work to promote a revival. In the waters of salvation the fishing season lasts the year round.

## 378 PREACHERS: Reverence in the Pulpit

Profanity is out of place everywhere, especially in the pulpit. Preachers should, of all men, never take the name of God in vain. They should not utter it needlessly. It should always be spoken with reverence. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do." To frequently and needlessly use the name of Deity is certainly a *vain repetition*. It is dreadful for a preacher to talk so as to call forth such a comment as an artless child made when she came out of church: "Ma, what made that man swear so?"

We have been shocked by language which we have heard from the pulpit. We once told a preacher that his sermon sounded like blasphemy. He defended himself, refused to reform, soon lost his influence, and dropped out of sight. Language bordering on profanity does not render a sermon vigorous. Expressions proper in themselves, such as "Praise God," should not be made in a commonplace, unfeeling manner. Let us see to it that, in preaching and praying, we have the Holy Spirit. If we do, we shall have a spirit of

reverence. Our words and our manner will not shock the most delicate sensibilities.

**379 PREACHERS Labor Under a Disadvantage**

Our preachers labor under one great disadvantage. There is no denying it; and worse still, there does not appear to be any way of avoiding it. Everywhere they are, to use a common phrase, undersold. Salvation is offered on easier terms than they dare propose. People get convicted under their preaching and then are attracted to a popular church, by some professional singer sent for as a decoy, and these are offered salvation on about their own terms. The Freemason need not give up the lodge, the proud need not give up their jewelry, confession of wrongs to others and restitution is not insisted on; all they must do is "only to believe," and they are pronounced converted. The revival meeting is adjourned over for the church festival, and there is a blending of fun and faith that brings about great results. A large number of converts are reported; the account of a great revival is sent abroad. Yet of the converts it would be hard to find one who has forsaken all in order to become a disciple of Christ.

**380 PREACHERS Do Not Always Have Equal Liberty**

A man who preaches from inspiration will not have the same help at all times. Much depends on watching and prayer, but still the "wind bloweth where it listeth," and the peculiar influence of the Spirit that we may desire is not always at our command. The most careful and prayerful may have a barren season. But they should not condemn themselves on that account.

Bishop Hamline was a man of God, who enjoyed and preached holiness. He wrote as follows of a sermon he preached at Trumansburgh, New York, August 12, 1847:

"Preached this morning to a full house, of all mixtures, on 'perfect love.' Good attention, but no signs of feeling. The people of these parts think; but if they feel, they do it inwardly and 'as it were in secret.' It is a time of declension, however."

**381 PREACHERS, Self Indulgent**

A preacher should be a man of clean hands and pure heart. His body should be clean, his conversation should be pure. Without moral purity a preacher will be lost just as truly as if he were engaged in another business. His popularity as a minister, his success as a revivalist, can not save him. As good peaches as I ever ate, I picked from a tree that had been broken down for weeks. One side of the trunk held together, and allowed enough sap to circulate to mature the crop under the burden of which the tree broke down. But it never bore again. So, a preacher, after he has fallen into sin, may go on under the momentum he gathered when he was right with God and see souls converted. But he must not take this as an indorsement of God upon his soul. It is simply a divine indorsement of the truth, and not of the one who utters it. One going away from church may direct others to it. Paul was a self-denying, devoted preacher. Yet, after years of heroic devotion to his work, he writes, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). He does not say, "lest I should cripple my influence," or, "lest others should stumble over me," but "lest I myself should be a castaway." Paul evidently believed that a truly converted, sanctified, laborious, and successful minister might, at last, be lost through self-indulgence. Reader, how is it with you? Are you pure in heart, and in life? Are you cleansed from secret sins?

**382 PREACHERS Should Not Forsake Calling**

A preacher may have mistaken his calling. If he has, the quicker he leaves the pulpit the better for himself and for the cause of God. But if he is truly called of God to preach, and God has set his seal to his ministry, he runs a fearful risk when he quits preaching for some more lucrative employment. He is quite likely to make shipwreck, both for this world and for the world to come. It will be well if he does not drag his family with him down to ruin. Preachers who get into debt through neglect of their duties,

and through a spirit of indolence and self-indulgence, and quit preaching for a time to get out of debt, generally become involved more deeply. The only path of safety is the path of duty. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper; and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

### 383 PREACHERS, Faithful, Rewarded

The greatest rewards in the life to come are promised to faithful ministers. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). There is to be a great difference in their favor over ordinary saints who get through to glory. And this difference is to last to all eternity. But mark! It is not merely the *preacher* that is to be thus rewarded. It is not merely the active or the successful preacher, as success is commonly estimated. In fact, it may be other than a preacher. It is the one, be he preacher or layman, who *turns many to righteousness*. This is the essential thing. Thorough work is demanded. No notice whatever will be taken of the multitudes who rise up for prayers, and who join the church without any marked change in their character or conduct. They must be turned to the love and practise of the right—to temperance, chastity, honesty and veracity, industry and humility. They must be so made over that they will always be found on the side of the right. They must have all the active virtues included in that comprehensive word *righteousness*. Precious few of the many who are called converts does God count. But rewards will be distributed according to his reckoning.

### 384 PREACHERS Should Go Early to Their Circuits

If a preacher has a visit to make before entering upon his duties on a new circuit, he had better make it before than after conference. Sometimes a preacher's usefulness for a whole year is lessened by his failure to get to his circuit in season. The people come out to hear him, and are

disappointed, until their interest in him dies away. Others enter upon fields of labor that he might have occupied. He meets a discouraged people, when he might have met people full of courage, if he had met them in season. He is too late with his protracted meetings, too late in getting around among his members, and alas. they are too late in their support. He began behind, and never catches up. He goes to conference a discouraged preacher, and the people very naturally want a change. If you had a gold mine to work, you would feel that you could not get at it too soon. If you had wheat to sow, you would want to get it in the ground in season. If your soul is on fire for the salvation of the souls committed to your care, you will want to commence your ministry among them as soon as possible.

#### 385 PREACHER'S Reception to New Circuit

Preachers are human beings; they, and their families, have the feelings and the wants of human beings. If, when they come to your circuits, you give them a cordial reception, it will go a good ways toward making them think that they are in the right place, and it will help give them the courage and the faith they need to make them useful. So, when the new preacher comes, take pains to look after his wants. Do not leave it for somebody else. Invite him to your house and make him feel at home. See to getting his things moved; and make no charge for drawing his goods to, or from, the depot. Furnish the parsonage with something for the family to begin living with, and do not let them feel at the outset that they have come upon a "starvation circuit." If the weather is unpleasant or pleasant, get out to hear him preach; look up to get blessed, and if you hear anything that touches you, bring out a good, hearty Amen. It will help the preacher amazingly. In short, give your preacher a cordial Christian reception. It will bring out the good that is in him.

#### 386 PREACHERS' Wants to be Known

Appearances can not always be depended upon. We were told in Minnesota of a well-to-do brother who felt impressed

to see how the preacher was getting along for provisions. So he decided to take dinner with him. The preacher's family had nothing whatever to eat. But just before dinner time a neighbor sent in a loaf of bread. Some one else sent them a piece of fresh meat; another a little butter. The children found a nest full of eggs. So the preacher's wife prepared an excellent dinner, and set on the table all there was in the house to eat. The brother enjoyed the dinner and went away and reported the wants of the preacher were abundantly supplied; that they lived better than he did.

Hasty conclusions are often wrong conclusions. Patient investigation would often show that things are entirely different from what they appear to be on the surface. Job, in repelling the false accusations of his friends, gave as one manifestation of his integrity, "The cause which I knew not I searched out." More of Job's uprightness would make us less hasty in our decisions.

#### 387 PREACHERS, Care of Worn-out

Where people have true religion they will take care of their preachers, not only while they are effective, but when they become disabled. No humane man ever turns out to starve an old horse that has served him faithfully. C. B. Edgar, of Brooklyn, N. Y., says in a late number of the *Christian Evangelist*, the organ of those who call themselves "Christians": "In our church the superannuated pastor may literally starve, if he is too proud to beg through the church papers for pennies. I never heard of one of our churches pensioning its worn-out pastor. Sometimes a poor, old preacher moves around among the churches, suffering exposure and discomfort, leaving a kind of tribute by preaching an old sermon, or threatening to do so, which is often more effective of his main purpose. Is it surprising that the last days of some of our old preachers are full of bitterness? When I think of all the heartless, selfish, ungrateful treatment that I have seen and known of churches toward ministers I am persuaded that there is to be an awful reckoning above. If it is true that corporations have no souls, I am sometimes led to believe neither have some churches."

Such churches, whatever they may style themselves, are not Christian churches. Such people need to be converted.

Reader, are you doing your duty by your pastor?

**388 PREACHERS, Be Good to Your**

Be good to your preachers. It will help them to be good preachers. A man full of courage does not seem to be the same man as he is when he is full of discouragement. In contests of physical strength, much stress is laid upon the condition of the contestants. So the success of a society depends largely upon the condition of the preacher. If you are doing your share to keep him in good condition, you are doing more than you know to promote the cause of God. Help him temporally. See that he and his family do not want. Help him spiritually. Pray for him, but do not pray at him. Give him a word of encouragement now and then. It will help him greatly.

**389 PREACHERS Must be in Sympathy With Us**

Not every one who is called to preach is called to be a Free Methodist preacher. God has raised us up to do a work that no other denomination is doing. We are a *peculiar people*. If we ever cease to be such, we should cease to be. No denomination has a right to existence unless it is *essentially different* from the others.

No person, whatever his gifts and graces, should be put in the way of becoming a member among us, unless he is thoroughly and conscientiously in sympathy with us. Richard Baxter says: "No man is fit to be a minister of Christ who is not of a public spirit as to the church; does not delight in her beauty, nor long for her felicity. As the good of the commonwealth must be the end of the magistrate, so must the felicity of the church be the end of her pastors. They must rejoice in her welfare, and be willing to spend and be spent for her sake."

He who comes among us to preach because he thinks it is more easy to get into the ministry with us than with some older denomination, should receive no encouragement. We should not set a man to teach what he does not believe.

## 390 PREACHERS To be Esteemed for Work's Sake

We should always bear in mind that the Scriptures base the claims of preachers to consideration, not upon their position, but upon their character and conduct. Bad qualities are only made the more conspicuous by putting them into the pulpit. A preacher who lacks industry is no better than a lazy clerk or hired man. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." Here is nothing about names or titles, or succession; the stress is laid upon their conduct. *Labor among you.* They did not settle down and take it easy; they worked, and spent as many hours in a day in their sacred calling as wage-workers do in their secular calling. They visited—not where they could get good cheer—but where their help was needed. They dealt faithfully with souls, warning and admonishing those who are out of the way. People like to have their preachers industrious. They even like to have them admonish *others*; but there are but few who can bear to have the preacher admonish *them*. Hence the Apostle beseeches us to "esteem very highly in love for their work's sake" those who admonish *us personally*. Brother, will you yield to the Apostle's entreaty in this particular?

## 391 PREACHERS, Faithful, Not Likely to be Popular

Paul said to his hearers: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). But what trouble did it bring upon him! He began preaching in Damascus right away after he was converted. He "confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." When men can not reply to the truth, and will not yield to it, they can get mad. "And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him." This was but a foretaste of the treatment that assailed him everywhere. He was expelled from Antioch; he fled from Iconium; he was stoned at Lystra; he was beaten with many stripes at Philippi, put into jail, and his feet made fast in the stocks; and so on until he finally died

the martyr's death. Yet Paul was one of the most prudent of men. But he never became popular. Any one who makes up his mind to deal faithfully with souls, as Paul did, must lay aside all thoughts of popularity. He will meet opposition and persecution, to the full extent that the law will allow. But he will be so upheld by infinite power that he can say, "None of these things move me." It is true that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

### 392 PREACHERS, Half-heartedness Destroys Usefulness of

Half-heartedness in his work will destroy the usefulness of any preacher. He may be popular with the world; but he will have little power to promote the salvation of souls. At a time when he is, in most respects, capable of doing most good, he does the least. His lack of spirituality, of whole-heartedness in the cause of God, more than overbalances the knowledge which he has gained from books and from experience. The church suffers, the circuit suffers, his family suffers. A dry-rot within is invisibly eating up his strength, and in some emergency his Christian character utterly goes to pieces. The catastrophe comes on at once: the preparation for it had been going on for some time.

### 393 PREACHERS, Like, Like People

Paul, in writing to the saints, speaks of the work done among them by their ministers, and says, *whose faith follow*.

The people are quite inclined to obey this apostolic direction. They look upon their preacher as their leader, and they are apt to follow where he leads. If he goes to the lodge, some of them will go with him. If he is fond of worldly pleasures, he will take them to festivals and frolics. If his faith is weak, and he gives way to discouragements, they will be discouraged. But if he is truly a man of God, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, he will be apt to have a live church, rejoicing in hope.

When a preacher is complaining of his people, they generally will be found complaining of him.

**394 PREACHERS in Conflict with Members**

Some preachers appear to have a strong inclination to come in conflict with old, reliable, substantial members. We had hard work at one time to keep a young and inexperienced preacher from taking steps to turn out of the church the best member there was in it. She was one of the most godly women we ever knew, with more than ordinary good sense and prudence. She had been the means of forming the society and building the church. Yet the preacher took a dislike to her, and seemed determined to get her out of the society.

If a conference finds that it has such men belonging to it, the stationing committee should not make them preachers in charge, until they are thoroughly cured. They should not be allowed to go on destroying societies. Better hurt the feelings of the preacher than allow him seriously to hurt the work.

**395 PREACHERS' Indiscretion**

Christ derives many of his best illustrations from farming operations. A farm furnishes a good deal of excellent training for religious teachers. Moses, brought up in the court of Pharaoh, afterwards had his forty years' training on a farm, before he was fitted to become the leader and law-giver of God's people. A month's work splitting rails might do some young preachers more good than a theological seminary could do for them in the same time. I am not certain that Abraham Lincoln could have carried this nation triumphantly through the great crisis which endangered its existence, if he had not learned to split rails when a boy. He found out that, though, to split a log, it is necessary to get the big end of the wedge in, yet the best way to do it is to put the thin edge in first. This is something that it takes some preachers so long to learn. It seems as if they would never learn it. They will persist, in spite of repeated failures, in trying to get the big end of the wedge in first. They make it a matter of conscience to do it. They think it is compromising not to attack at once whatever they may see wrong in another, although the per-

son assailed may see no wrong in it, in comparison with others of which he knows he is guilty. Instead of *drawing* souls to Christ, they stir up their prejudices and arouse their animosities.

Brethren, do not spoil your mauls by trying to drive in the big end of the wedge first.

### 396 PREACHERS, Lazy

"If there is anything especially repulsive to me," said a godly layman, whose life and means are consecrated to the cause of Christ, "it is a lazy preacher."

We agree with him. A man called of God to snatch souls from eternal burnings, taking it easy, lying around, feeling no concern, doing as little as he can for the salvation of others! Why, he must be wanting in common humanity. A man whom Christ has called to labor in his vineyard, and whom he has promised to reward eternally according as his work shall be, hardly working at his calling one day in seven, and then going at it in such a lifeless manner that he might just as well not work at all! How can such a man believe one word that Christ says? If he believed Christ, would he not be moved by the fear of meeting such a doom as this: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30)?

President Edwards was right when he said, "Slothfulness in the cause of God is as damning as open rebellion." One can as surely go from the pulpit to hell as from a saloon to hell. No place or position which one occupies can save him. One evidence of salvation is filling our place to the glory of God.

The brother referred to said, "Do not send a lazy preacher on our circuit." So say the people generally. A lazy preacher is not acceptable anywhere. No matter how correct his life, or how great his ability to preach, the people do not want him. There is no place for him on earth, there is no place for him in Heaven, and if he goes to hell, the devil will go at him first thing, to stir him up.

## 397 PREACHERS, Declension of Spiritual Life in

It is always expected that the master of the trade will do better work than the apprentice. To this rule perhaps the ministry furnishes the most notable exceptions. We inquire about preachers who, in the prime of life, are so dry and powerless that no circuit wants them, and we are told that when boys in the ministry they carried everything before them. They had revivals wherever they went. Men who fight demonstrations used to fall under the power of God. What is the matter? They know more than they did. They preach more systematic sermons. But this is not the cause of their present inefficiency. The trouble is they have backslidden in heart from God. They have lost their first love. And the worst of it is, they will not consent to see it.

Beloved, have you lost power with God? Then ask yourself the question, "Is there not a cause?" Search it out and remove it.

## 398 PREACHERS, Backslidden

One mark of a backslider is a loss of power. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." It is equally true that you will lose this power if the Spirit leaves you. A preacher is all given to the Lord, and, as a consequence, is filled with the Spirit, and is successful in his work. He is spoken well of and cared well for. He becomes, by degrees, spiritually proud, conceited and worldly. He goes to another field. The people see him in the light of his present experience. The impression they get is, that he is formal, and selfish. He thinks they fail to appreciate him—that they are bigoted, and prejudiced—and that he can do them no good. It looks to him like a waste of time to stay on such an unpromising field. It never occurs to him that the real difficulty is with himself. In reality he is backslidden from God, and does not know it. He preaches plain, but it is in bitterness, and not in love. He does not love the people, and they feel it. They go to hear him a few times, and then leave him alone. The remedy is not to get back on the old field, but to

get back the old experience. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

#### 399 PREACHERS Should Not Talk Too Much

If preachers would pray longer in their closets, and shorter in public; if they would spend more time in studying their Bibles, and less time in talking from them, they would meet with more success. Skim-milk takes up more room than cream, but it does not make so much butter. Long talks fill up the time, but they do not bring about the desired results. Never talk to kill time. If you have nothing to say, then say nothing. The Spirit is quite as likely to work amid profound silence, as in a talk full of profound emptiness. So minister the Spirit that those who hear will have something to say, either in the way of confession or of testimony. Then give them time to take the part they should in the meeting, and if they do their duty you will have a good meeting. But many a well-meaning preacher talks his meetings to death.

#### 400 PREACHERS Warned Against Jealousy

Moses showed that he was called of God by his willingness that God's work should be carried on through any instrumentality, even though others got the credit. When complaint was made that Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, and he was asked to forbid them, his noble reply was, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" If the Lord uses a local preacher, or exhorter, or private member in an unusual degree, the preacher in charge should not get jealous over it, but encourage them and open the way for them to do all the good possible. If he tries to put them down for fear they will eclipse him, he will certainly put himself down in the sight of God and men. People have a keen discrimination in such matters. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." People seem to delight in putting down one who evidently aims

simply at his own elevation. He who shows jealousy of those whom God blesses, grieves the Spirit and kills himself.

#### 401 PREACHERS, Unconverted

It is a great misfortune for a people to have an unconverted, or backslidden, preacher. Either one can do great harm. The more talented, highly educated, refined and amiable they are, the more dangerous do they become; the greater is their power to deceive. A preacher who was never converted may be very popular with the worldly, but he is liable not to know the work of the Spirit. To him a genuine work of the Spirit appears to be fanaticism. He can not understand it. He is troubled over it; so he gives it an opprobrious name, and endeavors to put it down. He may be zealous for reforms, and eloquent in the advocacy of good morals, but he is as ignorant of the new birth as was the ruler of the Jews who came to Jesus by night. Said John B. Stainton, a man of God, to the bishop, of his pastor (one of these preachers), "He has not even stumbled on an evangelical topic during the year."

It is a very common thing in Europe for unconverted men to be educated for the ministry, just as they are educated to practise law or medicine. The custom is rapidly growing on us here. Talent and wit are in greater demand for the pulpit than godliness. Congregations will pay much more liberally to be entertained than they will to have the way to Heaven pointed out to them.

Such a man as Wesley was, before his conversion, would be regarded as a prodigy of piety in our days. He writes: "It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I least of all suspected), that I who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. (I am not sure of this). 'I am not mad,' though I thus speak; but 'I speak the words of truth and soberness'; if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see that, as I am, so are they.

“Are they read in philosophy? So was I. In ancient, or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I, too, have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labor, as well as of their substance? I have labored more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country; I have put my life in my hand wandering into strange lands. I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God should please to bring upon me. But does all this (be it more or less, it matters not) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did, or can know, say, give, do, or suffer, justify me in his sight? Yea, or the constant use of all the means of grace (which nevertheless is meet, right, and our bounden duty)? Or, that I knew nothing of myself; that I am, as touching outward, moral righteousness, blameless? Or (to come closer yet) the having a rational conviction of all the truths of Christianity? Does all this give me a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. I am a child of wrath, an heir of hell. I have no hope but that, if I seek, I shall find Christ, and ‘be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith’ (Phil. 3:9).

“If it be said that I have faith (for many such things have I heard, from many miserable comforters), I answer, so have the devils—a sort of faith; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the apostles had even at Cana in Galilee, when Jesus first ‘manifested forth his glory’; even then they, in a sort, ‘believed on him’; but they had not then ‘the faith that overcometh the world.’ The faith I want is (the faith of a *son*) ‘a sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ my sins are forgiven and I reconciled to the favor of God.’ I

want that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it not); for whosoever hath it is 'freed from sin'; the whole 'body of sin is destroyed'; he is freed from fear, 'having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.' And he is freed from doubt, 'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost' which is given unto him; which 'Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God.' "

Reader, are you truly converted to God? You may be a preacher, you may talk about "accepting Christ," and all that, without your ever having been born of the Spirit. Are you a new creature? Are old things passed away; and all things become new? (2 Cor. 5:17).

#### 402 PREACHERS Will Succeed, if Diligent

At one of our recent conferences a delegate, a man of God, and so a man of his word, said to the preachers: "Brethren, you go to your circuits, stay the year out, and attend to your work as a minister, as I attend to mine as a farmer, and then if you fail to get a living I will make up the deficiency." He is able to make his promise good, and no doubt will do it, if there is any necessity for it. But will it be necessary? There is not the slightest probability of it. The brother is perfectly safe. The conference is in a rich farming country. The barns are filled with plenty. The people are generous and warm-hearted. They are believers in Christianity; though many of them are not Christians. Let a preacher go among them, filled with faith and with the Holy Ghost, and work as many hours of the day, and watch as many hours of the night, for their spiritual welfare, as the successful farmer does in caring for his crops and his stock, and the people will not let him starve. Those for whom he feels and manifests an interest,

will soon manifest an interest in him. His wants will be supplied. In caring for others he will be cared for; in watering others he will himself be watered.

#### 403 PREACHERS, Successful and Unsuccessful

A preacher sent to a run-down circuit, to which the preachers did not wish to go, came up to conference with the best report of any of them. There had been during the year a large accession of members; and no one had received a better support than he. What made the difference? The preacher. Preachers make a great difference in circuits.

A preacher full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, working with diligence and discretion, will be likely to bring up any circuit. A preacher full of high notions of himself, lazy, indiscreet, self-willed and self-indulgent, will cause any circuit to run down on his hands. It can not well be otherwise. If such a man will not get thoroughly saved, and correct his faults, the best thing he can do is to resign his charge, and go to work and take care of himself and family. A man called of God to preach, and who labors as he directs, can hardly fail of meeting with success. Hearts will be opened to receive him and his message.

#### 404 PREACHERS, Are You Successful?

If you are a preacher, are you a revival preacher? Are any souls saved through your labors? If not, why not? What are you preaching for? Did God call you to preach, or did you take it upon yourself to preach, as a genteel way of making a living? If the latter, you had better vacate the pulpit quickly. If Christ puts you in the ministry, he promises you success—large success. “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit” (John 15:8). But God is not glorified in your pounding away on the fruit others have gathered, till you destroy what little vitality is in them. Strike out on your own responsibility. Break up new ground. “Sow in tears,” and you “shall reap in joy” (Ps. 126:5). This is God’s declaration; it can not fail.

Be in earnest in the matter, and you shall have a reward that will cause rejoicings in Heaven.

#### 405 PREACHERS' Education

If God calls you to preach, do not neglect the call because you are not educated. You can, if you will, obtain all the education you need to make you an able and successful minister of the gospel. If the Lord would have you go to school, he can open the way. If the time has passed for you to go to school, and he calls upon you to begin to preach as you are, he can give you the necessary training *in* the work. We believe in schools; but after all the schools can do, a man must learn to preach, very much as he learns to swim—by jumping in and going at it. He may make awkward motions at first, but patient study and practise will give him skill.

Dr. Ormiston, one of the most able and learned preachers of New York, says, "A thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, an experimental knowledge of the power of the gospel, and a ready command of the English language, will enable a man to become an able minister and a successful preacher of the gospel." This is the deliberate opinion of one who is well acquainted with all the advantages which a liberal education can bestow. But all these qualifications he speaks of, one who possesses the necessary gifts and graces may acquire without going to school.

#### 406 PREACHERS Must Study

No matter what may be the talent, and learning, and piety of a preacher, he will cease to be useful if he ceases to study. Wesley preached incessantly; but he was a hard student. Adam Clarke, while preaching more sermons in a year than the most active of our preachers, became one of the first scholars of his day.

Dr. Stephen Olin says: "It may be laid down as a first principle, that he can not long continue a useful, nor even a popular, preacher, who has ceased to be a student. He must himself gradually lose all relish for the dry, irksome

work of memory and repetition, to which he dooms himself. However habit or temperament may enable him to preach with apparent warmth and vivacity, his announcements of truth do in fact no longer bear the sanction and indorsement of his own deep, living convictions: for neither reason, nor conscience, nor faith is much concerned in the reproduction. If this sort of work is distasteful to the preacher, it soon becomes loathsome to the hearer, with whom all such exhibitions pass for mere routine or declamation. A clerical brother lately said to me, 'I know several preachers in the —— conference who have not *studied* in ten or twenty years.' Such ministers are only less guilty than those who have not *prayed* in ten or twenty years, for it is quite as practicable to be a good preacher of the gospel without praying as without studying."

#### 407 PREACHERS: Hard Study Necessary

No matter how successful a preacher may be in his first efforts, he will not continue to be a successful preacher unless he devotes several hours a day to hard study. The lake that sends forth a stream of water, must receive water, or it will run dry. Dr. Olin says: "The church has never more reason to be ashamed than of ministers who no longer try to preach well—who only go to their study to read newspapers and periodicals, and have nothing fresher and better for their pulpit than the dry, cold fragments of oft-tasted feasts, or the yet more refuse and unwholesome viands which the troublous agitations of the moment are able to galvanize into some of the lower forms of life. It is wonderful that the least spark of piety should not deter men from bringing such *cheap* offerings before God." There is no doubt but that some preachers backslide in heart because they neglect to study. They lose their interest in preaching, engage in secular pursuits, and soon quit preaching altogether. "Give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13) is the direction which the Apostle gave to a young minister who had a very large circuit and whose hands were full of work.

**408 PREACHERS: The Object of Their Study**

Preachers should study; but it should be that they may be more successful in winning souls. If they aim at securing a reputation for learning, the knowledge which they thus gain will be likely to do them more hurt than good. Nothing that a preacher can acquire from books will compensate for a loss of spirituality. But study should increase one's spiritual power; and it will, if one studies from a right motive, and in a right manner; and if he make a right use of what he learns. In its natural tendency, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." So the more we learn, the more we need of the charity which "vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up." A display of ignorance, if attended with genuine humility, is not as offensive as an ostentatious display of learning.

**409 PREACHERS, Young, Should Pursue a Course of Study**

Young preachers should do the work of evangelists; but they should not be in haste to become evangelists. They need what many of them dislike—close application. Without this they will run for only a short season. They will get tired of hearing themselves say the same things over and over, and they will quit preaching and go at something else. Young preachers need to pursue a course of study. This will teach them order and system and give them thoughts. They need to preach stately to the same congregations. This will render it necessary for them to study their sermons, and acquire a variety of topics, and varied forms of expressions. They should write sermons, not for the purpose of reading them to their congregations, but for the purpose of acquiring the power to express themselves correctly and to arrange their thoughts systematically. A desultory style of preaching may be tolerated in the fervor and enthusiasm of youth; but when these wear away, the people soon get tired of it. The perpetual light which always shone in the tabernacle of old, emblematic of the Holy Ghost, was fed by "pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always" (Ex. 27:20).

## 410 PREACHERS, Young, Should Read

It was in the apostolic age, when the fire which fell from Heaven on the day of the Pentecost was burning in its pristine splendor, that Paul wrote to a young preacher, "Give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13). If this was necessary then, when the Spirit was so poured out upon God's people that miracles were wrought among them, how much more is it necessary now, when almost the smallest degree of the outpouring of the Spirit is characterized as fanaticism and wild-fire? If it was necessary for Timothy, who "from a child had known the holy Scriptures," how much more is it necessary for those who passed their childhood in ignorance of the Scriptures, and in increasing familiarity with sin? Then, beloveds, "give attendance to reading." Make no apologies. You have not as hard a circuit as Timothy had. He was among the people that the Apostle referred to when he said, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15:32). Books were much scarcer and more costly then than now. It took a small fortune then to buy a Bible. Few had one. You have the Bible to study, and you can readily procure other good books to read, if you desire to. A few good books, carefully read, understood, and remembered, will do you more good than many will, read in a cursory manner. A man who likes to fish may not like to dig, but he will not neglect to dig the necessary bait. If you love souls, you will not be averse to reading those books that will help you in winning souls.

Every preacher is a teacher. But we can not teach what we do not know. To lead others in the way of life we must ourselves be in the way of life. To instruct others we must ourselves receive instruction. "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 2:7). Then live where you can get communications direct from Heaven. Follow the Spirit and he will lead you into all truth. But it will often be through study, and by searching out the revelations which God has made to others. If you would grow, you must love the truth. You

must go to hear men preach who have the ability and the courage to preach the truth. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15).

**411 PREACHERS: Study and Labor Not in Conflict**

Whoever is called of God to preach is called of God to study. Nor, if he works with God, will his studies interfere with his preaching. Adam Clarke was one of the greatest scholars of his day, and his immense fund of learning was acquired while in the active work of the ministry. He preached incessantly. We doubt if there is one among us who preaches as many sermons in a year as he did while pursuing those studies, and gaining the knowledge which made him famous for his learning among the learned men of the world. Nor did his zeal die out with advancing years. When he was over seventy years old, he wrote to the president of the conference:

*"If no place is open for me here, I shall rather travel in the keen blasts, over the mountains, hills and bogs of Derry and Antrim, than set myself down as a supernumerary in any place in Immanuel's land, even in its whole length and breadth; at least for the present year."*

**412 PREACHERS: Pulpit Preparation**

Preaching without notes does not imply preaching without preparation. A flowing well must be supported by a greater fountain than one from which the water is obtained by pumping. A preacher who does not write his sermons should study more than one who does. He has more time. He should thoroughly understand his subject. He should feel like Elihu, "I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me" (Job 32:18). Lyman Beecher, the greatest of the Beechers, said to a class of licentiates, "Young gentlemen, don't stand before a looking-glass and make gestures. Pump yourselves brimful of your subject, till you can't hold another drop, then knock out the bung, and let nature caper."

## 413 PREACHERS Should Divide Their Subject

Paul, in writing to a young minister, tells him to show himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth.*" We must not present the truth in a mass. A loaf of bread is a unit. It is all good—all to be eaten. But it is not presented to those around the table whole. It is cut into slices. So a sermon should have its divisions, clear and distinct. The people can appropriate it to better advantage. If you stick to your text, divide it naturally. If you preach on some *subject*, divide the subject. Make clear statements. If you do not know how to make a proper division of your text or subject, study the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Brother Hogue's book on Homiletics; and practise upon them until you learn how.

Then divide your discourse into *sentences*. Avoid all long parenthetical or explanatory phrases. Use a good many short sentences. Let each sentence be simple and distinct.

Divide your *sentences into words*. Do not let the words run into each other. Divide your words into syllables. Speak *each letter* in a word distinctly. Do not compel the hearer to guess at your meaning. Make yourselves understood.

If God calls you to preach, you can, *with proper pains*, make a preacher.

## 414 PREACHERS, Health Rules for

Preachers ought to preserve good health. One part of the commission of those whom Christ sends out reads: "Heal the sick" (Matt. 10:8). "And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2, and 10:9). To do this they must themselves keep well.

Wesley asked: "What reason can be assigned why so many of our preachers contract nervous disorders?"

"Answer: The chief reason, on Dr. Cadogan's principles, is either indolence or intemperance. (1) Indolence. Several of them use too little exercise, far less than when they wrought at their trade. And this will naturally pave the way for many, especially nervous disorders. (2) Intem-

perance, though not in the vulgar sense. They take more food than they did when they labored more; and let any man of reflection judge how long this will consist with health. Or they use more sleep than when they labored more, and this alone will destroy the firmness of the nerves. If then our preachers would avoid nervous disorders let them (1) take as little meat, drink and sleep as nature will bear; and (2) use full as much exercise daily as they did before they were preachers."

#### 415 PREACHERS' WIVES

When God made man he said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." So, when a woman marries, she should make it her business to help her husband. This is the work she assumes. It is her divinely appointed mission. He needs her help. A wife can help her husband rise in the world, or she can drag him down. Many men of high standing in civil affairs owe their advancement largely to the judiciously exercised influence of their wives.

Especially does the usefulness of a married preacher depend largely upon the co-operation of his wife. If she is selfish, and insists upon his being at home and helping her, constantly complaining of her hardships, she will make him unpopular everywhere he goes. She should cheerfully consent to his being absent from home as many hours a day, fulfilling the work of the ministry, as he would have to be if working at a trade. A woman planning to get from the people all she can for her husband's services, and to deprive them of as large a portion of his services as she can, will neutralize his influence, and in the end probably drive him from the ministry. Or she may embarrass him by her extravagance, spending the money they get in railroad fare or in needless delicacies.

On the contrary, the wife of a preacher is "a help meet" indeed when she assists her husband in his work, encourages him to visit among his people, to keep up appointments in the country around, and goes with him when she can, and takes an active interest in the salvation of the people.

Such a woman will bless her husband, and the people will bless her.

#### 416 PRESUMPTUOUS Persons

“Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities” (2 Pet. 2:10). People of this class generally make the highest professions. But those who must have their own way at any cost, who will destroy a good society rather than not have their own notions prevail, are mistaken in thinking that they have such strong faith. One who relies on God is not self-asserting, over-positive, and quarrelsome. He does his duty in a quiet spirit, and in a proper manner, and leaves the result with God. But those who force things through against the convictions of a majority, many of whom, at least, are of deeper piety and better judgment than themselves, are what the Apostle here calls “selfwilled” and “presumptuous.” Instead of there being a Heaven of purity and peace in waiting for such persons, the Apostle declares that for them “the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.”

#### 417 PRIDE

No matter how much your preacher may encourage pride by precept and example, you indulge in it at the peril of your soul. Unless you humble yourself, it will be impossible for you to approach God. “The proud he beholdeth afar off.” Prayers made up of pompous phrases, or pretty elegancies of expression, may excite the admiration of those “having itching ears,” but they do not reach the ears of the Eternal. Baxter says, “A proud man makes himself his God, and sets up himself as his idol: how, then, can his affections be set on God? How can he possibly have his heart in heaven? Invention and memory may possibly furnish his tongue with humble and heavenly expressions, but in his spirit there is no more Heaven than there is humility. I speak the more of it because it is the most dangerous sin in morality, and most promotes the great sin of infidelity.”

Reader, watch against pride as thou wouldst keep out of hell.

## 418 PRIDE, A Damning Sin

A proud look is mentioned first among the six things which God hates; it heads the list of the seven that are an abomination unto him (Prov. 6:16, 17). Among those who in the last days shall have the form of godliness, but who will deny its power, are the proud (2 Tim. 3:2). Pride is a damning sin. "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (Isa. 2:12).

Yet of all the sins to which we are subject, this dangerous one is the most difficult to detect in ourselves. We see it readily in others. The proud never think they are proud. Pride often lurks under the guise of morality and religion. It kneels in the pew, and talks of humility in the pulpit. As Gurnall says, "It can take sanctuary in the holiest actions, and hide itself under the skirts of virtue itself. It is impossible to starve this sin; and there is nothing almost but it can live on; nothing so base that a proud heart will not be lifted up with, and nothing so sacred but it will profane, even dare to drink in the bowls of the sanctuary; nay, rather than starve, it will feed upon the carcasses of other sins." A church that encourages pride in its members does them incalculable harm.

## 419 PRIDE Shown in Disputing

Pride does not always show itself in the apparel. Where there is pride in the dress there is pride in the heart. But there may be pride in the heart when the dress is perfectly plain. Paul says of a certain teacher, "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness" (1 Tim. 6:4, 5). So one fond of disputing has reason to fear that he is actuated by pride. There may be times when it is one's duty to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," but he must be certain that it is for the faith, and that his part of the contention is carried on in a right

spirit. But when we see one given to "strifes of words," we must let him alone. Let him fight his own battles. "From such withdraw thyself."

#### 420 PRIDE, Spiritual

When one sets himself to be a true Christian and abounds in labors and self-denials, then Satan, failing in every other method, tries to destroy him through spiritual pride. One way in which this is manifested is in the low opinion he forms of the piety of those who do not follow in his lead, or at least give him their indorsement and support. When he is fully under its influence he denounces those who oppose him as backsliders or hypocrites. President Edwards says: "Spiritual pride is very apt to suspect others: whereas a humble saint is most jealous of himself; he is so suspicious of nothing in the world as he is of his own heart. Pure Christian humility disposes a person to take notice of everything that is in any respect good in others, and to make the best of it, and to diminish their failings; but to have his eyes chiefly on those things that are bad in himself, and to take much notice of everything that aggravates them."

#### 421 PROBATIONARY OPPORTUNITIES Soon Gone

We are passing away. In a little while our places will be filled by others. In rapid succession one generation follows another. Ages ago, in the days of the Prophet Isaiah, the blind Grecian poet, Homer, sang

"Like leaves on the trees the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;  
Another race the following spring supplies;  
They fall successive and successive rise:  
So generations in their course decay;  
So flourish these when those are passed away."

Let us, then, make the most of each day as it passes. It will never return. Let us eagerly embrace every opportunity for getting good and for doing good. Our probation once gone, we shall never have another. Our destiny once settled, it becomes irreversible. Let us consecrate our-

selves more fully to God than we have ever done. Let us seek a perfection of all the Christian graces. As we have opportunity let us do good to all with whom we associate.

**422 PROFESSORS, Characteristics of Popular**

A loss of the love of the truth is a sure mark of a backslider. A child of God loves the unadulterated Word of God. Nor can error and falsehood be dressed up in language so eloquent, and adorned with flowers of rhetoric so beautiful, as to be acceptable with him. A saint loves the homely truth; he hates the gilded lie. No salary, however great, can induce him to forbear to proclaim the unacceptable truth; no company, however refined, can lead him away from association with those who seek the truth as it is in Jesus. Lovers of shams can not be lovers of Christ. Insincerity can never pass current with God, though it be clothed in sacred garments. The Apostle says of the backsliders of the last days, "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." This is an accurate description of the popular professor of to-day. Let an earnest man preach the truth as it is laid down in their standards, and they will persecute him and drive him out. God's ministers are not wanted. Few pulpits open to them. Baptized worldlings found schools of theology to raise up preachers of their own liking. This, too, is predicted. "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts" (2 Tim. 4:3, R. V.). These teachers, like professional ball-players, go where they can get the largest salary.

**423 PROFESSORS, Fruitless**

A large apple tree in our garden bore no fruit of any value from year to year. Its limbs were gnarly. As it was neither useful nor ornamental, I cut it down. It was sound outside, but decayed within. The shell was only about an inch thick, but the bark was well-nigh perfect. I then saw the reason why many professors bear no fruit that the Lord thinks worth gathering. They seem all right

on the outside, but are rotten at heart. They do no great wrong—they are too selfish for that—but they do no good. Our Lord says that the barren tree shall share the fate of the bad tree. In a world where there is so much to be done, doing nothing is doing wrong. *“Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.”*

#### 424 PROHIBITION and High License

One of the most absurd arguments against prohibition is the assumption that it can not be enforced. In general terms it amounts to this: If criminals persist in crime, then that crime must be tolerated. This furnishes as good a reason for tolerating theft, by imposing a “high license” upon thieves, as it does for legalizing the still more abominable business of drunkard-making, by imposing a “high license” upon saloon-keepers. Of course liquor-sellers do not care for prohibition laws, nor for any other laws, only as it is for their interest to. They are bad to the core. The man who, for the sake of trifling gains, will rob his fellow of his manhood, and by making him a drunkard expose him to every evil that can befall a human being, will of course trample prohibitory laws under foot if he is permitted to. But “high license” does not help the matter at all. Unless he is compelled to, he has no more respect for “high license” than for prohibition. If he could not be made to stop his hellish business in any other way, he should be shut up in State’s prison for life. There prohibition is enforced.

#### 425 PROHIBITION Needed for All

It is a great mistake to suppose that prohibition is needed only for weak-minded men. If once an appetite for spirituous liquors is formed, the strongest are liable to become its victims. Daniel Webster was intellectually the strongest man this country ever produced. But strong drink overcame Daniel Webster. This man of towering intellect, of matchless eloquence, “the expounder of the Constitution,” “the godlike Daniel,” was sometimes seen in public, helplessly intoxicated. Among the literary giants which Eng-

land has produced, the name of Samuel Johnson is placed in the front rank. But Samuel Johnson said to Boswell, "I can be abstemious but not temperate."

We need prohibition for our great men, as well as for those in the common walks of life.

#### 426 PROMISES

We shall receive the promises if we inherit the promises. But our identity must be established. If we claim a promise, when we are not one of the persons to whom the promise was made, our claim will be disallowed. We must also ascertain the true meaning of the promise. The Jews believed the promises relating to the Messiah, but they put a wrong interpretation upon them; and so they did not know him when he came.

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8). This is true. It is always true. But that which seeks the profits is not godliness. It is very far from it. It is selfishness dressed in a religious garb. To have the life that now is, and to enjoy it, too, one does not need wealth. The greatest happiness that this world can afford may be enjoyed in comparative poverty.

So two mistakes are made about this promise. (1) It is not made to mere formalists. (2) It does not hold out the riches and honors of this world as the reward of godliness.

#### 427 PROPERTY Consecrated

If you are truly consecrated to the Lord, then is your property also consecrated to the Lord. In all your expenditures of money you should seek for Divine direction. You should have the approbation of God on the way you make money, and on the way you spend money. Be strictly conscientious in giving to every one his due. You can not come back to rectify mistakes. You can not go to Heaven without being strictly honest. Deal honestly with men while you live; and deal justly with God when you die. If you leave property, leave a portion of it where it can

help on the cause of God. Pray over it till you find out what you ought to do, and then do it in season. Make your will while you are well; you do not know how soon you may become helpless, or how suddenly you may die. Make it legally, so that there will be no trouble over it when you are gone, and so that the lawyers will not get the larger portion of your property. REMEMBER GOD IN YOUR WILL.

#### 428 PROPERTY in Old Age

If you are getting along in years, and God has given you property to support you when you are no longer able to earn a living, then take care of it. Do not run any risk of losing it. If you own a farm, keep it, though it may not be very profitable. Even if you can not work it, you can have a good home in the house, and you can let out land on shares to raise your living. If you sell it for money, persons in whom you have confidence will get your money under plausible pretenses and "without any fault of theirs" will lose it, and leave you in your old age poor and dependent. If you move into the city, somebody will convince you that you can soon double your money in a business venture which he will manage for you, and the first you know the hard earnings of years will be scattered. If God has given you a comfortable home, do not part with it in your declining years, unless you know that it is his will that you should.

#### 429 PROPHECYING in the Spirit

St Paul says, "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and comfort." He speaks under the direct inspiration of the Spirit. Preachers should so speak; and so should all of God's people. The Lord said through Joel, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Joel 2:28). This began to be fulfilled upon the day of Pentecost. The promise reaches down to the end of time. We should look for its fulfilment in all our congregations. We should give all encouragement to men or women who speak "to edifi-

cation, and exhortation, and comfort." There are good congregations and a deep interest where this takes place. But from a church the members of which "bite and devour one another," people naturally keep away. Denunciation is not prophesying. To revile those who revile you, does not require the Spirit of Christ. Any sinner can do that. To speak in the Spirit, we must have the Spirit, we must live in the Spirit.

A society that lives in the Spirit, and prays and prophesies in the Spirit, will have a continuous revival. They may have a weak preacher, or they may have no preacher; but they will prosper in their souls, and the Lord will add to their numbers men and women who are in earnest to get to Heaven. This is what St. Paul says: "But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth" (1 Cor. 14:24, 25). This result is frequently witnessed. People who go to such meetings through curiosity, and perhaps full of prejudice, go away to lead a praying life. They get convicted by the Spirit when they least expect it; and if they are honest with God, and yield to their convictions, they will be saved. We have known such a church to have a revival right along for years. Try and have your church such an one. You may think it is not possible, but "all things are possible to him that believeth." You can do your part towards it, and that may accomplish more than you imagine. But in any event your effort will secure a great blessing for yourself.

#### 430 PROVIDENCE: Christ Cares for Faithful Servants

It is encouraging to see how Christ provides for one who follows him fully. Dr. J. W. Redfield was a physician of a lucrative practise in New York City. God called him to go out and labor as an evangelist. His success was wonderful. Thousands were converted and sanctified under his labors. He did not heal slightly. He did a thorough work, the fruits of which remain. He made no stipulations for pay,

but generally bore his own expenses. As years passed by, and age began to steal upon him, he said, "I do not know but I ought to go to work and lay by something for old age or disability." But he never could find the place to break off from his great work of soul-saving and go to money-making. He was struck down with paralysis. Immediately God laid it upon a wealthy farmer, who had been fully saved in his meetings, to take care of him. This brother took him to his home and devoted his time wholly to taking care of him during the two or three years that he lived. If Dr. Redfield had been worth a million dollars he could not have procured the care and attention, for money, that were bestowed upon him through love.

Here is another brother who has followed Christ fully in the work of the ministry. As a boy he began to labor among us, at the very beginning of the Free Methodist work. He never sought for an appointment, but always went cheerfully to the work assigned him. Wherever he went, he threw his whole soul into the work of soul-saving. Without any effort on his part, the people cheerfully took good care of him and his family. He never bought or built a house for himself. He kept out of debt. When, in answer to the call for help, he went to the frontier, with its small salaries and great hardships, though fine land was plenty, contrary to the example of preachers generally, he took up no "claim." He gave himself wholly to the work of the ministry. But all these years the Lord has wonderfully cared for him. His children have been well educated, and all enjoy salvation, and are filling responsible positions. His brow has scarcely a wrinkle in it, his head not a gray hair on it.

When the disciples went out, without purse or scribe, to proclaim the gospel, on their return the Master asked, "Lacked ye any thing?" They said, "Nothing, Lord." Christ is still the same. His resources are still the same.

#### 431 PROVIDENCE, Act in Harmony With

We should take no important step without Divine direction. It is promised us and we should insist upon having

it. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6). Much praying before a matter is decided upon would often save from much suffering which results from a wrong decision which has been made. It is better not to move at all than to go against the providences of God. He has a place for each of us, and a work for each of us to do. Let us seek to find our work and our place, and accept them thankfully, however humble they may be. The weakest member of the body, if it properly fulfils its functions, contributes to the welfare of the whole.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise.  
Act well thy part: there all the honor lies."

God has a will concerning us. Let us find out what it is and steadily follow it out. When we are workers with him, our labor is never in vain.

#### 432 PROVIDENCES OF GOD

The providences of God are always in harmony with his Spirit. When Cornelius, prompted by the Spirit of God, sends for Peter, the Apostle is supernaturally prepared to accept the call. The coat fits the back for which it was made. The door is opened for him who should pass through it.

Dr. Adam Clarke says: "How exactly does everything in the conduct of providence occur; and how completely is everything adapted to *time, place* and *occasion*! All is in weight, measure and number. Those simple occurrences which men snatch at, and press into the service of their own *wishes*, and call them providential openings, may indeed be links of a providential chain, in reference to some other matter; but unless they be found to speak the *same language* in all their *parts*, occurrence corresponding with occurrence, they are not to be construed as indications of the Divine will in reference to the claimants. Many persons, through these misapprehensions miscarrying, have been led to charge God foolishly for the unsuccessful issue of some business in which their passions, not his providence, led them to engage."

**433 PUBLIC TEACHING**

We are told to be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). If we are to be prepared to give a reason for our hope, we certainly ought to be for the teaching we give the public. Unless we have some reputation for wisdom, people will not care much for our opinions. The opinion of even the wisest, if unsupported by experience, or other good reasons, is not reliable. Vituperation and ridicule, and confident assertions, prove nothing, unless it be the badness of the cause which they are employed to support. "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars" (Prov. 9:1). She has something substantial on which to rest. Let us see that we build on the indestructible pillars of wisdom.

**434 PULPIT: Enter It Prepared**

Not only prepare your sermons, but select your Scripture lessons and your hymns before you go into the pulpit. Do not keep your congregation waiting while you are looking over the Bible and hymn-book for something. The best professional elocutionists never read a piece before the public till they have read it many times in private, and become so familiar with it that they can read it with effect. We have seen a congregation all melted down in reading the first hymn. The one who read it was filled with the Spirit.

Sunshine and showers always help that wheat most which was sown on land that was prepared with the greatest care. So the Spirit always helps a preacher most who has conscientiously studied, faithfully visited, earnestly prayed, and carefully walked with God during the week. And the great thing in preaching is to minister the Spirit.

**435 PUNISHMENT, Future**

The Bible teaches future punishment just as plainly as it does future rewards. It declares that there is a hell as emphatically as it does that there is a Heaven. If you

have any doubt about it, take your concordance and read the passages that speak of these two places of future existence. You will also find that we are warned against going to hell as earnestly as we are persuaded to go to Heaven. The New Testament, especially, abounds in vehement exhortations to *flee from the wrath to come*. Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount is full of warning. "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29). You may as well reject the Bible entirely, as to say there is no hell.

#### 436 PURPOSE, Singleness of

Paul said, "This one thing I do." He was a man of one work. He was a great traveler; but he traveled solely for the purpose of evangelizing the nations. He sometimes worked at his trade, tent-making; but it was for the one purpose of supporting himself and his fellow workers in preaching the gospel. He lay in prison for two years at a time; but such was his reputation for sanctity that people came to him in the prison to hear words by which they might be saved. It would seem that his gospel message reached the family of the emperor; for, writing to the Philippians, he said, "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household" (Phil. 4:22).

A man thus devoted to the work of soul-saving, whom no privations can discourage, no persecutions silence, can but meet with marked success.

#### 437 QUIETNESS an Element of Strength

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. 30:15). A weak horse, tugging at a heavy load, attempts to move it by jerks and plunges. A strong, well-trained one settles down to it, takes very short steps at first, gets under motion, and then moves off with it. Carlyle says it is "a fundamental mistake to call vehemence and rigidity strength. A man is not strong who takes convulsive fits; though six men can not hold him then. He that can walk under the heaviest weight without staggering,

he is the strong man. A man who can not hold his peace till the time comes for speaking and acting, is no right man."

In two ways we gain by quietness. First, we steadily accumulate strength; and then, when expenditure is really called for, we spend it to the best advantage. Many waste in fretful, ill-natured remarks an amount of nervous energy which, if saved, would carry them triumphantly through great trials.

#### 438 READING, Give Attention to

It is a misfortune to be ignorant. And yet in many respects we are all ignorant. What the most learned knows, is but little in comparison with what he does not know. It is a still greater misfortune to think that we know it all, than to be ignorant. Such is the decision of holy writ. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him" (Prov. 26:12). He who is conscious that he does not know much, is willing to receive instruction. And willing learners can always find good teachers. But self-conceit shuts out instruction, as a thick wall laid in mortar shuts out light. We once told a preacher, whose sameness in preaching was becoming tedious, that he ought to read more. His emphatic reply was, "What shall I read?" It takes but a few years for such preachers to run out. They are not long in demand.

#### 439 RECKLESSNESS

Recklessness is not faith, nor is it one of the fruits of faith. It is rather the offspring of unbelief and despair. A man who sets out to cross a stormy sea, in a boat which he knows to be old and leaky, has no right to talk about having faith in God for a prosperous voyage. The farmer who plants poor seed on poor soil, poorly prepared, and who neglects to take the necessary care of it, can not have any proper faith that God will give him an abundant harvest. So one who sets at defiance the laws of health which God has ordained, has no right to expect that God will give him health.

In matters physical, as well as in matters spiritual, there

are conditions which we must meet in order to realize the desired results. Faith in God is shown by our obedience to the laws of God. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14). "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26).

#### 440 REFORMING MEN Not Sufficient

It is not to be reformed a little, or to be reformed a great deal, that men in a state of nature need, but to be raised from the dead. Decorating corpses is at best but useless. Gilded coffins and costly sepulchers do dead men no good. No benefit can be conferred on them unless they are first restored to life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). Then let us aim, not merely at reforming men, but let us strive to persuade them to come to Christ that they may have life. If we fail in doing this, however much we may succeed in other things, our ministry is but a failure. For a minister to drop into a mere reformer, is a public, though perhaps undesigned, acknowledgment that he has lost his power.

#### 441 REGENERATION or Reformation, Which?

There were great social evils in the time of Paul. Society was corrupt. Slavery, intemperance and licentiousness abounded. But Paul never became a mere reformer. He organized no anti-slavery or temperance or social-purity societies. He preached a gospel which rooted out all moral evils. He laid the ax at the root of the tree. Society became reformed by the regeneration of many of its members. Their influence elevated in the moral scale those who were not converted.

#### 442 RELATIVES, Aged and Helpless, Should Be Cared for

Paul, speaking of "children and nephews," says: "Let them learn first to show piety at home" (1 Tim. 5:4). He has special reference to their manifesting their piety by

providing for the wants of those who, when they were helpless, cared for them. The religion of the child who can let the parent suffer, when it is in his power to relieve him, is of a very bad quality. It is not the religion of the Bible. In some heathen lands it is the custom to expose their aged men and women, and suffer them to die through neglect. True Christianity does away with all such barbarous practises. In a Christian land the poorhouse is no place for one who has "children or nephews," strong and well. They should make it their business to care for the aged and helpless relative. Among the Ten Commandments, the only one that has a promise attached to it is: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

#### 443 RELIGION, Foundation of True Greatness

Nothing takes hold of the deepest nature of man like religion. Questions concerning our duty and our destiny are the greatest questions we have to solve. It is but a superficial, insincere nature that can dismiss such questions with a sarcasm or a sneer. All truly great men have been religious men. Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton all derived a large share of their inspiration from religious truths current in their times. Even the great warriors of the world recognized the authority, and invoked the aid, of the Divine Power above us. The ranks of atheism have never furnished a great poet or a great commander.

The young man who aims at distinction by scoffing at religion is not likely ever to attain to any higher distinction. Unless he completely turns about and becomes converted, an inglorious career, ending in shame and everlasting contempt, is before him.

#### 444 RELIGION Not in External

Much time spent in the externals of religion is fruitlessly spent. Not that the externals are of no account: they are of great account as indications of the state of the heart, and as the manifestations of a gracious or ungracious disposition of the soul. But much that is done is really

nothing more than a protracted effort to make a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. The best that can be done in this direction is the production of an attractive but worthless imitation. All who believe should be careful to maintain good works; but they should see that the good works are genuine, and not false counterfeits—that they spring from humble faith and ardent love of God, and not from a love of praise and an expectation of earthly rewards.

When one habitually fails to do right, it is because he is not right. Efforts to do right should not be relaxed; but efforts to do right should be redoubled. Make the fruit good; but the only successful way to do it is to make the tree good. Humble confession to God, earnest prayer, obedience to the inward strivings of the Spirit, will bring us where God can accomplish the work. True religion does not consist in anything external, but in *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*.

#### 445 RELIGION, Our, a Benefit to All

Our religion should, in some way, benefit every one we come in contact with. It should make us more considerate of others, more faithful in all the common duties of life. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Rom. 14:7). This is said of all true Christians.

#### 446 RELIGION, Trading in, For Profit

Trading in principles is a disastrous business. It is a cheat all around. It has much the appearance of dealing in counterfeit money. The one who sells knows that he is practising a fraud; the one who buys knows that he is getting something which he expects to sell for more than its actual value. The religion that is disposed of for a money consideration is not worth the price paid for it, however trifling that may be. It is worse than worthless. It will not save the soul, and it effectually prevents one from seeking that sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord. Judas gained nothing by selling Christ. His silver became a weary burden that he could not carry. The transaction was equally fatal to the other parties to the

bargain. O ye compromising professors! Will ye not consider the words of Christ: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

**447 RELIGION, Mixed, a Curse**

Mixed religion is the curse of Christendom. It is a greater obstruction to the spread of the gospel than infidelity in all its varied forms. A Christian faith combined with heathen forms of worship and worldly rules of conduct deludes and demoralizes wherever it prevails. To be conformed to the world, while professing to serve God, is as fatal a symptom as is the act of "stealing the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in." They both show a division of purpose that renders it impossible to worship God acceptably. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" is the great lesson which the professed Christians of to-day need to be taught. The preacher who ministers at the altars of Freemasonry, because of his devotion to its principles, should not be allowed to preach from Christian pulpits to get a living. Singing songs of Zion, and manifesting sinful tempers, will never take one to Heaven. Prayer and pride do not go well together. Prayer may feed pride; but pride kills prayer. The gospel of expediency is a damning substitute for the gospel of Christ. See to it that your religion is pure. Accept no mixture of celestial and infernal principles, be they ever so skilfully compounded. "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."

**448 RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER, The Province of a**

We do not intentionally assail the moral character of any person, especially of any minister or member in good standing, or permit it to be done, in these columns. A newspaper is not a tribunal for the trial of church-members, or of any one else. But it is a proper place for a temperate discussion of methods. While discussing these, we should be careful and not reflect upon the Christian integrity of others; but we should, on the other hand, guard against an over-sensitiveness when we read what others write in opposition to our

views or practises. We should not assume that one thinks we are not Christians because he can not agree with us. When he says that the tendency of a given course of action is bad, we should not take it for granted that he says the actor is bad. We should construe it, as it was intended, as a question of methods, rather than one of morals. The best construction that can fairly be given words is the charitable construction. When a man says one thing in print, we should not proceed to denounce him for saying something entirely different, which we may choose to think he meant. We should not charge one with meaning worse than he says.

Conscience and candor should be called into exercise in reading, as well as in writing. Give these full play, and it will prevent a good deal of hard feeling.

#### 449 RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL ARISTOCRACY

The popular churches of this country have set the example of establishing an aristocracy based on wealth. The best seats in the grand houses of worship are sold to the ones who will pay the most for them.

The great political parties are following the example of the great churches. In the Senate of the United States there are said to be sixteen millionaires worth eighty millions of dollars! Probably every one of them owes his election to his wealth!

The government of ancient Rome was much stronger than ours. It stood hundreds of years and was, humanly speaking, firmly established. But when its people became corrupt, and offices were bought and sold, and mammon seized the reins of power, the state fell to pieces from its own corruptions. Its enemies triumphed over it, and its people were reduced to slavery.

Our nation is in danger, not from without, but from within. The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

#### 450 REPROACH Improper Among Saints

A church composed of only those who, before they were converted, led respectable lives, could hardly, in the present state of society, be called a church of Jesus Christ. He

came to call, "not the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The rags from which one sheet of paper was made may have come from a lady's parlor; those from which another sheet was made may have come from the gutter. But now you can not tell the difference. One sheet may be just as white, and just as good, as the other. The one from the parlor never reproaches the one from the gutter for its origin. Both had to be cleansed by the same process. It is so with God's saints. Their excellency depends, not on what they were, but on what they are. One should never accuse another of his sinful condition when he came to Christ.

What if he or she did marry when young and wicked, and obtained a divorce on other grounds than those permitted by the Scriptures? Their scriptural right to a divorce *now*, no one questions. But as they were long ago legally divorced, they can not obtain another one now. And if they could, it would be a needless expense. They give every evidence of being forgiven, and of leading a Christian life, that you could ask for in any other case. Then let them alone. If God has forgiven them you must forgive them, if you would yourself be forgiven. Do not be so afraid that the church will be disgraced. It will not be disgraced by the bad conduct of its members prior to their being saved, if they are now leading holy lives. But it is disgraced by those who, professing to be saved, are guilty of backbiting and slandering others. You should try to help, and not to hinder, those who have been rescued from the very clutches of Satan. If they have repented, brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and are now blameless in their lives, it is a fiendish work to bring up the past against them. If God has covered it by his Spirit, let it stay covered. Satan is the accuser of the brethren. Do not help him in his nefarious work. The former bad conduct of a person now saved of God is one of the things you are required to forget.

#### 451 REPROACHING One's Neighbor

Taking up a reproach against a neighbor is dangerous business. One can not follow it, and go to Heaven. Per-

sons have been killed recently by handling old shells that had been dropped twenty-five years ago, during the war. If you should happen to plow one up you had better bury it again. If people bring to you reproaches against their neighbor, carry them no farther. If they lay them down at your door, leave them there till they die. Positively refuse to have anything to do with them. You take them up at your peril. They are an unclean thing, which we are not permitted to touch. Scandal-mongers should find no market for their wares at the house of a Christian. They may offer to give them to you; but you should spurn all such offers, as you would an offer to give you the smallpox, or the yellow fever.

#### 452 REPROOF

Before you reprove, be certain that the reproof is deserved. If you hear, or see, anything in another that you think is wrong, do not condemn, either publicly or privately, until you are fully assured that you have a right understanding of the matter. If possible, get the views and explanations of the party concerned.

A preacher, in his sermon one Sunday morning, gave his members a severe chastising for neglecting a sick sister. At the close of the meeting, several asked him what he meant. He said that a sister who lived across the street from him, had been sick for three weeks, and none of the members had visited her.

"Why did you not tell us before? We did not know that she was sick."

"I did not know it till yesterday."

Yet he reproved his people publicly and sharply for not doing what they did not know needed to be done. There is often no more foundation for scolding sermons than in this case.

Mr. Wesley was once about to drop a member for covetousness. He knew the brother's income, and thought he did not pay for the cause as much as he ought to. He went to the suspected brother about it. He found that the brother was living upon eighteen pence a week—some-

times made an entire meal out of boiled turnips—that he might pay debts which he had contracted before he became a Christian! So, instead of censure, Wesley gave him a hearty commendation.

Before you administer reproof, make it a rule to go to the party concerned and, with a loving spirit and in quiet tones, find out the facts and explanations in the case.

#### 453 REPROOF, Manner of

Reproof, to do good, must be wisely given. Much depends upon the occasion chosen and the manner employed. Generally, the person offending should be taken alone. If others not interested are present, he will naturally put himself upon the defensive. Instead of confessing where he is wrong, he will endeavor to lay the blame on others. Then the manner should be kind, the tones of voice quiet and tender, the words chosen the gentlest that will answer. What wisdom Nathan used with David! The object should be, not simply to do our duty, but to restore the erring. “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

#### 454 REPROOF Should be Taken Kindly

Preachers should have the consideration, the respect, the sympathy, and the support of their people. You should give some candid thought to your preacher, his circumstances, his trials, and his necessities, and ask yourself the question, “What can I do to help him?” If he gives you well-meant reproof, you should not be restive under it, even though you find that you do not deserve it. A saved soul is not touchy and over-sensitive. If you are not right, you should be thankful to have the fact shown to you; and, even if it does hurt your feelings somewhat, you should be willing to have it pointed out; and you should set yourself to get right. On the other hand, if you are all right, and the Word of God does not condemn you, and the Spirit gives you his indorsement, and fills you with comfort, why should you be troubled, though you are misunderstood and misjudged? “For what

glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called" (1 Pet. 2: 20, 21).

#### 455 RESURRECTION Power Required

In our articles of religion we say that we believe in the resurrection of the dead. This refers to the bodies which have gone down to the grave. We also believe in the resurrection of dead souls, and dead societies. But this can be effected only by the power of God. It will not do any good to denounce them. We must be able to so prophesy upon these bones, that there will be a "shaking," and "a noise," and a "coming together bone to his bone," till the "breath come into them and they live." In this way many dead societies have been resurrected. But it is of no use for you to try it, if you are as dead as the rest. You must yourself first be brought to life. Come to him who is the "resurrection and the life," for power to enable you to help others to come to life. The dead can not raise the dead.

#### 456 REVIVALS

Push on the work of revivals. If there is no special stir in your church, try and awaken an interest. Look at the multitude about you, thronging the broad way that leads to destruction, until a burden for souls comes upon you. Concern begets concern. Earnest, importunate, believing prayer will be answered in the awakening of souls. If there is a revival interest, keep it up and increase it. Attend the meetings. Be there in time to take an active part in the opening exercises. Sing heartily. Pray earnestly. Get blessed. Give others a chance. Be short. Do not scold. If you stand in the way of any one, make such a humble confession as will remove every hindrance. Break down others by breaking down yourself. Do your own confessing, and let others do theirs. Make no issues. Avoid personal attacks upon any one. Be clothed with humility.

**457 REVIVALS Needed**

We hope that every Free Methodist appointment will go in at once for a revival of the work of God. A revival is needed in every place. Sin abounds. Multitudes make no profession of religion. Of those belonging to the churches, but few give scriptural evidence of being born of God. Many were never converted. Many who were once converted are now backslidden. Spiritual death reigns. It is epidemic. Those who were once alive are dying all around us. Hills and valleys are covered with the bones of the dead. And they are very dry. Everywhere the great want is an outpouring of the Spirit of God. Unless God breathe upon these dry bones, they shall never live. But the breath of the Almighty can cause a resurrection where everything betokens a condition utterly hopeless. Those who believe in God should never despair. There is help in him. These dead can live. "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. 3:9).

**458 REVIVALS Needed in Every Locality**

We are very desirous that all our preachers, and all our people, should go to work to promote a revival of religion in their respective localities. There is not a town in all this land in which a revival is not needed. Everywhere, sinners in the church, and sinners out of the church, are going to hell. The worse the state of religion and morals in the community, the greater is the necessity for a revival. If you want to do the work of an evangelist, there is plenty of room for the exercise of all your energies in any of our circuits. If you desire to become a missionary, begin your training at once by doing mission work in your own neighborhood.

"If you want a field of labor,  
You can find it anywhere."

Who will consecrate his service for this work to the Lord?

## 459 REVIVAL, A Genuine

So rigid was the discipline among the old Spartans that a campaign was looked upon by them in the light of a pleasant duty. So it is with every real Christian. His best days are when he is putting forth the most vigorous efforts for the salvation of men. He loves revival scenes. The cry for mercy of the convicted sinner, groaning under the load of his sins, and the shouts of the redeemed, fall like sweet music upon his ear. We are never so happy—never so raised above the world—as when God condescends to use us as his “battle axe to break in pieces the nations” of sinners, and to “destroy kingdoms” of darkness.

But a revival, to be a blessing and not a curse, must be accompanied with the purification of the church. The old Pharisees made proselytes, but they were twofold more the children of hell than themselves. So it is with the converts of a cold, dead, formal, fashionable church. Among the old members are many who were once soundly converted, and who, when they were poor, and when their church was persecuted and despised, really enjoyed religion. These are generally, unless they are living in the secret commission of flagrant sin, sufficiently in sympathy with salvation not to oppose it very bitterly. But when unrenewed men in large numbers get into the church and take the reins of government into their hands, then the opposition to the life and power of godliness becomes too formidable to be successfully encountered. Then the sanctuary of the Most High is turned into a market-place where the right of worshipping God is sold by auction to the highest bidder. Then fairs and festivals, pleasure rides, oyster suppers and sociables, become the order of the day. True religion is treated with ridicule, and those who enjoy it are stigmatized as fanatical or superstitious.

A genuine revival is one that leads its subjects to get right with God and man, that leads the stout-hearted to bow in humble submission at the feet of Jesus. Brother, would you enjoy a revival? Begin at once to search your own heart. Get right at any cost. Wherein you have wronged any one in his character or property, make con-

fession and restitution to the utmost of your ability. Consecrate yourself fully to God for all coming time.

“They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” If your converts are many, it will be because you are diligent and earnest. You must do much personal work. Men do not usually flock in multitudes to the standard of the cross. They are drawn and won—one here, another there.

#### 460 REVIVAL Implies New Life

A revival in a church does not depend so much upon the spiritual condition of a church as it does upon its taking a step forward in the divine life. A church may be in a good spiritual condition, every member may enjoy the blessing of holiness; they may be united, and have the respect and confidence of the community; the preacher may be able and laborious; but if they do not get melted down by the Spirit, and get fresh blessings on their souls, they will not likely enjoy a revival of any permanence or depth. On the other hand, if they are divided and backslidden, yet if they will turn to the Lord “with all their heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend their hearts and not their garments,” that is, have true inward humility, God will pour out his Spirit upon them, and there will be a blessed revival of religion.

It was *after* David had grievously backslidden, and returned to the Lord, and prayed for pardon and for a clean heart, that he prayed, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee” (Ps. 51:12, 13).

Not that it is not better for all to lead holy lives. But if we would see an outpouring of the Spirit, we must break down before God, and get new touches of divine power.

#### 461 REVIVAL, Old-Fashioned

Where is not a revival needed? Where are the people all living together in holy love, on their way to Heaven,

with songs, and everlasting joy on their heads? Where does not sin abound? Where does not the church need purifying?

An old-fashioned revival will do more to settle difficulties than arbitrations or church trials. It will improve the neighborhood. It will help on every needed reform. Salvation from sin removes the great cause of bickerings and dissensions and neighborhood difficulties. Nothing will help the finances of a church like a thorough revival of the work of God. Above all, it will glorify God in the salvation of souls.

Then lay yourself out for a revival. Make your plans to have one. Consecrate yourself to God to do all you can to promote one. Let your cry to Heaven be, *O Lord, revive thy work.*

#### 462 REVIVALS Not by Chance

Revivals do not come by chance. A harvest of souls is no more gathered by accident than is a harvest of wheat. In the first case well-directed labor is as necessary as in the latter. It takes a hard, heavy soil to raise good crops of wheat from year to year; and a great harvest of souls has often been gathered from the most unpromising fields.

Charles G. Finney, the greatest revivalist of his day, said, "A revival is the result of the *right* use of the appropriate means. The means which God has enjoined for the production of a revival, doubtless, have a natural tendency to produce a revival. Otherwise God would not have enjoined them. But means will not produce a revival, we all know, without the blessing of God. It is impossible for us to say that there is not as direct an influence or agency from God, to produce a crop of grain, as there is to produce a revival." Reader, ask the Lord what he will have you do to promote a revival.

#### 463 REVIVAL, General Suggestions For a

If you would have a revival, you must not only agree in asking for it, but you must agree as *touching it*. You must take hold together to remove every obstacle that stands in

the way of a revival. Just as far as possible get all dissensions among the members healed. Put a stop to all real inconsistencies which are naturally held up by sinners as a reason why they do not get converted.

Make the room comfortable in which the meetings are to be held. Give to the people not only public but personal invitations to come to the meetings. Be always present yourself at the opening of every service, and look to have the Spirit poured out in the singing of the first hymn. Lay aside all jealousy, and all desire of prominence, and take hold heartily with any one with whom God is pleased to work. Manifest your interest in, and your agreement with, everything that is of God. Do not seek to have attention directed to yourself, but be willing to work unnoticed and unappreciated by mortals. You know the wheel that turns the mill is out of sight. Keep filled with love, and carry with you a gracious influence into every place you enter. Have a faith that never wavers, and try to inspire it in others.

#### 464 REVIVAL: Begin Right

One reason why revivals are not more extensive and more permanent is, that they do not begin right. In goods made according to a pattern, no pains are spared to have a perfect pattern. The preachers and the workers in a revival will, to a great extent, shape the experience of the converts. If the workers are cold and formal, the converts will be weak and unstable. Pharisees do not make converts like themselves. They have their faults doubled in intensity. This is what our Savior said. Then, if you would have a revival, begin with yourselves. Stir up yourselves to take hold of God. You can not impart to others what you do not have. If you would communicate spiritual life, you must have spiritual life; and you need to have it more abundantly. Prayers from the dead will not raise the dead. No church is fit to labor in a revival that is not enjoying a revival. Then consecrate yourselves anew to God. Do not be afraid to break down and get blessed before the world.

## 465 REVIVAL, Where Begin a

Success in the beginning of any undertaking inspires those engaged in it with courage. If you want a revival, it is best to begin where, if you do your duty, failure is impossible. Your success will encourage yourself and others. There is but little doubt but that the work will spread.

“Where,” do you ask, “shall I begin? Where I am certain, if I do my part, to have a revival?”

We answer, *Begin with yourself*. The obstinacy and perverseness of others can not prevent the holy fire from falling upon you. “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.” Others will feel it.

## 466 REVIVAL: Opportunity to be Improved

The long evenings afford opportunity for revival and protracted meetings, which should be improved. If you have no heart for such a meeting, talk to God in your closet about it. Set apart a day of fasting and prayer, that you may know the mind of the Lord in the matter, and beseech him to especially baptize your soul, that you may feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an overseer. Then go to the homes of your membership and pray with them over the matter. By this time you will be ready to visit the unsaved in their homes, talk with them personally about their souls, and pray with them. If you succeed, you must be anointed for the work; and when you get the anointing you must work as though you had it all to do; and depend on God as though you were nothing, and he had it all to do.

## 467 REVIVAL MEETINGS Should be Started Early

The best time to begin revival meetings is right away before cold weather comes on. So, if you go back to your former circuit, make appointments for the first bright evenings and, in God's name, begin at once to make special efforts for the salvation of souls. If you go to a new appointment, get settled as soon as possible, and start revival meetings before the interest in the new preacher

dies out. There is no time to be lost. Souls are perishing all about you. The young people will be harder to reach when the winter amusements begin. Get all on fire and you will find some place in which to kindle a fire. Get burdened with a love for souls, and you will find souls to be saved. To settle down in inactivity will deaden the energies of any preacher. Get thoroughly awakened, and you will awaken others. We want to hear of more revivals, and of a greater number of conversions in every revival. God help you!

468 REVIVAL MEETINGS To Begin in Closet

Do not wait for revival meetings to have a revival begin. Let it begin now. Have one yourself in your own soul. It will then spread. Fire, kindled by a live coal from the altar of God, catches as readily as any other. A very humble colored woman once, by her burning testimony to perfect love, set the heart of a lawyer, a dead formalist, on fire with love for God and love for souls. He at once began to labor with great zeal and power for the salvation of others. Thorough and permanent revivals attended his labors wherever he went. His labors for souls were incessant for over thirty years. Many thousands were brought to Christ in the meetings which he held. Dead professors, however beautiful they may be in death, can not bring dead souls to life. But if you get all alive you will bring others to life. Let the revival begin in the closet. It will soon reach the family altar, the prayer-meeting, and the public congregation.

469 REVIVAL Begun

If your church is cold, throwing cold water upon it will not warm it. Bring in a little fire. Do yourself what you wish others to do. Fire kindles fire. A good example is likely to be followed. A little blaze among smoldering brands will very often set them all aglow. One live person in a dull meeting can completely change its character. His promptness makes others prompt. His ardent love leads some to see that they have lost their first love. They say

to themselves, "I used to feel that way myself. People may call him fanatical; but he is right. I am more nearly dead than I thought I was. I will get back to the Lord and get my soul blessed. I will not be in this luke-warm state any longer." This was the beginning of a revival. He had more to confess than he supposed. But he went through and was powerfully blessed. Others followed. Several backsliders were reclaimed. In a short time sinners began to seek the Lord, and the good work went on till many were saved.

**470 REVIVAL May Be Begun Where Two Are Agreed**

To have a revival in any place it is not necessary to have a large number of devoted Christians to labor for it. Christ says, "Where two of you are agreed as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." These words are general, it is true. But there is nothing to which they will more properly apply than to a revival of religion. If you want a revival, can you not pray for one until God will give you some one to unite with you for it? If you have not a brother or a sister who will unite with you, is there not a backslider that you can get reclaimed, or a sinner you can get converted? Look up some one with whom you can be agreed. Simon Peter found his brother Andrew, and you can find some one if you try.

**471 REVIVALS: Cottage Prayer-Meetings**

We want to hear of more revivals among us. A thorough revival of the work of God is the great need of all our societies. There is not a place in the land where one is not needed. If the preacher is busy on another part of the circuit, do not wait for him to begin revival meetings. Let the members begin them. Hold prayer-meetings around from house to house. If unconverted people will open their houses for prayer-meetings, go there and hold them. The preacher may be greatly surprised, when he comes around, to find a revival in progress. Said a man in the love-feast yesterday, "I was very wicked. Several of the neighbors

came in one evening. I said to my wife, 'Spread the cloth on the table; they have come in to play cards.' They replied, 'No; we have come in to have a prayer-meeting.' I was greatly taken back, but I consented. I was pleased with the singing. When they asked if they might come again, I said yes; but I really hoped they would not. They came, and I got to praying, and God gloriously converted my soul. This was some years ago, and I have been leading a praying life ever since. I am happy in God to-day." Some of the best revivals we have ever known began, and were carried on, in cottage prayer-meetings. These can be held anywhere, and without a preacher.

#### 472 REVIVAL Efforts Unmixed

"The Free Methodists in our place," said an intelligent member of the M. E. church, "have done more the last six years to build up our church than they have to build up their own."

If in doing that they were helping souls to heaven, we would pass it by in silence. But when they are helping to put people in a church in which worldly conformity, church festivals, fun and frolic, and Freemasonry are fast destroying every vestige of the old-fashioned Methodist piety and fervor, we feel free to say, that Free Methodists ought to be better employed. They can use their time, and talents, and means, to better advantage. In doing such work they are recreant to the trust which God has committed to them.

How was it brought about? Not intentionally on their part. They lost a good degree of the life and power out of their own hearts. They became absorbed in politics. Partizan zeal ate out religious zeal. Then they went into union meetings. The preachers toned down to suit the occasion. They failed to do thorough work for God. Superficial revivals resulted, and the more worldly church gathered in the weakly converts.

Such preachers need to repent. God pronounces a woe upon them who do his work deceitfully. The truth should be preached with all plainness and boldness to worldly congregations. Those converted under our labors should be so

thoroughly converted, and so well instructed, that formal churches will not want them. They should show so clearly in their testimonies what Christ can save a truly converted soul from, that their burning words would make the dull ears of cold professors tingle. Let us be true to our calling. Let us do thorough work for God.

#### 473 REVIVAL, Members Should Continue

If meetings are going on successfully, they should not be closed because the preacher must go to another appointment. That must be a superficial revival in which the members are not so blessed that they can carry on a meeting without a preacher. We are living in the times spoken of by the Prophet: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another" (Mal. 3:16). It was about the things of the kingdom that they spoke, for "the Lord hearkened and heard it." It is considered an important meeting when a reporter for the press is present and writes down the proceedings. But these meetings are more important, for God sent a recorder and "a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." A meeting that interests Heaven can hardly fail to attract some attention on earth. Such a meeting may be held without a preacher.

Better still, we are living in the days spoken of by the Prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28, 29). Can you not get along without a preacher with such a state of things? Generally the trouble at such times is to get along with a preacher. He is too liable to want to "steady the ark." Hands off when God's presence is signally manifested. Let the young kine move on, lowing as they go. You will not want for an audience—"the lords of the Philistines" will go after them. They will be moved by curiosity, if by nothing else. Let "your sons and your daughters," upon

whom the Spirit of God rests, prophesy. Give them the opportunity, and God will work through them.

**474 REVIVAL MEETINGS: Do Not Close Too Soon**

Much efficient labor is often lost by closing protracted meetings too soon. They are sometimes stopped just as a deep interest has been awakened, and before there has been any great ingathering of souls. This is wrong. It is a mistaken policy. It prevents the realization of much good; and sometimes does positive harm. Those who were melted, but not saved, become harder than they were before. It is better not to plow up a field and sow it, unless you intend to take care of the crop and harvest it. It is wanton cruelty to take fish upon your hook, only to throw them back into the water. Paul, though the world was open before him and needing help, held on at Ephesus "by the space of three years." Nor was it a resting time among old friends: for he says, "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It was a long effort and a successful one. A strong church was gathered from the world and established in the truth.

**475 REVIVALS All the Year**

It is altogether a mistaken notion that we can have revivals only in the winter. Men die and are lost in the summer as well as in the winter. God is just as willing to work in one season of the year as another. The trouble is in our lack of faith and lack of consecration to the work. Preachers may have revivals in the summer if they will.

On the last circuit we traveled we had a powerful revival in a farming community right on through the busy season of the year. The church, and wagons with hay-racks on, driven up to the open windows, were filled with people. Many were saved. It was a glorious visitation. At another point we kept up a grove-meeting every Sabbath afternoon all summer, which was attended by hundreds of people.

Brother preacher, keep a revival spirit, and aim directly to get believers sanctified and sinners converted; your labors will not be in vain in the Lord.

## 476 REVIVAL Destroyed by Impatience

The whole community was stirred, and there appeared to be the prospect of a great revival of religion. The meetings were the common topic of conversation in the stores and in the houses. But the people did not move as promptly as they should have done. Conviction was working in their minds, but as yet they showed no disposition to yield to it. Many, doubtless, would have yielded, but the evangelist who was holding the meetings appeared to the people to get out of patience, and went to abusing them. They turned against him, refused to go to hear any more, and the meeting which began with so much promise ended in a total defeat.

Beloved, whatever takes place, keep sweet in your temper. However provoking others may be, let the peace of God reign in your heart. If others will not get religion, still you can live religion. Christ says, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." But he does not say that he will drive them. And it is worse than useless for us to attempt to.

## 477 REVIVALS, Popular

In the popular revivals some important truths are preached. But unpopular truths, greatly needed, are either passed over in silence, or only occasionally touched upon. "Glittering generalities" are employed where pertinent personalities should be used. In general terms, people perhaps are told from the pulpit, that they must give up their sins, that they must renounce the world, but in the inquiry-room they are told simply to believe in Jesus; or to believe they are forgiven, and they are forgiven. Then they are urged to confess Christ; that is, to say they are converted. Then they join the church, and go on deceived to the end of life. "He that is down need fear no fall." If they are moral and amiable, they pass for Christians, when they were never even scripturally awakened. They never lose their experience, for they never had any to lose. They never backslide, for they have nothing to backslide from. For a sinner to be converted, he must repent. He must make a humble confession of his sins. He must turn from every

wicked way. He must come out from unbelievers and be separate. He must come to Christ by placing himself wholly at his disposal. "So likewise whosoever of you he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

**478 REVIVAL WORK: Superficial or Thorough?**

A Free Methodist preacher informs us that he held meetings several weeks last winter, and had about thirty sinners converted; but only two or three of them joined the Free Methodist church. All the rest were induced to unite with the M. E. church. If they would be led on to holiness it would not be labor thrown away. But it is discouraging to labor hard to get sinners converted, and then see them join a church which, to say the least, tacitly encourages the young men to join an anti-Christian lodge; and the young women to dress like the world and mingle in its pleasures. It is like drawing water in a sieve. It is toiling to roll a stone up hill, only to see it, when near the top, slip from your grasp and roll back lower down than it was when you started it. Such results always come from too superficial work. Popular churches do not want those who are converted in the old-fashioned way, unless they have a good deal of money. Converts who bear their testimony against Freemasonry, and church festivals and worldly conformity, and who get shouting happy, would only work trouble in a worldly church. They would not be at home in it.

If you would not have your converts go to popular churches, you must not adopt popular methods to promote revivals. You must preach repentance, and insist upon it. You must not assume that the conditions of salvation as laid down by Christ and the apostles have been outlawed. Stress must be laid on these conditions. "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9). When people come forward for prayers let earnest and united prayer be made for them. Get them to pray. Do not be all the time talking to them. You talk to God for

them and let God talk *to them*. Sing the good old Methodist hymns, such as, "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive," and do not sing the antinomian hymns now so popular. Do not encourage them to think that they are converted until they have the witness of the Spirit that they are born again. Look to have them come through happy in God.

479 REVIVAL SPIRIT Must be Maintained

We hope that all our societies will settle down to steady work, but not settle down in formality. Let every member have a revival spirit; then you will have a revival spirit in all your meetings. The preacher may be cold; but unless he is dead, past all hope, he, too, will be revived. Every church ought to be a revival church, and every preacher a revival preacher. We prove it by the words of Christ, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:8). The fruit which Christians bear is the good they do to others. If we are doing no good, Christ tells us plainly that we are not his disciples. We may call ourselves such; but he disowns us. If we belong to him, we shall engage heartily in his work. Let us be warned in season. "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." Do you not dread such a doom?

480 RICH, Gospel Not To

From the pains especially taken by many churches to make their services particularly acceptable to the rich and the proud, one would think that the gospel was primarily designed to meet the tastes of these classes. But this is a great mistake. Christ never said to the rich, "Come unto me, and I will give you an opportunity to display your fine clothes to the best advantage. Come to my church, and I will see that the preaching and the singing, and all the services, are adapted to your culture. Nothing offensive to your refined tastes shall be permitted." Quite the contrary. His words were such as these: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). "And the poor have the gospel preached to

them" (Matt. 11:5). "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matt. 11:6).

Let us then take special pains to preach the gospel to the poor. Those who are willing to hear it in its purity and power can then listen to it if they will. A free road is open to the rich as well as to the poor.

#### 481 RICH, Oppressors of Souls

No church can maintain its purity and its simplicity, if it is dependent upon the rich. In return for their money, they will demand concessions to their pride; and that will prove destructive to vital godliness. St. James asks the saints, "Do not rich men oppress you?" Where is there a single church controlled by the rich in which the saints are free to get blessed and praise God?

The Old Methodists saw so clearly the danger from this source that they gave, as a reason for building plain and inexpensive churches: "Otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent on them, yea, and governed by them. And then farewell to Methodist discipline, if not doctrine, too."

Has not *this farewell* been uttered? What M. E. preacher enforces the M. E. Discipline, even as it has been toned down to suit the worldly inclined?

#### 482 RICHES

It seems strange that any person who believes the Bible should join in the scramble after riches. What can be plainer than the words of Christ: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Would any person have confidence in the sincerity of a young German who, expressing a great longing for the time to come when he could enter the army, deliberately mutilates himself so as to unfit him for the army? Can a man be in earnest to gain Heaven when he takes a course which Christ says will shut him out of Heaven?

I was deeply impressed this morning in reading the account of the rich man and Lazarus. It sounds like a true

narrative. Turn to the sixteenth chapter of Luke and read it over carefully. Ask yourself if you are seeking to have your good things in this life.

**483 RICHES Dangerous**

It seems strange that men will hazard almost everything to obtain that which renders their eternal salvation extremely difficult, if not impossible. Yet they do. To obtain riches many do not shrink from any act of dishonesty that promises success. Many of the common methods of getting rich, when stripped of the air of respectability which legal sanctions and common practise throw around them, are no better than downright robbery. Watering the stock of railroads is simply lying and stealing combined. Stock exchanges are gambling houses thinly disguised. Yet men who call themselves moral and respectable, and many church-members, engage in these practises. Only to get rich! Hear what our Savior says: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Luke 18: 24, 25). These texts are not often preached from in our popular pulpits. Yet such was the uniform teaching of Christ. The salvation of the rich is extremely difficult, if not impossible! Think of it, before you decide to try to become rich.

**484 RICHES An Obstacle to Salvation**

For a man to have burglars' or counterfeiters' tools in his possession is a suspicious circumstance. To show that he came by them honestly does not remove the suspicion. He may show receipts from the men of whom he made his purchases, but that does not improve his standing with honest guardians of the law. "We are convinced that you bought them, but what have you bought them for?" So, if a rich man could show that he came by his riches honestly, still, in the eyes of Christ, the bare possession of them is strong presumptive evidence that he is an enemy of Christ and an alien to his kingdom. Dr. Adam Clarke says:

“Earthly riches are a great obstacle to salvation; because it is almost impossible to possess them and not to set the heart upon them; and they who love the world have not the love of the Father in them” (1 John 2:15). To be *rich*, therefore, is in general a great misfortune: but what rich man can be convinced of this? It is God himself who, by a miracle of mercy, can do this. Christ himself affirms the difficulty of the salvation of a rich man, with an oath, *verily*; but who of the rich either hears or believes him?

#### 485 RIGHTEOUS LIFE Brings Peaceful End

If you would die the death of the righteous, you must live his life. Holy living makes easy dying. If you pass through the strait gate, and walk steadily on in the narrow way, you need have no concern about what the end will be when you reach it. Your sole concern should be to press on steadily in the narrow way, and not allow yourself, by any inducements which earth can give, to be turned aside into the broad way of worldly conformity.

To live the life of the righteous you must become righteous. You must repent. You must be born of the Spirit. You must be sanctified by the Holy Ghost. You must walk in the Spirit and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Do this, and you need have no fears about dying. You will be ready for it when the time comes. Rivers that flow into the ocean reach it on a level with it, no matter from what high grounds they may come. Their waters run into the ocean and the waters of the ocean run into them. So if your life is going out towards God, his life will come into yours and you will become more and more like him, until at last you are swallowed up in the ocean of infinite love.

#### 486 RIGHTEOUSNESS, National

*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people*” (Prov. 14:34). The mightiest nations of antiquity, one after another, fell from their own corruptions. While they had moral strength within, they were proof against all external enemies. In her best days Rome dispensed justice through all her dominions. The principles

of jurisprudence which her jurists laid down are still acknowledged as binding by all civilized nations. But when her people became rich, and voluptuous, and rapacious, her decay began. Public offices were bought; and Gibbon says the crown itself was sold by the Pretorian guard at public auction. He became emperor who offered the highest price for the honor. (See Gibbon's Rome, 1:127). The spirit of venality prevailed at last to such an extent that the same historian says: "The Romans would demolish with their own hands the arches and walls, if the hope of profit could surpass the cost of the labor and exportation" (Same, 6:526).

If the American republic is to stand, an end must be put to the practise of carrying elections by money. He who *buys* or *sells* a vote should be branded as a traitor, and be rendered incapable afterward of casting a ballot or holding an office.

#### 487 ROMAN CATHOLICS: Jesuits

The Jesuits have been banished from every Roman Catholic country in Europe. They are thought the least of where they are known best. Those whom they serve are afraid of them. They were organized to uphold the Pope. They succeeded in stopping the progress of the Reformation begun by Luther. They have planted Romanism in every quarter of the globe. Their equals for devotion to the cause they have espoused can not be found. Their self-denial, their fearlessness in the face of danger, their persistency in carrying out what they undertake, their ready obedience to those in authority over them, their life-long consecration of every energy of body and mind, are wholly without a parallel. But they are so intriguing, so unscrupulous in their methods, and the standard of morality which they inculcate and practise is so low and elastic, that every Roman Catholic Government in the world is afraid of them, and closes its doors against them. This country is the paradise of the Jesuits. Here they can practise their dangerous arts unmolested. They work in secret. Without opposition in politics, they form a potential factor in important political

movements. They are now making a persistent effort to obtain control of the judiciary of this country. They are succeeding to quite an extent. Roman Catholic magistrates and policemen in many of our cities, where they dare to interfere, lay an iron hand on any unusual effort on the part of Protestants to reach the low, degraded masses, composed generally of atheists, socialists and Roman Catholics. There is little doubt but that the Pope has greater political influence in Chicago and in New York than he has in Rome.

#### 488 ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH *Aggressive*

The disposition manifested by our Government to bestow special favors upon the Roman Catholic church ought to arouse the country to a determined opposition to all such measures.

The *Presbyterian Observer*, of Baltimore, says: "The Indian schools receiving governmental aid are passing rapidly under the control of Roman Catholics. Just think of it! Four-fifths of them are under the direction of papists, while only one-fifth are under the care of Protestants of all denominations. How is this to be accounted for? What does it mean? Is Rome better qualified for the work, or is it designed to favor Romanism and secure its support politically? Protestants should watch Romish influence in this and other directions."

The tread of the Jesuit is as noiseless as the approach of a serpent. He lays his plans and works in secret until he gets his victim within his embrace, and then there is no escape. Let this country fall under the control of the Jesuits, and it will soon fall into the decay common to all Roman Catholic countries. We should guard against the evil while it may be prevented.

#### 489 ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH *and Property*

A large amount of the property of the country is fast passing into the hand of priests who acknowledge supreme allegiance to the Pope of Rome. In Brooklyn, New York, a few years ago, they obtained, by getting a rich bachelor to make his will in their favor, and allowing no one else

to have access to him till he died, possession of nearly a block of property, now worth millions. In the town in which we live they own a good farm which was given to them. They have both these pieces of property so fixed that they are exempt from taxation. The same thing is going on quietly all over the country.

In France, in the days of Cardinal Richelieu, the Romish priests, according to the historian Guizot, "possessed more than a quarter of the property of France." For this property they claimed exemption from taxation. Richelieu was the controlling spirit in the government in the reign of Louis XIII. He levied a tax at one time upon this property of eighty million livres.

In no papal country in the world are Romish priests allowed to go on untrammelled in absorbing the wealth of the people, as they are in this country.

#### 490 ROMANISM, Aggressions of

The aggressions of Romanism are steady, insidious, persistent, and well directed. They aim at one object—to obtain control of the civil power of this country. Already, in many of our cities, religious liberty is circumscribed through its influence. Brass bands are permitted to head noisy processions on the streets, and even on the Sabbath; but a few followers, marching and singing the songs of Zion, are arrested and sent to jail. Romanists should have the same rights as Protestants, but no more. We are in favor of religious liberty to its fullest extent; but we object to having religious liberty construed to mean only the liberty to do as the Pope directs. In Boston, the Rev. Mr. Davis, a minister of high standing, is sent to jail for a year, for the crime of preaching the gospel on Boston Common! And yet the country does not rise up and demand his release!

#### 491 ROMANISM and Free Institutions

The American people can not afford to tolerate Jesuitism. It is a deadly foe to free institutions. The Jesuits have proved themselves so dangerous that they were once ban-

ished from the leading Roman Catholic countries of Europe.

Joseph Cook says:

"America is young and strong. She is a child in gay, overflowing health, rushing forward in full sunlight through lush, rank growths and vernal meadows. Jesuitism is a snake in the grass. The viper fastens itself almost unnoticed around her ankles as she runs. It already sinks its fangs into the veins of journalism, and into those of education, and into the great central artery of politics. The racing child in her eagerness and vigor as yet hardly feels the wounds. But the poison will tell in due time. When once the health of the republic begins seriously to suffer, the head of the serpent will be crushed beneath the heel of public opinion. The safety of men is inconsistent with the freedom of vipers. The plea for toleration is to be answered in presence of a full exposure of the purposes of Jesuit aggression. When the Syllabus lies behind the Roman Catholic propaganda, the right of self-preservation lies in front of it.

"No Protestant American desires a union of church and state, or asks for himself in church or school any privilege he is not willing to grant to any other loyal citizen. But the safety of the people is the supreme law. A free school, a free church, and a free state are the three supports of the tripod on which rests the whole weight of American prosperity. Strike away either of these three and you cause the whole to fall. It is undeniable that the entire force of the Romish hierarchy is now pledged to the destruction of the first of these supports. The arm of the Vatican is lifted to destroy the American common-school system."

Our public schools must be defended at all hazards. No one should be admitted to citizenship who does not renounce all allegiance to all foreign powers.

#### 492 ROMANISM and the Public Schools

"Father Chapelle" asks, "Is there not a flagrant contradiction in the conduct of men who band together to direct evangelical influences to bear upon our people, and

who thoroughly and most inconsistently proclaim that the teaching of the gospel shall be banished from the schools?" We reply: There is. Such a course is inconsistent. It ought to bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of every Protestant. But *how* came the Bible to be put out of our common schools? It was by an outcry made against it by the Romish priests. The infidels joined in the outcry; and the politicians, to gain their votes, voted the Bible out. But the priests are as clamorous as ever, only now they raise the cry that our common schools are godless schools. But they made them so. And this is only a specimen of what they will do if they gain the power.

#### 493 ROOTS OF BITTERNESS

It is a great thing to get saved: it is much greater to keep saved. Many lose communion with God by compromising with sin; many more by losing their love, and becoming harsh and uncharitable. In the same breath in which we are commanded to "follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," we are charged to look "diligently, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (Heb. 12:15).

These "roots of bitterness" are troublesome things. What trouble they make in the conference, and in the church, especially if there is a strong, leading spirit nourished by the root! There is almost no end to the mischief it can make. It brings in a spirit of division. It instigates to church trials, it stirs up a hasty spirit; it breaks up societies and ruins souls. As alcohol, the bane of our race, is extracted from grain from which the bread of our race is made, so this "root of bitterness" is a perversion of holiness without which no one can be saved. To *discern it* one must *look diligently*. Much that passes for the fruit of holiness grows upon this root of bitterness. It produces many sermons, and exhortations, and articles for the papers, which claim to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. From knowing that what goes into a building is suitable for food, you can not decide that what comes out is good to nourish human beings. The grain may come out flour for bread, or

it may come out liquid hell-fire. It depends upon whether there is a mill or a still inside. So what one gets out of a text depends upon what there is in the heart. If there is love, the severest words will be seasoned with tenderness. They may be sharper than a two-edged sword; but to the honest soul that is wounded, there comes the oil of joy for mourning.

But if, instead of love, there is within the root of bitterness, the words will drive rather than draw; the arrow may be well aimed, but it will leave a poisoned wound which refuses to be healed. Those who come under the influence of this root of bitterness become less kind, less amiable, than they were before they professed holiness. Those who live in love may stir up enmity, but their enemies are drawn to them in spite of themselves.

It is not enough that we are zealous, and our zeal is successful in making converts. What is the character of our converts? Are they filled with that love of God which leads them to keep his commandments? "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). Or, on the contrary, are they conformed to this world? If not, if they are simple and plain, are they bitter in their spirit, and denunciatory in their tone?

Christ said of the Pharisees, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15). We must see to it that we are not of that sort, and that our converts are not of that sort. Zeal and success in making converts, and in getting them into the church, are not evidence that those who have the zeal and meet with the success are the children of God. The church and the world greatly need those who can and will do true work for God. Many who seem willing to do it are not in a spiritual condition to do it. They are either too complaisant, or too bitter. Their converts are either baptized worldlings or self-complacent bigots.

Who will have true charity and will do faithful work for God?

## 494 RULE OR RUIN SPIRIT Unchristlike

We are struck with the reproof that Christ gave his disciples, when some of them wished to have authority over the others. "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so it shall not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister [or servant]: and whosoever of you shall be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:42-44). He gives as a reason, his own example: "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." God "hath set governments" in the church (1 Cor. 12:28). But it does not follow that every man who wants to govern, is called of God to govern. If one puts himself forward to govern it is, as a rule, presumptive evidence that God does not call him to be a ruler. When God called David, it was through the prophet Samuel; and the people indorsed the call. Absalom called himself; and, though he secured many followers, he came to an untimely end. The spirit of "rule or ruin" is utterly opposed to the Spirit of Christ. If one must leave the church because he is not put into office, he is not fit for office. The love of power is as contrary to the Spirit of Christ as the love of dress or the love of money. One may be dead to everything else, but if he finds in himself a disposition to rally around his banner as many followers as he can, with whom his word is law, and over whom he exercises absolute authority, he has a right to conclude that he is not dead to sin. Self is still alive to a dangerous degree. "Only make me king to-day," said a Mohammedan prince, "and you may kill me to-morrow." But a true disciple of Christ does not want a kingdom of this world.

## 495 SABBATH, The

The Sabbatarians, by their positive assertions, and their long array of Scripture quotations, succeed in disturbing some honest souls. But do not be disturbed. Their proofs will not bear examination. We say this, because we have examined them with all fairness and candor. We have

never seen a single text that says, God commanded men to keep as Sabbath the seventh day of *the week*. They add *of the week* to God's commands. We have never seen any good authority to prove what they so confidently assert, that Constantine or the Roman Catholic church changed the Sabbath day from the seventh to the first day of the week. If they ever made any such change there ought to be an authentic record of it. We have never seen any. Let it be produced. Give us not assertions. They are easily made. Show us records.

#### 496 SABBATH To Be Valued

It is the duty of a Christian to conscientiously observe the Sabbath. It is the day which God has specially set apart for himself. His requirement is, "In it thou shalt not do any work." Ordinary labor is to be suspended on this holy day.

To keep it properly, we must make preparation on the day preceding. We should do on Saturday all that we can for our comfort on the Sabbath. Instead of working later than usual on Saturday night, we should quit work earlier than usual, in order to get our minds and our worldly matters ready for the Sabbath. To sit up late on Saturday night is likely to be followed by getting up late on Sunday morning, being late to church and, in the end, too often, in backsliding from God. It was *very early* on Sunday morning that the women of Galilee met the angels and learned from them that Jesus was risen from the dead.

If you would get much out of your religion, you must make much of the Sabbath.

#### 497 SABBATH, Preservation of the

Working men are specially interested in the preservation of the Sabbath. Let it be turned into a day of recreation, and it will soon become a day of labor. The money kings will say, "These people tire themselves more by their Sunday amusements than they would by work; therefore, they might better be kept at work." We have called attention

to the fact that on the continent of Europe this result has been realized to a large extent. Large numbers of working people have no day of rest.

The Sunday excursions and baseball games, common in this country, will have the same effect. Already it is beginning to be realized. A contemporary says:

“Sunday labor has been greatly increased during the past few years. In the city of New York alone there are fully one hundred thousand men and women who work every Sunday at their trades or vocations. A religious organization there is trying to prevent the growth of this encroachment upon the day of rest.”

If the people will not have a Christian Sabbath they will soon have no Sabbath.

#### 498 SABBATH: Not to be Secularized

The American Germans are making a great mistake in trying to secularize our American Sabbaths. They may have the assistance of the railroads, and of some of the capitalists, in turning the Sabbath into a day of pleasure, of riding and drinking and revelry; but when that is effected they may expect that the same result will follow here as is being realized in Germany—the Sabbath will be turned into a day of labor; and the toilers will be compelled to toil on seven days in the week. The German government, in a recent report on Sunday labor, shows that factory work is becoming the rule in Germany. Sabbath labor is more general in some parts of the empire than in others; but there is a decided tendency to do away with the practise of regarding the Sabbath as a day of rest from labor. If we do not have the Christian Sabbath, we shall have no more Sabbath than they have on the continent of Europe. The greed of gain in most of those who employ labor, will soon make it clear that it is no worse for the laborer in the mill than it is to play ball, and get drunk, and have fights, on the Sabbath. All are interested, whether they know it or not, in the preservation of the Sabbath, but none more so than the working man.

## 499 SABBATH: Worldly Conversation Not to be Indulged

We must not indulge in worldly conversation on the Sabbath, if we would keep it properly. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Worldly talk on the Sabbath is not only an indication of a lack of grace, but it opens a leakage of the soul through which what grace one has may easily slip away. Do not allow yourself to talk about worldly business on God's holy day. Be decided in this matter. Your friends, your children, your employers or your employes will draw you into it if you permit them. Follow God's direction and do not seek your own pleasure, nor speak your own words, on the Lord's Day. Let your conversation be in Heaven—about Heavenly things. Lay aside worldly cares and worldly talk, and seek to minister grace to others and to have others minister grace to you. Then the Sabbath will be to you a delight, and God will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth.

## 500 SABBATH AMUSEMENT

The working classes are making a great mistake by turning the Sabbath into a day of public amusement. If they keep on they will repent when it is too late. They have the deepest interest in the preservation of the Christian Sabbath as a day sacred to the worship of God, from whom came all our blessings. The *New York Journal of Commerce*, a leading secular paper, says:

"The moment all serious regard for the hours of rest, as sacred time, is lost, the greed of man comes behind the laborer with its lash, and in spite of laws forbidding work the factory and the mill are open, and the workmen must respond or quit the service. Let this fact be impressed on the mind of every man who asks for more of license on the first day of the week. A Sunday which has no sacred hours will very soon have no interval of peaceful rest. Open the day for unrestricted fun and frolic, and it will soon be open for exacting toil."

The men who get up Sabbath excursions for the laboring classes, and set before them beer and whisky, are their greatest enemies.

## 501 SABBATH, Seventh Day

The keeping of Saturday for Sabbath has always resulted in a failure, whenever it has been tried for any length of time. A large colony of Seventh-day Baptists settled in the town in which I spent my boyhood. They were a godly, intelligent people, free from fanatical notions. They had a flourishing church. Their ministers were pious, educated men. But they have all run out. Their children learned from their parents to work and play on Sunday, and from their neighbors to do the same on Saturday, and now it is a godless, wicked neighborhood. The Seventh-day Baptists began their work in this country over two hundred years ago. They were able, zealous, sincere men; but the blessing of God has not rested upon their labors. Their increase has been less than the natural increase of their families. They have fought vigorously, but they have been fighting against God.

## 502 SAINTS "Approved of Men"

What the Apostle says about true saints being "approved of men" is deserving of serious consideration. He does not mean that they will be popular, in the common acceptation of that word; very far from it. On the contrary, he taught, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But the very ones that persecute come at last to approve, and often to love and fellowship, those whom they persecute. Constancy in suffering, and sweetness of temper, and holy triumph in agonies extreme, manifested by his victims, have brought many a persecutor to his knees, beseeching God to bestow upon him this great salvation. In religious matters natural men are slow to adopt what they approve, and swift to practise what they condemn. But however men oppose us, we should always aim to keep their consciences on our side. In the long run, conscience is pretty apt to wear out prejudice. Not infrequently will men talk against the saints, and turn around and defend them when others do the same. A godly life stirs up opposition, but it at the same time challenges admiration for its consistency.

**503 SAINTS Persevere in Adversity**

He who will be a saint only when everything is prosperous, is no saint at all. A fish goes against the current only when the fish is alive. The dead ones are washed ashore. Paul, when in prison, wrote, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me"; but his faith never wavered on that account.

**504 SAINTS, Overfed**

Though one must eat, if he would be able to work, yet if he eats all the while he will soon be unable to work. Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding. Ordinarily more persons die of dyspepsia and apoplexy than of starvation.

The trouble with some of our pilgrims is, they do not work enough in proportion to the amount of spiritual food they take. Their appetite is good. They relish strong meat. But they do not work enough to keep their digestion good. They would be strong if they had more exercise in God's great harvest-field. As it is, instead of bringing in sheaves they are complaining. They flounce about paroxysmally, and tread down the grain that they should reap. They offend needlessly those whom they should bring to Christ. If they would visit them and talk with them face to face, they would be tender and sympathetic, and use persuasion where they now use denunciation. They are puffed up and die of spiritual pride, or they become mere fault-finders, and in trying to kill others kill themselves. Our only safety is to "work out our salvation" as "God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure."

**505 SALOONS Should be Suppressed**

The experience of every community shows that the sale of intoxicating liquor leads to drunkenness. To this there are no exceptions. Wherever there is a saloon, there are drunkards among its customers. This is so everywhere. Saloons make drunkards, just as schools make scholars. Every glass of intoxicating liquor which a person drinks is one step on towards making him a drunkard, just as every

lesson which a child learns goes a little ways towards making him a scholar. Saloons are schools of crime, nurseries of poverty and degradation. They teach nothing good; their whole influence is hurtful to society. Therefore society has the right to suppress them. *It has no right to tolerate them.* Men have no natural right to keep a saloon. Laws prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, as a beverage, no more interfere with one's natural rights than do laws prohibiting stealing. Then SALOONS SHOULD BE SUPPRESSED. The sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage should be utterly prohibited.

The saloon is of foreign origin. It is not an American institution. We remember when there were no saloons in the country. They were brought here by the criminals and socialists and anarchists of the old world. The great majority of saloon-keepers are foreigners; and many of them are ex-convicts. They are the natural enemies of our free institutions. They corrupt our politics. They put into office, to make and execute our laws, ignorant men, law-breakers, dissolute, unprincipled men. If they keep on growing in influence, they will land us in despotism. A nation of drunkards can not long remain a free nation. Our old taverns were bad enough. The saloons are a thousandfold worse. They are an unmitigated curse. Patriotism, no less than philanthropy, requires that the saloon should be suppressed.

#### 506 SALOONS, Society Has the Right to Suppress

Liberty is not license. The welfare of society demands that a man must exercise his natural rights so as not to interfere with the natural rights of others. A man living entirely alone commits a crime only against himself when he gets drunk. But if he is in a family, or in society, he commits a crime against the family or against society when he gets drunk. He makes himself a nuisance. He places himself in a position in which he is unable to contribute his proportion to the support of the family and the welfare of society. He becomes an unnecessary care and burden to others. While in a state of intoxication, he loses, to a

great extent, the control over himself. His reason is unbalanced, his moral sensibilities are blunted, and he is liable to commit the greatest crimes against his best friends.

Therefore, in society no man has a right to get drunk. Society has the right not only to punish him for getting drunk, but to exercise all necessary precautions to prevent any person from getting drunk. Therefore it has the right to suppress saloons.

**507 SALOON: Headquarters of Anarchy**

The American people should wake up to the fact that we are rapidly verging on a state of anarchy. The standing argument against prohibition is, that it can not be enforced. What is this but an acknowledgement that whisky and beer are stronger than the law? that the real seat of our government is the saloon, and not the State-house? And everywhere the saloon is the headquarters of anarchy.

Every true patriot should say the law prohibiting or restraining liquor-selling and gambling must be enforced. Officials whose duty it is to enforce it, should be exhorted to do their duty; and be supported while attempting to do it. If they neglect to do it honestly and bravely, they should be made to give place to better men. Christians should make it a matter of conscience to do their part toward securing good laws and a vigorous enforcement of them. The church should be as active as the saloon in selecting candidates for office and in securing their election. The ungodly should not be allowed to enthrone ungodliness without opposition or protest. Our deeds should say with our words, "Thy kingdom come."

**508 SALOON Should be Outlawed**

No other crime is more easy of detection than that of selling liquor to drink. The victims of the saloon-keeper, as soon as they set foot on the street, tell by their appearance, and by their talk, what has been done to them. To suppress liquor-selling it needs a strong law against it, and earnest men to enforce it. For men who give their support to saloons to profess to be Christians is a disgrace to Chris-

tianity. A merchant who sends rum to Africa, may be a liberal church-member, but he is as probable a candidate for hell-fire as the country affords.

Because men can not be made honest by law, is as good a reason for licensing stealing as is the one so often urged, that because men can not be made temperate by law, therefore saloons should be licensed.

#### 509 SALOONS: Murder Mills

As murder-mills, the saloons of this country are a marked success. Many persons are killed with revolvers, some with dynamite, some with poison, but strong drink kills more than all other violent means combined. It kills a large proportion of those who use it; and they, before their death, when under its influence, not infrequently kill others. The saloon-keepers themselves at last become its victims. Other poisons kill the body, but strong drink kills the soul. In other forms of murder and robbery, usually only money and other valuables are taken. One who is murdered by strong drink is frequently robbed of character, of houses and lands, and cattle, and clothes, and all that he possesses. Let the Murder Mills be closed.

#### 510 SALOONS: Kept By Convicts as Punishment

The keeping of saloons by convicts appears to have been of very ancient origin. Rameses III. reigned over Egypt about 1200 years before Christ. Towards the last of his reign a conspiracy was formed against him. It being discovered, the chief conspirators were put to death. Some ladies of the court, knowing of the conspiracy, but not making it known, were condemned "to the penal servitude of keeping a beer-house." So says Rawlinson in the "History of Ancient Egypt."

Our advance in civilization in this respect has been decidedly backward. It is true that many of the keepers of our beer-houses are criminals and ex-convicts, but they are *licensed* to do it as a *privilege*, instead of being *condemned* to do it as a *punishment*. The old Egyptian idea was the

more nearly correct. It is well to degrade the business of beer-selling: it is better not to tolerate it.

511 SALOON, Woe For Those Who Vote to Legalize the

The business of drunkard-making is the business of hell itself. It is worse than ordinary theft; for he who steals another's money leaves him free to earn more money. But he who gets a man's money for strong drink, unfits him for his business, whatever it may be. He may be a skilful mechanic—but jobs become more difficult to obtain—for a drunkard can not be depended upon. Who will employ a drunken surgeon, or a drunken lawyer? Poverty and crime are the legitimate fruit of the saloon. It is no wonder that God pronounces a woe upon all who are responsible for the business. "*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!*" (Hab. 2:15).

Legislatures which legalize the traffic in strong drink, that means *you!* Citizens, who vote for license, high or low, that means *you!* God's woe is upon all who countenance the business, and there is no escaping it but by repentance and reformation.

512 SALOON, The, Must Die

The saloon stands out convicted before the world, as a deliberate murderer. No one is safe who stands in its way. Let the verdict of every right-minded man and woman be, *the saloon must die*. It has no claim for forbearance. Its hands are red with innocent blood. If in any community we have not officers who will put down the saloons, let us elect officers who will. Let our most determined, intelligent efforts be directed to the utter extermination from the face of our country of the saloon.

513 SALOON-KEEPERS: Oppressors

The great oppressors of the wage-workers of this country are the saloon-keepers. Let a new factory be started, and saloons are opened near it. The fewer hours that

drinking men work, and the greater wages they receive, the more time and money they have to spend at the saloon. No matter what wages men get, if the saloon and the lodge come between them and their families, their families will suffer. The monopolists to be dreaded are the men who have a monopoly of selling beer and whisky. The strikes that are so common in the cities are wicked and senseless. Wages now are far above the cost of living. The really oppressed class are the farmers. It takes about five bushels of wheat to pay for a good pair of shoes. The men who run the machines by which shoes are made do not equal the average farmer in intelligence and skill. Yet each of these men turns out several pairs of shoes a day. The oppressions of the lodge are felt in all quarters by all the people. Let the children of God stand free; and at the same time use what influence they can to secure liberty of conscience and of action for all classes and conditions of society.

#### 514 SALOON-KEEPERS Versus Preachers

The saloon-keepers are the natural enemies of the preachers. Preachers try to save men; saloon-keepers lead them to hell. Preachers dissuade men from crime; four-fifths of the crimes against persons are caused by the saloon-keepers. Preachers influence bad men to become good; saloon-keepers make good men bad. The pulpit is counteracted by the bar. The efforts of the preachers to lift men up are neutralized by the efforts of saloon-keepers to drag men down. Therefore, preachers, whatever they may disagree about, should make common cause against the business of saloon-keepers. The great crime of liquor-selling is their calling. It is so bad that it can not be reformed. It is a business which no one can follow, under any circumstances, and be a Christian.

Then let Christian ministers and Christian people unite in putting down this nefarious traffic. Let no opportunity to banish it from any community be lost. Let the most feasible and the most vigorous effort be made to utterly exterminate this horrible business from the land.

## 515 SALVATION: By Grace

We are saved by grace, and not by any works of our own. If we are able to do any good works, this ability is of grace. The inclination to do good is from above; for it is God that worketh in us to *will* that which is right. The ability to carry out what he has inspired us to attempt is also of him; for he worketh in us to *do* his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

Bishop Hamline was one of the most godly ministers in the M. E. church. At every conference he attended he stirred up the preachers to seek holiness, to live it and enjoy it. But his whole trust was in the mercy of God. Towards the close of his life he wrote: "My sense of unworthiness is so great, and the fact that Christ died for me is so assured, that no words which I can use seem to come up to the earnestness and ardor of my experience. 'Chief of sinners!' 'Jesus died for me!' Let these be ever written on my inmost heart. And oh, to think that he who died for me should renew me, and rekindle the flame of divine love in me, when it had burned low and had sometimes been well-nigh quenched! In my own merit I deserve nothing but perdition, but I trust in Christ, and he saves me. I feel that he saves me. I am saved! I know I am saved! I never saw more of the glories of redemption than I have seen to-day, never at any period of my life."

## 516 SALVATION Requires Earnest Effort

It seems incredible that any one who believes in Jesus can believe in Universalism. One asked him the question, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" His answer was direct and to the point: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24). This plainly teaches that not only few are saved, but that many who seek salvation will fail to reach Heaven because they are not sufficiently in earnest. They seek, but do not strive. Their efforts are too feeble and too spasmodic.

STRIVE! What power is in this word! It is like the bugle's blast calling to battle. It summons to desperate con-

flicts with self and Satan, with rooted wrongs and fortified errors. It bids us work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

“Not on beds of down,  
Or under shade of canopy reposing,  
Eternal life is won.”

**517 SALVATION: The Rich May Be Saved**

There are great obstacles in the way of the salvation of any person. We must all fight if we would reign. It requires earnest effort to take the kingdom of God. But there are special difficulties in the way of the salvation of the rich. They love to have their own way. It comes very hard for them to submit to God. Our Savior says, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23). Still they may be saved. There is a possibility of it, for Paul writes, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God” (1 Tim. 6:17). This implies that they may be saved. The Free Methodist church, while it is especially adapted to the poor, also affords the best opportunities for the salvation of the rich. By requiring all its members to dress plainly, it does not give encouragement to pride. By having all the seats in all its places of worship free, it does not nourish a moneyed aristocracy. In every meeting it gives a practical lesson on the essential brotherhood of mankind. “The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all” (Prov. 17:2). For the salvation of all classes—especially of the rich—free churches afford the best possible facilities. Judge McLean, of the United States Supreme Court, was one of our most prominent public men in his day. It was said that he would never attend a church which rented or sold its seats, except upon a funeral occasion.

**518 SANCTIFICATION Through the Truth**

There is a great depth of meaning in the prayer of Christ for his disciples: “Sanctify them through thy truth” (John 17:17). They had already been converted and were

kept; but they needed to be sanctified. This was to be done through the truth. Error does not make its votaries holy. Its tendency is to lead those who embrace it to yield to wrong affections and bad tempers, and so become guilty of vicious conduct.

But there is a sanctifying power in truth. No one can open his heart to any truth without being made better by it.

“Stronger than steel  
Is the sword of the Spirit;  
Swifter than arrows  
The light of the truth is;  
Greater than anger  
Is love that subdueth.”

He who would be sanctified wholly must love truth supremely. He must be loyal to it in all his words and actions. This may cost us much, but the results will compensate for all it costs. “Buy the truth, and sell it not.”

#### 519 SANCTIFICATION Must be Preached

Our preachers, if they would succeed in their work, must preach entire sanctification. They must preach it clearly, distinctly, definitely. On this subject the gospel trumpet must give no uncertain sound. Francis Asbury did more than any other man to plant Methodism on this continent. He said he felt divinely called to preach holiness in every sermon. Yet, one time when he was taken sick, he wrote: “I have found by secret search, that I have not preached sanctification as I should have done; if I am restored, this shall be my theme more pointedly than ever, God being my helper.”

Brother, do you preach entire sanctification as you should? Do your people get sanctified wholly? Do you live so that you can preach sanctification from a present experience?

#### 520 SATAN Hates Real Manifestations of the Holy Ghost

It is a cunning trick of Satan to brand with odious names those who walk in the Spirit. Nothing excites the wrath of the devil like a real manifestation of the Holy

Ghost. He stirs up his servants, especially those who belong to the church, to heap contempt upon those who give themselves up to be led by the Spirit. They are branded as fools and fanatics by those who do not know what fanaticism is. True fanaticism is very unlike the spirit of humble love which those always manifest who are filled with the Holy Spirit.

#### 521 SATAN Imposes Crosses

The disciple of Christ must deny himself and take up his cross daily. But just here he needs to be on his guard. When Satan finds that he can not any longer prevent you from taking the cross, then he changes his tactics and makes crosses for you. He gives as the reason for doing anything, that it is a cross. This is Satan's logic. If there is no better reason for doing anything than that it is a cross, then let it alone. Because it seems hard to you to do anything, it does not follow that you must do it. A deluded man, Freeman, of Northern New York, thought that he must do something that Satan made a test of his fidelity to God, and so he killed the child on whom his heart was set, and offered her, as he said, "a sacrifice to God." The devil lays crosses on those who will take them. Do not touch them. We give you two marks by which you may distinguish the cross of Christ from the crosses which Satan imposes :

1. The cross of Christ is always in harmony with the general teaching of the Scriptures. Satan often backs up his suggestions with a single text, detached from its connections. Read in the fourth chapter of Matthew how he tempted our Savior, and the method Christ adopted to defeat him.

2. When a person takes the cross of Christ, God gives the strength and a glory that makes the cross easy to be borne. It may require more labor and more self-denial than has, up to this time, fallen to your lot, but Christ will give you such vigor and such rest of soul that you will get along better than you ever did in your life. His yoke is easy and his burden is light.

## 522 SCHOOLS, Salvation

No agency among us is doing more for the permanence and spread of the work of God in the earth than our salvation schools. They are raising up well-trained, valiant soldiers who will carry on the truth when we who have been longest on the field shall have been called from the scenes of conflict. The good effects of these schools have been already seen in all quarters of the globe. Then take hold and help sustain them. If you have children to send away to school, send them to our schools. If you have money to leave for the cause of God, when you are through with it, then leave a legacy for one of our schools. We would like to see each of them endowed with a liberal sum, the interest to be devoted to the support of the principal and teachers.

## 523 SCOLDING Will Not Do

You can never scold the people into a revival. All you say is true, and the people deserve every word of it, but you say it in such a scolding tone and manner that it does more harm than good. Do ask the Lord to change your spirit, so you can successfully change your manner. Get filled with meek and lowly, and tender love, and it will act like a charm on others. You can lead those whom you can not drive. Little as you suspect it, you really need to be revived yourself. You are ready to talk and to pray; but your talk lacks unction, and your prayers lack faith and fervor. You do not have the spirit of supplication. Beloveds, let us who preach have a revival. What do you say?

## 524 SCRIPTURES, Wresting of

Every book has some word or words which it uses in its own peculiar sense. It is so with contracts, and with all important writings. To understand them correctly, we must take the word in the sense in which the writer uses it. This may, or may not, be the original meaning of the word. This is not material. Words are simply signs of ideas. So, in understanding a writer, or in interpreting a document,

we must inquire what idea, in the passage under consideration, the word was intended to convey. To give to the word in any writing the meaning generally attached to it, although it is evident that the writer uses it in another sense, is to pervert its meaning. Bible words are sometimes used in this way. It may be done without any intention to pervert the meaning of the Scriptures, but the result is the teaching of the Scriptures is perverted. Thus the word immortality is never used in the Scriptures to denote, simply and solely, existence forever. There is always coupled with it the idea of a happy existence. It is not once used as the opposite of annihilation. But those who teach what they call "conditional immortality," use it in this sense, and thus pervert the teaching of the Scriptures. Thus, in Romans 2:8, 9, Paul uses, as the opposite of immortality and eternal life, not annihilation, but "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." These terms plainly imply a conscious existence.

Reader, be careful how you, in substance, say to yourself, "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," thinking that death ends all. A sensual life is a senseless life. It does not terminate in non-existence. Christ says of a representative of this class, that he died and was buried, "and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 12:23).

Reader, shun his mode of life, as you would shun his fate.

#### 525 SCRUPULOUSNESS, Over-

While we should be conscientious, we should guard against over-scrupulousness. Some good Christians are destroyed by it. We knew an excellent sister, a school-teacher, who became so afraid that she should not speak the exact truth that she would qualify everything that she said, and finally became afraid to say anything. She died insane. Baxter says:

"If you send your servant on your message, you had rather he went on his way as well as he can, than stand scrupling every step whether he should set the right or left foot forward, and whether he should step so far, or so far at a time. Hindering scruples please not God."

## 526 SECRET LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Among the inalienable rights of man is the right to work for whom he pleases, and on what terms he pleases. To deprive him of this right is to deprive him of an essential element of personal liberty. It is taking a long step towards reducing him to a condition of servitude. It makes him, in this respect, a slave. He is no longer his own master. Were any state to pass and enforce a law that a man should not be permitted to work unless he belonged to a particular association, and unless he received for his work a price stipulated by this association, and yet the state fail to provide him with work at that price, there would be a rebellion. Such a law would be considered too despotic to be endured. Everywhere there would be a revolt against it. No political party would dare to propose such an enactment. Such a law would be regarded as an infringement upon our God-given rights. Yet this is precisely what the secret labor organizations are doing. If a man does not belong to their order they will not allow him to work with them. If a part of them demand wages which the employer is unwilling to pay, a strike is ordered. Those who wish to work are not permitted to do so. Any who attempt to take their places are maltreated and some, perhaps, are killed. All this is a violation of the fundamental rights of man. It tends to the overthrow of the social fabric. It introduces an irresponsible, despotic power. It is no better than robbery. It is robbery under another guise. No Christian can voluntarily place himself under the control of others so as to authorize them to require him to do wrong. To belong to Christ he must be free to follow Christ. He cannot serve two masters. He who submits to the dictation of the lodge renounces allegiance to Christ. Other lords have dominion over him. Hence, the Free Methodist church, in requiring all its members to have no connection with secret societies, requires only that which is necessary to their being Christians. It renders them important aid in maintaining their personal independence. It also contributes materially to the good order and the welfare of the community at large. Were the influence of the

Free Methodist church all prevalent, labor troubles would, to a great extent, be avoided. Men would be taught that they can not be Christians without paying proper respect to the rights of others. But what inducement can there possibly be to form secret societies, if men do not expect to reap from them advantages to which their abilities, their character and their conduct do not entitle them? Patriotism combines with piety to urge us to do all we can to spread among men the Christianity taught by the New Testament.

#### 527 SECRET SOCIETIES and Labor

The outrages inflicted by the secret societies which control the "labor movement" are of such a nature as to demand suppression by the strong hand of the law. By practically abolishing the system of apprenticeship they virtually deny to the boys of this country the right to learn trades. Hence the foremen in most of our great manufacturing establishments are men born in foreign lands. American boys must look for employment outside of the trades, or be content with subordinate positions. If this state of things was brought about by legislative enactments, such an ado would be made as would soon bring about a remedy. But the tyranny of the trades unions is endured with a servile submission alike disgraceful to freemen and dangerous to our liberties. We need a better, braver class of men for our legislators.

#### 528 SECTS

There is no command in the new Testament requiring the church of Christ to preserve an organic unity. That such a union is desirable, if it were possible, is extremely doubtful. It is a fact that admits of no dispute, that where this unity prevails to the greatest extent, there the church is the most corrupt, as in Italy, Spain and Austria. We advise those who are so sorely exercised in mind over the number of sects in this country that they can not live in peace here, to emigrate to some of those countries in which sects are not tolerated. They will find that there may

be unity without spirituality. Water is never so strongly united as when it is frozen. But it is not the most useful in that state. Enough of heat to separate it makes it serviceable for man and beast. Even ice kept for use is of little service only as it is melted. The fire of divine love in the compact church of Italy would doubtless create divisions, but it would do great good. There are many things much more deplorable than the division of the church of Jesus Christ into sects. Satan delights to divert good men from fighting sin to fighting sects. Do not be drawn away into this profitless work. You will be in great danger of becoming defiled by a spirit of bitterness, but if you should be one of a thousand engaged in this work who keeps the charity essential to salvation, your life would be misspent.

#### 529 SECURITY FOR OTHERS

Many reports come to our ears of brethren, in different parts of the country, who have lost their property by becoming security for others. Some of them are sad cases indeed. One aged couple—over seventy years of age—who had acquired a moderate competence by hard work, were induced to become security to a large amount for a short time, for a neighbor whom they had known from childhood as an honest man. The result was, they lost all and are now obliged to work out at days' work to get a living.

The way to prevent all such calamities is very simple. It is to obey what God's Word says on the subject: "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?" (Prov. 27:26, 27). And again, "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure" (Prov. 11:15).

#### 530 SELF-DECEPTION

The capacity of some persons for self-deception is truly wonderful. Were it proper to speak of genius in such a connection, they might be said to have a genius for imposing upon themselves. They give every appearance of truly thinking they are saints; while they do not exhibit

in every-day life the uprightness of the honest heathen. They profess perfect love, while they manifest in every method which they consider safe, unmistakable malice towards the objects of their dislike. They claim to be willing to lay down their lives for Christ; while their contributions for the support of his gospel are made in response to appeals to their pride or to their love of self-indulgence. *"Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."*

**531 SELF-DENIAL Must be Practised**

If we do not know what self-denial for Christ's sake is, we do not belong to Christ. He who lives to gratify his senses does not live for eternity. Nor does he know in what true enjoyment consists. The happiness of this life is best secured by meeting fully the conditions for securing the happiness of the life that is to come.

*"I could not choose a larger bliss  
Than to be wholly thine."*

But no matter what temporary suffering it may involve, we must keep ourselves wholly consecrated to God. No sacrifice that he calls for must be counted too great for us to make. Christ forbids all needless self-indulgence and extravagance; not that we may save the money which they cost, but that we may have more with which to bless others. No Christian "can afford" to spend money needlessly upon himself.

**532 SELFISHNESS and Christ's Religion**

A selfish religion is not Christ's religion. Men who heap up riches and bestow their goods only where they are not needed—upon wealthy churches and organizations—will hear Christ say, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Upon their inquiring in surprise when they did this, the answer will be, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it

not to me." And these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:42-46). The rich would do well to lay these awful words to heart. They are not likely to hear them from their pulpits. A divine religion is a humane religion. He who loves God most is the most ready to make sacrifices for the good of his fellow men.

### 533 SELFISHNESS, The Great Obstacle

Consecrate your service to the Lord. Whatever your condition, there is work for God that you can do, and work that will go undone unless you do it. Each day brings its opportunity, which, when lost, never returns.

Do stop living for yourself. To live for others will give to life a new charm. Some are never satisfied with their experience, and they fail to find out the cause. In many cases it is because they are too much taken up with themselves. Less money expended for personal luxuries, and given to relieve the privations of others, would benefit them in this life and in the life to come. To have a large amount of grace, one must have a large heart. Mueller has mighty faith, for he has many mouths to feed.

Let us by "patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality," that we may have "eternal life."

### 534 SENSITIVENESS, Sanctification Remedy for

Sanctification and sensitiveness are not synonymous, but quite the contrary. The more fully we are sanctified the more easily we can endure to have others differ with us in opinion. We may get in our experience where we can bear to have a brother say that we are mistaken without our thinking that he accuses us of lying. It is possible for us to become so matured in grace that we will put the best construction, that it will honestly bear, on what we hear and read. We may be, even here, so completely transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we will have sweet and intimate Christian fellowship with some who differ widely from us in their theological opinions. Let us make haste to get

there. It will add greatly to our own peace, and to the harmony and welfare of the church.

535 SERMONS, Powerless

Christ says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The branch depends for its life wholly upon the vine. So our spiritual life and our usefulness depend on our vital union with Christ. "As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

A follower of Jesus may have been eminently useful for many years; but, if he relies upon himself, or upon his past experience, he is no longer successful. Sampson was a laughing-stock for the Philistines when the Lord, because of his unfaithfulness, departed from him. So sermons and exhortations, which made men tremble when they pulsed with the life of Christ, become, at best, only entertaining when the dependence of the preacher is upon his rhetoric or elocution. The greatest of truths lose much of their force when only carried to the ear by the voice of man. Words which fall powerless upon the ear, would, if carried to the heart by the breath of the Almighty, effect a wonderful transformation. Reader, are you united to Christ? "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

536 SERMONS Should Be Studied and Outline Written

If God calls you to devote your time to preaching, then he calls you to make suitable preparation to preach. Because you do not *read* your sermons, is no reason why you should not *study* your sermons. The less you write the more time you will have to study. But you *should* write, no matter how fluently you may be able to talk. Make a careful, written outline of every sermon. Divide your subject naturally. State your propositions clearly. Prove every important proposition by one or two plain texts, *correctly* quoted. Do not talk at random. Make your points so plain that you carry the understanding and the conscience of your hearers with you. Master your subject. Obey God's directions. "Hear the word at my mouth,

and give them warning from me" (Ezek. 3:17). God speaks generally to the soul in a still, small voice. You must live near him to hear that voice. You must be familiar with his Word if you would have God put his words in your mouth.

537 SERVICE Must be Whole-hearted

It is in vain that we use the language of devotion, unless our hearts are in it. God does not change. What he complained of in his people anciently, in lacking heart purity, he does not approve in his people now.

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before me as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Isa. 33:31). We must put our hearts in our prayers, in our testimony and in our songs. The most elaborate, artistic performances of acts of worship, as well as the simplest and rudest, are an abomination to God when they are not the genuine expressions of the feelings of those who participate in them. He abhors hypocrisy.

"Half-hearted, false-hearted! Heed we the warning!  
 Only the whole can be perfectly true;  
 Bring the whole offering, all timid thought scorning,  
 True-hearted only if whole-hearted too."

It is ourselves that God wants, and not merely our words. Let us see to it that our surrender to his will is complete. Let there be no more pretenses, no evasions. Let us be Christians, not only in some things, but in all things. Let our lives be continuous acts of worship.

538 SIMPLE LIFE, Advantages of the

Nature has her own way of evening things pretty well, after all. The man who has choicest delicacies to eat, suffers from want of appetite, and from dyspepsia and other diseases consequent upon high living, so that his costly dishes do not afford him as much pleasure as the laborer derives from his plain food. "I will gladly exchange din-

ners with you," said a millionaire to a laborer, "if you will give me your appetite and digestion." The actual wants of the body are easily met; the imaginary wants, which spring from pride and envy, can never be met. His food, prepared by a three-thousand-dollar cook, no longer tastes good when he learns that his competitor has a ten-thousand-dollar cook. To live simply and within one's means is to live well. The more of a beast a man makes of himself, the greater are his bodily sufferings, and the smaller is his capacity for real enjoyment. Good health and few wants afford more enjoyment than the bountiful supply of the artificial wants of one who has pampered appetites and a broken-down constitution. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."

#### 539 SINGING

If singing is an act of worship, then the worshipers should sing. If they are real worshipers, they will not consent to delegate the singing to a few. They could not do this, even if these few were saints. But usually the choir is made up largely of sinners. They sing for pay, or for praise. There is no worship about it. The sentiment expressed is not felt; the words do not have any meaning in the mouths of those who use them. It is a performance merely. But is God pleased with unmeaning performances? Let Christ answer: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). That can not be done with a senseless organ, by an ungodly choir. They must first be converted. Instead of hiring others to do your singing, you should say with the apostle, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." No machine that man ever invented can do this. No instructor of music can teach this art. Saved persons alone are capable of it. And they, when they sing, need the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Those who sing in the spirit get blessed themselves. They are lifted sometimes almost to the very gates of heaven. Often, under spirited singing, sinners get convicted and penitents converted. Masses of people are

powerfully wrought upon by Holy Ghost singing. It produces an effect infinitely beyond anything that mere artistic performances can accomplish. Let somebody start the tune that can start it in a devotional key. Let us have the Spirit and look to get blessed in our singing. Let all sing, and put their hearts in the singing.

**540 SINGING: Hymn-books**

At a Free Methodist camp-meeting we gave out a hymn from our Free Methodist hymn-book. To our surprise, there was not another hymn-book on the ground. Old-fashioned Methodist hymns and tunes were a novelty. Each preacher had his favorite collection of spiritual songs, and with these the people were well supplied. After this it was not a surprise to us to learn that at evening the working forces were divided—some going to the “Salvation Army” and some to “Daniel’s Band,” not leaving enough who had power with God to bring through the sinners who came to the altar to seek salvation.

Brethren, if you would make our work a success, you must fall into line and adopt Free Methodist methods, and read Free Methodist literature, and come into Free Methodist discipline. The tactics of a successful army are essentially the same throughout, though they may vary on occasion.

**541 SIN, Besetting**

If you are living in the commission of any known sin, you are not justified. It may be concealed from your fellow men, but it is not hidden from God. You may be keeping up a high profession; but that only makes your case the more hopeless, and your damnation the more terrible. You may be very zealous for reforms, and may succeed in casting out devils and doing many mighty works, but that will not prevent Christ from saying to you at last, “Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.” However well you may cover your tracks for a time, one thing you may depend upon. *Be sure your sins will find you out.* Then, at once, break off from your sins by righteousness. Turn to God with all

your heart. Seek forgiveness until you find it. One reliable evidence that God has forgiven you, is power to overcome your besetting sin.

#### 542 SIN, Progression in

The ancients had a maxim, *Nemo repenti fuit turpissimus*—"No one suddenly becomes most vile." An abandoned life, like winter, comes on by degrees. The first downward step which that hopeless, helpless drunkard took was playing checkers. To be in fashion he then took to smoking cigars, then to drinking beer, then whisky. His farm is gone, his health is gone, his character is gone, his property is gone, his family is brought to beggary and he is staggering up to the mouth of hell!

When one departs from the strictest uprightness, he can not tell where he will drift. He puts himself in the power of his enemy, who seeks only to drag him down to destruction. Little sins grow into great sins—and often they grow with startling rapidity.

#### 543 SINNERS Must Forsake All Wrong

St. James is as explicit as Daniel in specifying the nature of the work which God will reward. "Let him know, that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:20). The converted sinner must not only turn *to that which is good*, but he must turn *from everything that is wrong*. People are very ready, in these times, to put on the garb of Christian profession, provided they be permitted to wear it over their own garments of pride and self-righteousness. They will consent to dress tolerably plain at church, if they may dazzle in diamonds in the world. They will put on sackcloth in Lent; but must make up for it in the costliness of their Easter bonnets and other gorgeous attire.

Many a man will contribute liberally to the church, if he may still gamble in stocks, or drive hard bargains, or oppress the hireling in his wages.

But the convert that God owns turns *from* all his errors—

from pride, and sensuality, and covetousness, in all their diversified forms.

544 SINNERS' Services Should Be Accepted

One can not do anything to help on the cause of God without getting his reward, either in this life or in the life to come. God is a good paymaster. Christ healed the centurion's daughter on being told that "he loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." We mentioned, a few weeks since, how a gentleman aided in raising a subscription to build us a church. We are just informed that he has been gloriously converted and has united with the Free Methodist church. Praise God!

Word comes to us about an aged gentleman who had been prejudiced against the Free Methodists. But when they were to hold a conference in the town in which he lived, his love of hospitality led him to take an active part in providing for the conference. He attended the sessions and the preaching services, and his prejudices were swept away. He got saved among them, and died in holy triumph.

It is a great mistake not to let sinners help us, when they wish to and can do it consistently. We needlessly deprive ourselves of needed help, and often prevent them from getting the blessing they would receive if permitted to do the good to which they feel inclined.

545 SLANG Should Never Be Used

Some of the sacred writers were men of education, others were unlearned. There is a great difference in their style; but they all agree on one point—*none of them used slang*. The simplest style found in the Bible is yet a pure style. We wish to call the attention of all who speak in public, and especially our preachers, to this. It is our settled conviction that no one can use slang without grieving the Spirit of God. The use of it is offensive to all persons of good taste, and especially to those who have the Spirit. To use low, slang phrases is neither winning, witty nor wise. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." If this should be the rule for private

conversation, much more should it be for public addresses. You can be familiar without being low and vulgar. Study the Bible. Study the "Pilgrim's Progress." Bunyan was uneducated. His associations were with the poor and ignorant. In early life he formed bad habits of speech. But conversion cured him. In his writings there is nothing offensive to the most fastidious taste. His language was that of the common people. But you find in his writings no low, vulgar expressions. Imitate him in this respect. Say nothing that borders on buffoonery. Do not court a laugh when you should win a soul. Be serious. Be in earnest; and do not be vulgar.

#### 546 SLOTHFUL PROFESSOR

He who is always looking for difficulties will always find difficulties. "The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets" (Prov. 22:13). The trouble was with the man, not with the street. Laziness is a great inventor. It can always find reasons satisfactory to itself for not doing what is needed to be done. It is as abundant in resolutions as the apostles were in acts. But the highest resolves accomplish no more than to ease the conscience. Like Pollok's candidate for fame, he

"Saw in the very threshold of pursuit,  
A thousand obstacles; he halted first,  
And while he halted, saw his burning hopes  
Grow dim and dimmer still, \* \*  
His purposes made daily, daily broken,  
Like plants uprooted oft, and set again,  
More sickly grew, and daily wavered more,  
Till at the last \* \*  
Sleep gathered fast, and weighed him downward still."

It is time that the resolutions of many began to take form in action. God works in us to will and to do, but we must work out our own salvation. And we must work with a will. We can not

"be carried to the skies  
On flowery beds of ease."

Reader, are you a working Christian?

A lazy person can not be a Christian. He may be in the church, but he can not be in Christ. All who are in Christ partake of his spirit. And his is a diligent spirit. When only twelve years of age he said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

Paul, while insisting upon the deepest piety, directs its possessor to "be *not slothful* in business" (Rom. 12:10); and the wise man said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10). The grace of God puts life and energy in its possessor. This is seen in temporal and spiritual matters. He who prevails with God in prayer on his knees, will do good work for man with his hands. It was Paul's boast that "these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me" (Acts 20:34). Wilful idleness is sin.

#### 547 SOCIAL BEING, Man a

Man was not made to be alone. He was formed for society. Christianity is a social religion. As soon as Andrew felt the joy of communion with Christ he brought his brother to share in the blessed fellowship. Happiness is multiplied by being divided with others.

"Oh, the music and beauty of life lose their worth  
 When one heart only joys in their smiles;  
 But the union of hearts gives that pleasure its birth,  
 Which beams on the darkness and coldness of earth,  
 Like the sun on its own chosen isles:  
 It gives to the fireside of winter its light,  
 The glow and the glitter of spring."

We need a personal experience of saving grace; but it should be such an experience as leads us to long to share it with others. No man who is truly born of the Spirit lives to himself alone. Of all human beings he is the most careworn who cares only for himself.

#### 548 SOCIETIES, Forming New

In forming new societies it is of great importance that they be composed of godly men and women. The first members should be saved members. They should know our

principles, and should be consecrated to God to carry them out. They should have a clear experience of sanctifying grace, and a fixed determination to live holy lives. Such members will mold others as they come in. They will grow up a strong society, having power with God and influence with men. Societies of this kind are not liable to be torn to pieces by internal dissensions, nor to die of formality. They will settle down to steady work for Christ in the salvation of souls, and, as a consequence, they will prosper. It is better not to form a society than to form one out of bad materials. It is the character of the individual members, more than the Discipline to which they say they gave their assent, which determines the character of a society.

#### 549 SOUL Food

When we are hungry the sound of the dinner bell is pleasant to us. We like to hear it. But when we get to the table we expect something to eat. We are not satisfied any longer with the jingle of the bell. We want something besides noise. So when people come to our meetings they come to hear something that will do them good. They want food for the soul. If they wished to listen to one who "can play well on an instrument," they would have gone somewhere else. No man can minister acceptably to our congregations, however full his head may be of words, unless his heart is full of grace. Our people want something more than mere rattle. The sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal will not satisfy them, however skilfully they may be sounded and tinkled. It is not enough to preach about the Spirit. The preacher should be so filled that he can minister the Spirit. He must not only tell the people to get blessed; he must himself get blessed. To do this he must walk closely with God all the week. If he has been indolent, and self-indulgent through the week, he can not atone for it by violent vociferations on the Sabbath.

#### 550 SOUL Hunger Must be Satisfied

The success of any church will be in proportion to the zeal and fidelity with which it holds up Christ. Everywhere

the people are spiritually starving. Many are so far gone that they have no sense of hunger. Dogmas will not feed them. Denunciations and controversy will but drive them away. As the smell of nicely cooked food awakens the appetites of the body, so the odor of sanctity never fails to excite a hunger for righteousness.

Nothing can satisfy soul-hunger but the Bread of Life which came down from Heaven. He that feeds on Christ shall never hunger. The restless craving for something unattained is gone. Then hold up Christ. He is more attractive than the best trained choir—than the most eloquent preacher. We should show men their needs in order that we may point them to Christ, who can satisfy their every need.

551 SOULS, Wisdom Required in Dealing With

In cutting a tree into wood we strike slanting blows, and take out at first large chips. To get the log cut through once, we have to cut it through twice. Every chip requires a blow at each end. This may seem to the inexperienced a great waste of labor, but it is a great saving of labor. In fact, it is the only way to cut through a large log. By striking straight across the grain in one place you could never get the ax in far. You would mar the log, but you would get no wood. We see why some Christian workers accomplish so little. They strike hard blows; but they are not well-directed blows. In their eagerness to get at the heart, they go square across the grain. A Freemason or a flounced and feathered woman has been wounded by the Almighty and comes to their meeting for help. They make a direct attack upon the idol at once, stir up opposition and drive them away. By indirect blows they might easily have cut the badge or the flowers out, but, as they went to work, they only gave offense. They drove hungry souls away empty; and they never came back again. *He that winneth souls is wise.* It requires neither wisdom nor grace to make them mad. If that is all you have done, do not boast of your fidelity. Ask God to give you Heavenly wisdom, that you may achieve real success.

## 552 SOUL-SAVING, Devotion to

If God calls you to the work of the ministry, then give your heart to the work. Do not allow yourself to be diverted from it. If you devote your strength to hunting heresies and fighting every wrong notion, you ought not to wonder that the work of God does not prosper in your hands. If you want to see souls saved you must give yourself to the work of soul-saving. Going through the forms in an appropriate manner may ease your conscience, but it will not meet the claims of God nor bring souls to the cross. Do get baptized with a spirit of sympathy for the lost. Do give yourself wholly to the work of saving souls. You will astonish yourself at seeing what a revival preacher you will make.

## 553 SPEECH, Plainness of

Fancy flourishes in the pulpit may entertain the audience, but they excite no terror among the enemies of God. The preacher who does execution must be in dead earnest. Affected prettinesses are as much out of place in the house of God as they would be on the battlefield. Away with them. Use plain words in a plain manner.

“Speak thou the truth. Let others fence  
And trim their words for pay;  
In pleasant sunshine or pretense  
Let others bask their day.”

But do you deliver God's message in God's own words? Stand in fear of hell; but do not be afraid to say hell! If you are a messenger of God, you have warnings from God. Do not fail to deliver them faithfully. The salvation of your own soul, as well as that of your hearers, is at stake. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Tim. 4:16).

## 554 SPIRIT, Be Filled With the

“Be filled with the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is meant. It is put in contrast with wine, the evil spirit that leads many to excess, and madness, and poverty, and crime. The

two do not go together. Though some men appear uncommonly religious when partially intoxicated, yet their religion is of no value, for it is not the right kind. It is the religion of the flesh, though it may appear to be very zealous for Christianity. The clothes may be Jacob's but the voice is Esau's.

It is not enough to *have* the Spirit of God: we must *be filled* with the Spirit. Admit sunshine to a room, and it at once floods it, and expels the darkness. Open your soul to the Holy Spirit, and he will drive out all antagonistic spirits. Pride and envy, and covetousness, and unholy desire, will be banished; and they can never re-enter as long as the soul is filled with the Spirit. The easiest way to get air out of a tumbler is to fill it with water; and the easiest way to get vanity and all bad passions out of the heart is to have it filled with the Spirit. Then set yourself to obey this command, and *be filled with the Spirit*.

It is remarkable that the Apostle, after commanding us to be filled with the Spirit, immediately gives us directions how to act under his influence. This deserves our serious attention. What do we learn by it? We ought to learn a great deal. It should teach us that no degree of the Holy Spirit's influence ever deprives us of our free moral agency. The Spirit may rest upon us to that degree as to take away, for the time being, our physical strength; but the moral nature is never overpowered. We are still, under the mightiest pressure of the Spirit, left free to act. When overwhelmed by a manifestation of the Son of God, Paul says, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." He was not compelled by it; but he yielded voluntary obedience to it. God never does violence to the human will. He never turns any man into a mere machine. To do so would be to deprive him of his religious nature—to render him incapable of true obedience. We never think of praising our watch because it keeps good time. It runs just as it was made to run. But man is not a curiously-made piece of mechanism. He is a moral being—always capable of choice and of self-direction. Hence, when he goes wrong he is to be blamed.

## 555 SPIRITUAL STRENGTH Must be Renewed

Physical strength, to be retained, must be renewed. Unless he eats and sleeps, the strongest will soon give out. It is so spiritually. The soul that has prayed for pardon and found it, needs to watch and pray that he enter not again into temptation. One who has been sanctified wholly needs to go on and add to the grace which he then received, in order that he may "never fall" but that "an entrance may be ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

So we need to wait on the Lord, that our strength may be renewed. We can not live on past blessings, either for soul or for body. Paul's experience was genuine and thorough, yet he wrote of himself, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Many of high profession become dry and spiritually dead, for want of this daily, inward renewing. The petition which our Lord taught us, "Give us this day our daily bread," is in behalf of the soul no less than of the body. They are the strongest who makes the best use of the means of grace. He who does not pray much in secret, must not look to be signally rewarded openly. The face of Moses shone before the people, but it was when he went before them from communing with God.

## 556 SOWING AND REAPING

No farmer who sows oats expects to harvest from this sowing a crop of wheat. To raise weeds it is not necessary to sow weeds. The land partakes of man's depravity; only let it alone and you have a plentiful crop of weeds. So, to reap the fruits of righteousness, the seeds of righteousness must be sown. And one sowing will not suffice. The fallow ground must be frequently broken up, and the vital seeds of God's eternal truth be sown broadcast in the contrite spirit, and fruit will be gathered unto eternal life. But constant watching and unceasing painstaking are necessary. The most productive garden, planted with the choicest seeds, will not bear to be neglected. Our eternal salvation is not, ordinarily, worked out in a day

or in a year. There must be no slackness till the end is reached. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

#### 557 STRAIGHT WAY

Between two given points on a plain surface only *one* straight line can be drawn. Starting from one of these points, *any number* of crooked lines can be drawn in the general direction of the other, without hitting it. So there is but one way to Heaven—the Way of Holiness. The number of ways to miss it is legion. Straight lines resemble each other. Of thousands of crooked ones, two may not be alike. Fenelon was a Roman Catholic, Edwards a Presbyterian, Wesley the founder of Methodism, Stephen Grellet a Quaker, but they all point out the same way to Heaven. We have looked over the writings of many Universalists and semi-Universalists and infidels, but we find no two of them who agree. Each has his own discovery of the way to life and happiness, but finds to his dismay that true Christians neglect his discoveries, and go on in the old paths of righteousness, happy and contented. Let us hold on steadily in the narrow way, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel" (Ps. 125:5).

#### 558 STRANGERS, Do Not Sign Papers For

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers"; but do not sign any papers for them. If you do, you may get yourself into trouble. Some of our laws aid villainy. An unsuspecting, honest farmer, near us, was induced to buy of a genteel, polished stranger, two bags of a new kind of fertilizer. The cost was to be but little; and nothing if he did not like it. He was induced to sign an order for it. *This signature cost him three hundred dollars.*

It is time that our laws which make notes obtained by fraud valid in the hands of an "innocent purchaser" were reversed. A note, like a deed, or the title to any other kind

of property, should, if there is any wrong connected with it, carry the taint with it wherever it goes. If this were made the law, as it certainly should be, it would close up one of the richest mines of villainy now worked.

559 **STRENGTH, God is Our**

A man may be poor; but if he is doing business for one who is rich, and is authorized by his employer to draw upon him for all the money he needs to carry on his business, he has no right to complain of a lack of funds as long as his drafts are honored.

We are weak; but if we are truly the servants of God, we have the right to come to him for all the strength we need. He is our strength. We may all pray with the Psalmist: "Give thy strength unto thy servant" (Ps. 86: 16). When this prayer is offered in faith, by the weakest servant of God, it is always answered. Then we can say with the Apostle, "When I am weak, then am I strong." Thus we often see the one who is called "the weaker vessel" the stronger to endure the hardships and the trials of life. Nor need we be deterred in the least by our own insignificance; for God's strength is made perfect in weakness. The weaker we are by nature, the more clearly will it be seen that our strength is of God.

560 **STRENGTH, Our, in God**

We must not in our faith limit the power of God. To his friend of old he said: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1). We are apt to base what we think we can do in the service of God, upon what we are. He that does this can not seriously aim to "be perfect" before God. He may have a very imperfect knowledge of himself; but he knows he is not capable of so great an achievement. It is far beyond his capacity. But he who really depends upon God, depends upon strength that can never fail. It is always equal to any emergency. To him who would walk unspotted from the pollutions which he may encounter in the path of duty; to him who would overcome his enemies in every conflict,

God says: "Let him take hold of my strength" (Isa. 27:5). That can never, by any possibility, fail.

561 STRENUOUS, Not Enough To Be

It is a great mistake for one to suppose that he is a *radical* Christian because he is strenuous about external things, great and small. The Pharisees were. Inward piety will always be attended with outward piety. True grace is neither barren nor unfruitful.

But there may be a scrupulous attention to the outside, while the heart work is wanting. Red cheeks are not always an evidence of health. They may be painted by vanity, or tinged by consumption. It is important to dress plain; it is still more important to have the spirit clothed with humility. We should bear our testimony against pride and worldly conformity, but it is still more necessary that we are ourselves delivered from a spirit of envy and jealousy. We should see to it that grace goes to the very bottom of our natures, and roots out every plant that is not of heavenly origin.

562 STUDY, Importance of

If a preacher would be permanently useful, he *must* study. This is imperative. No natural gifts can render study unnecessary. The most brilliant speaker will soon lose interest in what he says, if he keeps on, year after year, repeating his old discourses. And if a speaker is not himself interested in what he says, he will fail to interest others. Such persons, finding their usefulness gone, themselves a burden, and their ministry a drudgery, are apt to forsake their divine calling at a time of life when they should be capable of doing the most good.

Years ago we said to the most original genius we ever knew, "You ought to study more." "What shall I study?" was the sublime reply, with special emphasis on I. For many years, when the church has needed his services most, and when his influence might have been most widely felt, he has been hid away, buried out of sight. The ocean keeps

full by being fed by thousands of rivers; the richest soil maintains its productiveness by absorbing fertility from earth and water and air; and so the mind most richly endowed by nature must take in new supplies of mental food, or it will gradually lose its grasp and power. Timothy was gifted, and well trained, and deeply pious, and filled with the Spirit; but Paul wrote to him, "Give attendance to reading." But, alas, what is the use of writing? Those who need this note, most probably, will not read it.

#### 563 SUBMISSION Required

One reason why some decided Christians do not grow in grace, and have more power with God and man, is that they must always have their own way. They do not know how to give up in any matter in which they differ in opinion from their brethren. They are self-willed and contentious. They believe in submission to themselves.

Dr. Adam Clarke says: "The Apostle inculcates the necessity of order and subjection, especially in the church. Those who are impatient of rule are generally those who wish to tyrannize. And those who are loudest in their complaints against authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are those who wish to have the power in their own hands, and would infallibly abuse it if they had. They alone who are willing to obey are capable of rule; and he who can rule well is as willing to obey as to govern. Let all be submissive and orderly."

#### 564 SUBMISSION Essential to Christian Life

A horse or an ox, to be of service, must be broken. A wild horse may excel in beauty and in speed, but who except himself is benefited by his fleetness? The yoke is an emblem of subjection and of service. Every man who lives in society must, sooner or later, submit to restraint. It is not possible always to have one's own way. The Czar of Russia is an autocrat; but he often fails to secure the accomplishment of his wishes. He who must sometimes give up, can not be taught too early to yield. The habit of sub-

mission, early formed, renders submission easy. The child trained from infancy to obey parental authority, as he becomes older submits gracefully to school authority, and makes a useful, law-abiding citizen, and a faithful, cross-bearing Christian. Children who have been brought up in indulgence may be converted; but it is very hard to keep them converted. They chafe under the necessary discipline.

**565 SUBMISSION, Christian, Graceful**

A true Christian can submit, even when he knows he is right and others are wrong. It does not require grace to have our own way, or to quit the field if we find we can not have it. Adam Clarke, in his old age, was made a supernumerary, against his request. When informed of it, he wrote:

“I feel that I have been ill-used in that work which God called me to, and which Mr. Wesley with his own hands confirmed me in, by their setting me down for a supernumerary, against remonstrances made to the president himself. Though, therefore, I conceive I have no appointment, I go preaching about wherever they call me to work for their charities. You see, therefore, that though I am hurt, I have not taken that offense which causes me to stumble. My time is nearly done. I have worked hard, borne many privations, and suffered much hardship, for more than half a century—and was still willing to work: and as I could still work with the same energy and effect, for God continued to own my word, it was not well to throw me thus far beyond the working pale! GOD IS RIGHT-EOUS, AND MY SOUL BOWS BEFORE HIM!”

**566 SUBMISSION Must be Mutual**

A preacher says, “We have a man in our society who is very good if he can have everything his own way.” There may be other societies which have a man of this character. So we venture to say a few words to them in love: Brother, if you are a disciple of Christ, you are a learner. That is the meaning of the word disciple. A judicious

scholar studies the necessary branches of learning in which he is deficient. He may not like them. But if, to be useful, he needs to understand them, he conquers his aversion. You are deficient in submission. It is an important, and may easily become a fatal, deficiency. It was this that cast Satan down from Heaven. It will keep you out. No-matter how much you may love other truths, if you do not learn the doctrine of submission, and practise it, you can never enter Heaven. It will not do for you to like to have others submit to you, and stop then; you must learn to submit to them. The command is, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord." This shows that it must be mutual. You have construed it to mean that everybody must submit to you. A sad mistake! The Apostle classes among those who are "reserved unto the day of judgment" to be punished, "them that despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Beware that you do not belong to this class.

**567 SUBMISSION: Obedience to Authorities**

Saints are not self-willed. No one can remain in the school of Christ who does not learn and practise submission to right authority. He should not submit to sin; but he should submit to those who are over him and admonish him in the Lord. John Wesley was not the greatest preacher of his age; but he was the greatest organizer: and while but little remains of the work of Whitefield, the influence of Wesley is felt throughout the world. But Wesley insisted upon obedience in all his societies. Those who would not obey the rules were dropped.

The Jesuits, as a body, are the worst religious society on earth, and the most powerful and successful. Their influence depends almost wholly upon the spirit of obedience that is inculcated. It is carried to the utmost conceivable limit. The Jesuit must obey his superior in *all things*, right or wrong; but the saint of God can never do that which is morally wrong, no matter who enjoins it. But in other things he is meek and submissive.

## 568 SUBMISSION to Government Important

St. Peter says that among those who are reserved "unto the day of judgment to be punished" are "them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise government." Those who refuse to join a church because they are unwilling to be governed, would do well to carefully consider this passage. It applies with equal force to those in the church, who have promised to be governed by the Discipline, but who wilfully violate it. A Free Methodist preacher who is very ready to govern, but not to *be governed*, is really in a dangerous spiritual condition. The independence of which he boasts is a strong evidence of a lack of grace. One trait of those who are filled with the Spirit, is a readiness to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God.

## 569 SUBSTITUTE FOR THE GOSPEL

"When a person or a church begins to backslide, there is often no stopping-place until the depths of perdition are reached. A neatly-printed pamphlet of ninety-six pages has been sent us giving an account of an "Assembly" and "Camp-Meeting" to be held under the auspices of ministers of the M. E. church. Among the attractions to the camp-meeting mention is made of "singing evangelists," who, in addition to leading the congregation, will give you solos and duets, with guitar or piano or organ accompaniments that would be worth, several times over, a fifty-cent concert ticket. The camp-meeting is to be followed immediately by the assembly. Among the celebrities to be present to edify and entertain the people, is a "noted violinist," a professional fiddler, who "will perform such feats on his versatile instrument as will astonish and delight all listeners. He is a violin virtuoso not equaled by any violinist of his age in the country, and has few if any superiors among the older artists."

They must be hardened sinners indeed, who can not be drawn into the church by such singing and fiddling, and guitar and piano and organ accompaniment! But perhaps they are in the church already, and these varied perform-

ances are provided to furnish for them a substitute for the joy of salvation!

But the astonishing thing is that those who get up these entertainments call themselves Methodists! Sidney Smith, a clergyman of the Church of England, wrote of them about fifty or sixty years ago:

“The Methodists hate pleasure and amusements; no theatre, no cards, no dancing, no Punchinello, no dancing dogs, no blind fiddlers; all the amusements of the rich and the poor must disappear wherever these gloomy people get a footing. It is not the abuse of pleasure which they attack, but the interspersion of pleasure, however much it is guarded by good sense and moderation.”—*Works*, p. 44.

John Wesley, whom they claim as their founder, says: “A Methodist is one who has the ‘love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him:’ one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul; which is constantly crying out, ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee! My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever!’ He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, as having in him ‘a well of water springing up unto everlasting life,’ and overflowing his soul with peace and joy.”—*Works*, vol. 5, p. 241.

Were the early Methodists fanatics? or are the modern, fashionable, pleasure-seeking Methodists deceived worldlings? Which? They are so opposite to each other that it is impossible for both to be right.

#### 570 SUPERFICIAL WORK is Deceiving

A sure way to deceive people is to place the standard of Christian holiness below the Bible standard. Many do this; and by doing this persuade numbers to profess holiness. But this is labor lost, to one who is working for eternity. Many “holiness teachers” in the M. E. church make the standard of holiness lower, in the matter of dress, than their Discipline makes it for those who are

scripturally awakened. Their Discipline teaches that the Spirit of God and the Word of God require more self-denial of an awakened person than these "holiness teachers" say is required of one who is sanctified wholly. Of course both can not be right. If we are convinced that any teachers are dangerously lowering the standard of holiness, we should be careful how we give them our countenance or support. We must not do superficial work, either personally or through others. Our work is to be tried by fire.

#### 571 SYMPATHY

The success of a preacher depends largely on his ability to put himself in sympathy with his hearers. Unless he does this, no matter how great are the truths which he proclaims, and how ably he presents them, he will repel rather than attract, drive away rather than draw.

To put himself in sympathy with his hearers the preacher must have real sympathy for them. Anything affected will soon be found out. Love begets love. Those in whom we feel a lively interest will feel an interest in us, and in what we say.

This sympathy should be manifested in our words and our manners. We should put ourselves on common ground with our hearers as far as possible. Instead of seeing how far we disagree, we should see how far we can agree. There should be no compromise, no withholding unpopular truth. The truth should be fearlessly proclaimed, but it should be proclaimed in love. The more severe is the truth, the more tender should be the manner.

There should be nothing of the spirit of "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" (Num. 20:19).

So, too, in our personal intercourse we should be tender, gentle and sympathetic; not standing upon our rights, not provoking in our manners. Rather, with the Apostle we should be able to say, "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children" (1 Thess. 2:7).

## 572 SYMPATHY, Power of

In efforts to save souls, sympathy goes farther than severity. Kindness will bring more to their knees than hard knocks. Christ was *moved with compassion*. He said very plain things; but he said them from a heart overflowing with tenderness. His words, his actions, his manners, his tones of voice, his pathetic utterances, showed that he came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. If you have his Spirit, and imitate him in these things, you will draw men to you, and not drive them from you. People who come to hear you preach will continue to come. You will hold your congregation. The plainest things that you may be led of God to say, will be received, and will profit the hearers. There will be a subtle, unseen influence about you, that will make those who feel all cut to pieces by your words say, "Well, I like him after all."

## 573 SYMPATHY, Practical

There is something striking in the arrangement of words in the last verse of Psalm 126, as well as in the words themselves: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." In this verse the weeping is made the principal act. Generally we preachers make bearing the precious seed—stating the truth—the principal act. We lay more stress upon logic than upon sympathy. Is not this one reason why preaching is not more effective? If we felt more deeply for the souls of those whom we address, our words would, in a greater number of instances, reach their hearts. He that goeth before his people endeavoring

"With cries, entreaties, tears, to save;  
To snatch them from a gaping grave,"

can never be wholly unsuccessful. Some at least will be won to Christ.

## 574 TACT, Commendable

Paul's tact with the Athenians is deserving of study and imitation. His self-control was wonderful. "His spirit was

stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." But he did not use toward them the language of denunciation. He did not even call them idolaters. On the contrary, his words were highly complimentary. He did not say they had no religion, but "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too religious" (Acts 17:22). For the word translated "superstitious," in our common version, should be rendered "religious." You reverence all the gods you know, and one that you do not know. Their philosophers had charged Paul with being "a setter forth of strange gods." Without directly replying to the charge, he says, "For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I saw an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." He did not compromise, but he did not needlessly provoke their prejudices. He stood with them on a common platform and laid before them some of the great truths which they admitted, and emphasized them. They were a hard class to labor among—the self-conceited always are—but he made a few converts.

#### 575 TALENTS to be Employed

If we belong to God, all our talents belong to God. This is as true of one kind of talent as of another. All alike should be employed for promoting the kingdom of God. The man who has a talent for making money, should make money for God, just as the one who has a talent for preaching should preach for God. A farmer, or a teacher, should be as thoroughly consecrated as a preacher. The one can no more keep back a part of what belongs to God, when he calls for it, than can the other. The sanctity of the gospel should be carried into every avocation of life. Every employment becomes a holy calling when it is carried on from holy motives and with holy hands. Different departments of God's service should never conflict with each other. All are members of one body. "And the eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

## 576 TEACHABLENESS, a Mark of True Conversion

A desire to learn is one of the marks of a true conversion. A *disciple* is a learner. That is the meaning of the word. When one gets where he can not learn—when he has grown so large that no one can teach him—he has left the school of Christ. He has set up for himself. Christ has also left him. He manifests a spirit of intolerance, of impatience of contradiction, that is utterly inconsistent with the spirit of Christ. He is lacking in that *charity* without which salvation is impossible. He is puffed up with a feeling of his own consequence; and whoever opposes him, he takes it for granted, opposes God. The learned college professor is a hard student; and he who truly knows most of divine things is most eager to learn divine things. The “beloved disciple” who had most of the spirit of Christ, got nearest to Christ that not a word might escape him. “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him” (Prov. 26:12).

## 577 TEACHING, Accuracy in

In religious teaching avoid all hair-spun distinctions. Some make a difference between being justified *by* faith and *through* faith. There is no ground for any such distinction. The same Greek word is in the New Testament translated in many places “by” and in many places “through.” We should aim at accuracy in our teaching; but we should be careful and not make distinctions that the Bible does not make. A critical spirit does not help souls, as does a tender, loving spirit. One may speak wrong and mean right. God understands him, and takes him as he means. Inspired writers do not descend to theological niceties and definitions. We do well to imitate them in a careful avoidance of mere technicalities. The main thing is to minister the Spirit.

## 578 TEMPER, Control of

One measure of our strength is our power of resistance. A wooden ship can fire as heavy bullets as an ironclad, but

it stands no chance of success in a conflict with one; for the balls which the ironclad could easily ward off penetrate its vitals and send it to the bottom. One may talk eloquently, but if he can not control his appetites or his temper; if he gives way to petty resentments; he easily falls a prey to the enemy. The career of some of the most gifted preachers we have ever known was short; and it ended in ignominy and disgrace, from their lack of power to resist evil. Gifts can never take the place of grace. And no church, however pure, can supply its members with grace. It may show them their lack, but to obtain it they must themselves come to God for it.

579 TEMPER, Uncontrolled

Some men will never occupy the position for which they are otherwise fitted, because of their neglect to govern their tempers. Instead of ruling their spirits, their spirits rule them. Two of our greatest statesmen might have been successively president of the United States, but for an unfortunate quarrel between them. It began, it is said, over a matter of absolutely no importance—a criticism upon a word. Many a person owes the failure to achieve success to a waspish disposition made such by indulgence in stinging repartees and remarks. Whatever one's natural disposition, he may strengthen it, modify it, or completely change it, by suitable effort. As education puts men more nearly on a level as to their ability, so does grace as far as disposition is concerned. No child of God should ever be peevish or irritable. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

580 TEMPTATION, Decision Required in

It is a mistake to conclude that because you yielded to temptation, after sincerely coming to God and getting blessed, that you were deceived and did not get what you thought you did. Your mistake was in supposing that the Spirit would carry you along in the right direction without any volition on your part. He never does that. When

temptation comes, he inclines you to make the right decision, but you must not fail to make it on your part. You must not allow some stronger will to overpower you. It can, only with your consent. You can wind up a clock so that it will run all right until it runs down. But you can not wind yourself up in this way. You will have to take the trouble to decide right, and to act right, in each particular case as it comes along. This you may think troublesome, but it is the only possible way that you can live religion. It is easy to do it when once you see the necessity for it and make up your mind to do it. Plod along, and day by day "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*"

**581 TEMPTATION: Grace Will be Tested**

Genuine grace is tested grace. It was immediately after Jesus had been miraculously and publicly owned of God that he was led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. But Christ did not conclude that he was mistaken in thinking that God had spoken to him, because the devil was so bold and so urgent with his suggestions. The disciple is not above his Master. So if you are blessed of God you may set it down as certain that you will be tempted of the devil. But do not be alarmed. When the temptation comes, God will "with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." But as this way opens before you, without delay you must enter upon it, with a firm, decided step. The way is provided by another; our traveling upon it is done by ourselves. Step by step in the narrow way is eternal life reached; blow by blow is the battle against the powers of darkness fought, and the final victory gained. We hope all our readers will be greatly blessed at camp-meetings; but they will still need to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation.

**582 TEMPTATION, Keep Away From**

A winged insect flew under the chimney of our lamp, which was not down quite close, but the opening seemed to

be very small. Yet he found his way under, and though exceedingly uncomfortable from the heat, he could not find his way out. We got him out as soon as possible; but it was too late. The poor thing fluttered and died. Human beings act in a similar manner towards sin. God has put it well-nigh beyond their reach. He has given them a conscience that rises up against it. He has so hedged them about with gracious providences that it requires a special effort to get at it. But they have forced their way through all restraints and come so near the burning fires of hell that they have scorched their wings, and if in infinite mercy they are saved from death, it is to crawl about where once they mounted up with wings as eagles.

KEEP AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM TEMPTATION.

#### 583 TESTIMONY, A Means of Salvation

Testimony is a God-ordained means of the salvation of souls. In his last message to his disciples before his ascension, Christ said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). After his ascension Christ said to Saul of Tarsus: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee" (Acts 26:16.) Then, to impress upon us more strongly the importance of testimony in carrying on the work of God, we are introduced to the glorified throng, and made acquainted with the secret of their victorious career. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (Rev. 12:11).

Testimony is a statement of some fact of which we have personal knowledge. When it falls into disuse in a church it is because preacher or people, or—as is often the case—both, have lost their experience of saving grace. That is, they have backslidden. It requires much more grace to testify honestly than it does to preach honestly. A man may preach what he believes to be true; and may have help in doing it, though he does not live up to his own

preaching. But he can not testify to the possession of saving grace unless he is under its influence. Preachers who have never been born of the Spirit can preach powerful doctrinal and practical sermons, but they can not give any such testimony as Paul did before Agrippa and Festus. To bear testimony so it may be believed and felt, one must be filled with the Spirit of God.

584 TESTIMONY, Holy Ghost, Needed

If there was more Holy Ghost testimony in our meetings, the work would move on better. Those who testify would be blessed and strengthened, and those who hear would be convicted and encouraged. Much of the work done in revivals is done through testimony.

Benjamin Pomeroy gives an account of an old infidel lecturer, who attended a powerful revival that took place under his labors. "These are the very words he uttered: 'I can stand that man's preaching; I have arguments to meet him; but I can't stand these boys.' Here he wept visibly, and in a broken way continued to say, 'When I was a boy, I prayed like these, and felt as they do; but now'— Here he stopped short, with a sensation through the house, for no one suspected that he ever had prayed."

Let us preach so as to beget a spirit of testimony among the people; and let us not be so lengthy in our exercises that there will be no time for testimony.

585 THANKFUL to Others

It would add greatly to our own happiness to express freely to our fellow men our thankfulness for favors they bestow upon us. Even where we derive no real benefit from an act of kindness done for us, yet if a disposition to serve us has been shown, we should feel grateful; and should freely express our gratitude. It would be a blessing to us and an encouragement to others. We have known instances where valuable, useful articles have been given to a preacher, not as salary, but as presents, and yet he not make the slightest recognition of them. The well-meaning donors could not tell whether he felt pleased or insulted. It is

no wonder that such preachers are poorly cared for, and leave their circuits in debt. When you feel grateful to any one, express it, not in a cold, formal, polite "Thanks," but with a hearty, sincere, *I thank you*, or some similar expression. Cold politeness is one thing; true affection is quite another. *Be ye thankful.*

#### 586 THANKSGIVING

Paul tells us to make our requests known to God *with* thanksgiving. The sails of the ship cost little, compared with the rest of the ship. But they are of great importance to a sailing vessel. A ship may be steered toward Liverpool, but is not likely to reach there unless its sails are spread. So thanksgiving adds wings to our prayers, and impels them on to the throne of God. A devout spirit is a thankful spirit. Notice how full the Psalms are of expressions of praises to God. In the worst calamities there is still something to be thankful for. The father of John and Charles Wesley, seeing the parsonage and all their earthly substance burning up, was full of thankfulness that his wife and all the children were saved. Let us cultivate a thankful spirit. "The Lord will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life" (Ps. 42:8).

#### 587 TIME, Improvement of

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (1 Cor. 7:29). This is true of the longest life. It is soon gone. But it is long enough, if properly improved, to permit us to make all needed preparations for eternity. Yet many, when urged to attend to the interests of the soul, say they "have no time to attend to such matters." Thus the more important is made to give place to the less important. The temporary is given preference to the eternal.

"He that lacks time to mourn lacks time to mend.  
Eternity mourns that, 'Tis an ill cure  
For life's worst ills, to have no time to feel them.  
Where sorrow's held intrusive and turned out,

There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,  
Nor aught that dignifies humanity."

Take time to read your Bible, to pray, to meditate, to get and keep your heart right with God. These worldly interests to which you give so much thought and attention will concern you but a little while. Be concerned mainly about the welfare of your soul. See that you do not leave this world a homeless wanderer, to find an everlasting abode with lost spirits in perdition.

#### 588 TOBACCO

That the habitual use of tobacco gradually undermines the physical constitution there is not the slightest doubt. Many are killed by it in the prime of life. Those who use it more moderately and live longer become prematurely old.

Reader, let tobacco alone. If you are already its slave, be its slave no longer. Escape for your life. Fugitives from sin of every kind are safe in the Canaan of Perfect Love. Tear off your fetters and accept the freedom which Christ offers you.

There is no filthiness in Heaven.

#### 589 TOBACCO: A Destroyer

Tobacco conquers the conquerors of men. It is not overcome by strategy, or killed by the sword. The heaviest artillery makes no impression upon the ramparts of tobacco. It is not put down by diplomacy, nor are its ravages appeased by concessions. It is the greatest foe to its greatest friends, and treats its patrons, whether they be obscure or eminent, with the utmost barbarity.

Says Brother G. W. Clark: "This foul destroyer makes no distinction between high, low, rich or poor. Among its conquered and slain victims are such men as Senator Carpenter, Senator Hill, General McClellan, General Sheridan and General Grant; and the amiable and promising 'Fritz,' Emperor of Germany. What a serious loss to Germany, where so much was expected from his reign! These able

men might have been in most robust health, on duty, and enjoying active, wholesome life to-day, but for the useless indulgence of the poisonous and pernicious weed."

It is not enough for the church to pass resolutions against tobacco. It should not be permitted to make its dirty nest in the Christian church.

If you have never touched it, let it alone. If you are its slave, assert your freedom in Christ, and submit no longer to its filthy bondage.

That the nicotine of tobacco is a virulent poison is not disputed. It makes fearful ravages upon the nervous system. Men of stolid temperaments may use it for a long time with apparent impunity, but gifted, active, bright men, if they begin to use it, soon are overpowered by it.

That staunch reformer, G. W. Clark, says further: "My next-door neighbor died suddenly of tobacco paralysis. A young man in New York, only thirty years of age, not long ago a victim of the cigar, was stricken with tobacco paralysis, and after fearfully and helplessly struggling for several days and nights, died a most pitiful death. His friends and six doctors did all in their power to save him, but in vain.

#### 590 TOBACCO Nuisance

The tobacco nuisance is well-nigh intolerable. A general outcry should be made against it. Stop at a hotel, and you are fortunate if you can get a room which tobacco smoke from the halls does not reach. Go on a boat, and the sickening odor meets you at every turn. Walk on the streets of the city, and you can not avoid breathing air vitiated by tobacco. Take a seat in the cars, and you find the floor befouled by tobacco chewers. Take a sleeping car, and the iron passageway is filled with smokers; and the foul, poisonous air is carried through the car, and if you stay there you are compelled to breathe it. We refuse to take such sleeping cars, and if all who do not use tobacco would do the same, a reform would speedily be effected. Let the nuisance be banished from decent society.

**591 TOBACCO Users**

We must in all our societies enforce our rules against using tobacco. We do not want a single tobacco-user in the Free Methodist church. However he may agree with us in other respects, if he will not cleanse himself from this "filthiness of the flesh," he should have no place among us. We have no smoking-room in our church. If one will insist upon defiling with the fumes of tobacco the air in which he moves, a clean church is no place for him.

The prevailing use of tobacco threatens great harm to our country. The medical director of our Naval Academy, at Annapolis, Dr. Gibon, says in his report for 1881, "The most important matter in the health history of the students is that relating to tobacco, and its interdiction is absolutely essential to their future health and usefulness. In this view I have been sustained by my colleagues, and all sanitarians in civil and military life, whose views I have been able to obtain."

**592 TONGUE Employed by Satan**

Satan is the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10). He earns his title from the work in which he is constantly engaged, day and night. In this work he employs all his forces—his raw recruits and his veteran soldiers. Those who engage in this work may belong to the church, but they do not belong to Christ. The most dangerous enemies are those who wave the banner and wear the uniform of friends.

The Psalmist gives as an unfailing mark of one that shall live in Heaven: "He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour" (Ps. 15:3). See among what class Paul places those who defame others: "Full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters" (Rom. 1:29, 30).

And St. James says: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas. 1:26). He is not speaking of outsiders, but of professed Christians.

Reader, do you bridle your tongue?

## 593 TONGUE, Governing the

Did you ever consider what importance the Bible attaches to the governing of the tongue? The Savior says that the one only sin for which there is no forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come, is a sin committed by the tongue. Again, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Every false, injurious word will add to one's condemnation. The Psalmist says of him who shall dwell in God's holy hill, that is, go to Heaven, that "he backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor" (Ps. 15:3). How is it with you in this respect? Do you wound the reputation of others behind their backs? Do you, when one comes to you with a reproach against your neighbor, take it up and carry it to the next one? "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

## 594 TONGUE, The, Must be Controlled

We can not maintain a good Christian experience without being careful of our words. An unbridled tongue will soon carry its possessor beyond the controlling influences of the Spirit of God. Words are weighty. They shape the destiny. The Psalmist and the Savior agree that our fate hangs upon our words. He that shall dwell in God's holy hill is one that speaketh the truth in his heart—one that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. And the Savior says that the one sin which hath never forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come, is that committed by the tongue (Matt. 12:32).

St. James compares the tongue to the little helm with which great ships are turned about; and says, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body" (Jas. 3:2). God hears all our words. No injunction of secrecy can keep them from reaching his ear. They are recorded in imperishable characters

in his book of remembrance. Let us then give heed to our words.

**595 TRANCES, Fallings, Etc., Not Always of God**

Trances, fallings, visions, revelations, may be of God; but they may be of the devil. Because a person's experience has been good, and his life correct, it does not follow that everything supernatural that may be manifested in him is of God. There are many avenues through which Satan may enter the heart of one who has been truly called of God. He entered the heart of Judas through covetousness. To-day he enters some through the same door; others through pride of appearance, others through spiritual pride. Satan whispers to an ignorant person that, if he will only yield himself to a blind impulse, he will become useful and famous; and, if he listens to the suggestion, a demon from the pit enters the open door and begins his operations. The deviations of one thus possessed, from the right course, may at first be so slight that the most spiritual hardly dare hint a fear that he may be going wrong. He is so wonderfully operated upon, and in the main so nearly right, that many honest ones are led away and become his partizans. As soon as a following is secured, the mask is gradually thrown off, and practises are indulged in, and defended, that are in direct conflict with the plain teaching of the Word of God. The strange thing in such cases is, that those who begin to follow him in all honesty, keep right along and follow him in his crooked ways. At last they are led forth with the workers of iniquity. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).

**596 TREASURES, Secure the Right Kind of**

The contrast which Christ draws between laying up treasures on earth and treasures in Heaven shows that there is an incompatibility between them. One can not at the same time do both. He must deliberately choose which he will do. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Great

earthly treasures make dying hard. Cardinal Mazarin had acquired great riches, but he said, when he came to die, as he looked around on the magnificent works of art which with great pains he had collected, "All that must be left behind!" And, turning around, he added, "And that, too! What trouble I have had to obtain all these things! I shall never see them more, where I am going!"

Earthly treasures, however prized, must be left behind! Works of charity and beneficence, done out of love to Christ, follow one to the eternal world. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

#### 597 TRIED MEN More Dependable

When the door of salvation was opened to the Gentiles, it was through Cornelius, a devout man of irreproachable character. God often uses, to carry on his work, men who have been notoriously wicked and profligate, but have been truly converted. Yet we do not call to mind a single instance of such a person who was used to inaugurate any great work. They are too liable to fall, and, in too many instances, they become lifted up with their success, lose the grace of God from their hearts, and fall into the scandalous sins to which they were formerly addicted. Many such instances occur to our mind. It becomes us all, if we would persevere in the grace of God, to see to it that we have the charity that is not puffed up. If there is a flaw in a tool of steel, it will not do to put it to too hard use; if a tree was broken when young, though it may be completely healed over, it is liable to give way at the old break, under a severe gale, or even when loaded with precious fruit. If one who has been notoriously wicked is signally used in the salvation of others, do not put him forward too fast, or needlessly expose him to temptation.

Let us walk before the Lord in all humility. "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged" (Isa. 51:1).

598 TROUBLE, Call Upon God in

Learn to go to the Lord with all your troubles. He is the Lord Almighty. He has power over the physical world and over the world of spirits. The laws of nature are his laws. The hearts of all men are in his hand. No combination of devils and men can be formed against you that he can not break.

He encourages us to come to him at all times for help. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps. 34:6). If this had been said of the king, you might say, "I am no king." But it is *this poor man*—an ordinary mortal, way down in the social scale. It is not said that he made or read a prayer, but he *cried*. The most illiterate can cry. It is a gift possessed by all. God is moved, not by repetitions of fine words, but by deep earnestness and sincerity of heart.

The man was not merely made better by coming to God, but his prayer was answered. It was no temporary relief, no partial deliverance, which he found, but the *Lord saved him out of all his troubles*.

When in trouble, it will often help us in getting out, to candidly consider how we got in. Was it through our own fault? Did it come upon us in consequence of our own sins, or our own imprudence? If the cause is in us, the first thing to be done is to remove the cause, as far as possible, and to humble ourselves before God, and implore his forgiveness. If the cause can not be removed, we can ask God to mitigate the evils, and give grace to bear them. When Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn in the flesh, the answer was given: "My grace is sufficient for thee." An elephant can easily carry what would crush a horse. God can so multiply our strength that we can bear in triumph what once would have driven us to despair. We must not set limitations to his power. He has ways to work deliverance that we do not think of. There is one important item in a Christian's education that we are too slow to learn. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

## 599 TRUTHFULNESS

One sign of a growth in grace is a growing love for truth. The nearer we get to the Lord, the more tender the conscience becomes over making a false impression upon the minds of others. A truly sanctified person can not allow himself in any misstatement, or prevarication or exaggeration. Jeremy Taylor, in his *Rules of Holy Living*, is thus specific: "Lie not at all, neither in a little thing nor in a great, neither in substance nor in the circumstance, neither in word nor in deed; that is, pretend not what is false, cover not what is true; and let the measure of your affirmation or denial be the understanding of your contractor; for he that deceives the buyer or the seller, by speaking what is true in a sense not intended or understood by the other, is a liar and a thief. For in bargains you are to avoid not only what is false, but that also which deceives."

## 600 UNCHARITABLE SPIRIT

An uncharitable spirit destroys the unity of the Spirit. To allow a spirit of malice, or envy, or jealousy to have the slightest influence upon us, so as to control in any degree our words or actions, will separate us at once from those who live in the Spirit. We may not know what ails us; we may think that nothing ails *us*; but we feel that something has come between us and our brethren. The fellowship has gone. We do not care about going to the social meetings. The preaching does not sound to us as it did. We lose our relish for reading the Bible. A disposition to put the worst construction on everything has come in, and the unity of the Spirit is destroyed. Judas separated from the disciples as soon as he permitted Satan to enter his heart. Be careful, then, how you give place to an uncharitable spirit. If you continue to yield to it, it will lead you at last to perdition.

## 601 UNCTION, Divine, Need of

Divine unction is more essential to the success of the preacher than anything else, or all things else. Neither talent, nor learning, nor a fine address, nor all combined,

can take its place. It will draw a congregation under adverse circumstances. We have seen raw boys, awkward in manners, draw crowds in a large city which they could not draw when they became able and distinguished preachers but had lost a good degree of the unction. We have seen people moved more under the reading of a hymn with the unction, than under a carefully prepared, powerful sermon without it. We do not underestimate the advantage of study, but we can not overestimate the importance to the preacher of the *unction from the Holy One* (1 John 2:20).

#### 602 UNCTION Necessary to Fruitfulness

A lack of moisture deprives the richest soils of their fertility. It is in vain that the plowing is done in good order, and the planting in due season, if the soil remains dry and parched. So a lack of unction makes the most convincing sermon barren of all good results. A discourse may be full of the seeds of truth, but unless they are wet up they will never bring forth fruit. It was the deep feeling which accompanied Paul's exhortations which made them so powerful. "I ceased not," he says, "to warn every one night and day with tears." Such warnings are always effective, when the tears are the genuine expression of real feeling. But assumed sympathy disgusts and repels. What we all need, in order to reach others, is the constraining love of Christ. He who is impelled by that is not likely to go too fast or too far. Natural drouths are beyond our reach, but spiritual drouths we may avert. *It is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.*

#### 603 UNION, In, is Strength

Dissension is weakness—in union there is strength. Jonathan was valiant, but to defeat the Philistines he must have his armor-bearer with him. Christ gave to each of the twelve miraculous power; but he sent them out two by two. The largest society, divided and quarreling, is weak, and has no strength to save souls: the smallest, united in confidence and love, is mighty to storm and carry in holy triumph the very citidels of hell.

On the day of Pentecost the disciples were all with one accord in one place. If a hundred and twenty could be thus united to-day in self-abandonment, and in waiting with willing minds and expectant hearts for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, mighty results would follow. An electric battery is powerful in proportion to the number of jars which are united: so also are spiritual batteries. One hundred and twenty human hearts, throbbing with love to God and love to men, and waiting together for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, would bring down such electrical shocks as would shake the greatest city.

#### 604 UNION SERVICES Not Desirable

There are some overtures for Christian unity that need to be treated with great caution. Some of the most zealous members of other churches, who have always kept aloof from us, and never failed to use their influence against us, all at once, when God is pouring out his Spirit among us, and converting sinners, appear uncommonly friendly. They come to our meetings, go forward to the altar to labor with penitents, and contribute their share towards making a "noisy meeting," which elsewhere they condemn. The closest preaching they seem to enjoy and indorse. They receive a cordial welcome, and make themselves at home; but when the revival is ended, they show that all which they have done is for the purpose of enabling them, the more easily, to lead off the respectable and influential of the converts, and get them to join *their* church. When this is accomplished, they never come near us, until an opportunity to do the same thing over is again presented. By such means, the fruits of extensive revivals, which our people have labored hard to promote, have been almost wholly lost to our church. This we would not deplore, did the converts thus led off remain true to their convictions, and "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath [set them] free." But they do not. The silken fetters of fashion are fastened upon them by degrees, and they become mere worldly professors; or the hoodwink is drawn over them, and they are led into the lodge, and thus

again entangled with the yoke of bondage. Instead of promoting the work of God, they help build up a formal, worldly church, which deceives souls to their eternal undoing. And they are themselves personally in greater danger of eternal damnation than when they were in the world, because they are resting in a false security.

It may seem almost uncivil not to accept the proffered services of those who come over to labor with you in a revival; but if they have stayed away till your meeting has become a decided success, you had better get along without them. Depend upon it, they have come in to help you shout on the victory, only that they may gather the spoils. They will not be scrupulous about dividing, but they will take all they can. They may cry out for union, but they mean absorption. They may soothe you with their tongues, but it is that they may swallow you the more easily.

Our work is so different from that now done by the popular churches, that honest souls who really desire to promote our work will unite with us. Let us avoid all entangling alliances.

#### 605 UNITY OF EFFORT Essential

To carry on the work of God successfully in any community, those who are engaged in its promotion must be united. The Bible lays great stress upon this. Christ sent out his disciples two by two. "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Unity in faith and in effort is essential to achieve any great results. Those who are united to Christ should be careful to be united to each other. Guerrillas, however bold they may be, never conquer a fort, or subdue a country. They differ from robbers mainly in the fact that they subsist by plundering such of their enemies as they may find defenseless. The guerrilla system of Christian warfare builds no churches, establishes no schools, plants no missions, makes few if any converts from the world. It seeks its prey in the churches. Men who are so self-willed that they can not work with any others,

can not work with Christ. They do not gather with him, but scatter abroad.

#### 606 UNITY OF SPIRIT Urged

“Be of the same mind one toward another.” Have such a love for the cause of Christ that you will be glad to enlist as many as you can for its promotion. You can not, for any length of time, live religion alone. Before you go far in the way to Zion you will persuade some others to go with you. Christianity is social in its nature. Its votaries instinctively flock together. The Apostle likens them to the body. “If one member suffers, every member suffers with it.” If one member of the body becomes so disordered that it does not do its appropriate part for the general welfare, then disorder and general distress follow. Therefore, do all you can to keep the unity of the Spirit. Bear undeserved reproach rather than make a division and begin a quarrel. Return a soft answer for insulting words. “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing” (1 Pet. 3:8, 9).

#### 607 UNREASONABLE MEN

We are greatly struck with Paul's request to the brethren to pray for him that he might be “delivered from unreasonable men.” He must have suffered a great deal from them. He classes them with wicked men. An unreasonable man in the church may stand in the way of the work of God more than a wicked man does, who is out of the church.

If the great Apostle was so desirous of being delivered from them, then an ordinary preacher should be forgiven for not wanting to fall into their hands. No preacher can satisfy them. They make trouble wherever they go. The more talent and zeal and piety they have, the more capable they are of wrecking a society. They can neutralize the best efforts of the most capable preacher. Brother, are you

unreasonable? The cure is humble love; for the meek God will guide in judgment.

608 UNSAVED Sometimes Employed by God

Some persons serve as scaffoldings for the lower story of the temple of the Lord, and, as the building goes up, they are laid aside. If they were better material, they would go into the building. But they are so coarse and cross-grained that they can not even be planed—much less polished.

God often uses selfish, self-willed, covetous, self-conceited men to open the way for his work. He gives them another opportunity to get right, and if they do not improve it, he leaves them to themselves. Like Noah's carpenters, they help build for the salvation of others, while they themselves are not saved. Reader, are you one of this class? Ask God to help you; for unless he does you will not be willing to acknowledge it if you are.

609 UNSAVED, Why Delay?

If you are unsaved, and are unwilling to die unsaved, why do you remain unsaved a single day? What are you waiting for? A more favorable opportunity? "Behold, now is the accepted time." For some one to pray for you? "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." You are included in "us." There is more efficacy in *his* intercessions than in the prayers of all the saints. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." So all you need to do is to come. Come just as you are. Come confessing and forsaking your sins. Come renouncing the world—its ambitions and pleasures and honors. Come, above all, renouncing yourself—all claims to yourself—all dependence upon your morality—and throw yourself with all the energy of despair upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Come believing that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him—and that you do receive the things you desire when you pray—and the arms of infinite love will embrace you: you shall be saved.

**610 VERACITY**

Veracity is one of the cardinal virtues. Christianity requires of its adherents supreme allegiance to truth. The only instance in which the apostles used their miraculous powers for the injury of others was when a man and his wife were struck dead for lying. "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8). This includes religious liars, liars in the church, liars in the pulpit. We have been shocked to see some who profess the highest state of grace appear incapable of stating correctly something with which they did not agree. Where this is done in reporting what one *hears* there may be some excuse; but what possible excuse can there be when one has a written or printed statement before him? Let us see to it that we have the truth in the inward parts. This God desires.

**611 VICTORIOUS LIFE Brings Triumphant Death**

If you would die a triumphant death, you must have victory in life. He who conquers the devil, and sin in all its forms, has nothing to fear from death.

John Knox had a stormy time through life. But he never quailed at all the terrors which popery could inflict. He never made a compromise with principle. "Few men were ever exposed to more dangers, or underwent such hardships." He was imprisoned; he was banished; he lived for several years an outlaw; but he died in peace, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

When he saw that his end was come, he ordered his coffin made. He prayed, "Come, Lord Jesus. Into thy hands I commend my spirit. Be merciful, Lord, to thy church which thou hast redeemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up faithful pastors who will take charge of thy church. Grant us, Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, by the evidence both of thy wrath and mercy."

To friends at his bedside he exclaimed in rapture, "I have been these last two nights in meditation on the troubled state of the church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world but precious in the sight of

God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her head, Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places and have prevailed. I have been in heaven and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am."

He died without a struggle. As he was laid in the grave the regent said:

"THERE LIES HE WHO NEVER FEARED THE FACE OF MAN."

#### 612 VICTORY Over One's Self Important

If you will fight, then fight yourself. What good will your victories over others do *you*? They will only add to your pride, that is, add to the probability of your eternal damnation. But a complete victory over yourself will bring present peace and eternal happiness. You may think the conflict will be short; but in most cases it will be a protracted one. The "old man" dies hard. We are too apt to underestimate the strength and persistence of the forces opposed to us.

Before you take up arms against your brethren who do not think on all subjects as you think they should, get your own pride of opinion, and love of admiration, and selfishness, subdued. This will have a great tendency to make you peaceable towards others.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

#### 613 WAIT UPON THE LORD When Straitened in Circumstances

If you are in straitened circumstances and need help, it is quite likely that the devil will step in before God and offer you his assistance. He did so by our Savior. When he was hungry the devil said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." That is, "Look for the help in a miraculous way, which you may easily obtain in a rational way." This is not God's order. He requires us to go as far as we can, and then he is ready to step in with his power. We must plow and plant, and God will send the sunshine and the rain. We must set the

proper example, and give the right instruction, and God will send the quickening power of his Spirit. His help may be delayed; but it comes when we reach the extremity. Refuse the devil's assistance and God will provide.

#### 614 WALKING IN THE LIGHT, Necessity of

To keep the blessing of God on our souls we must walk in the light. And light never changes. What was light is light. We may get additional light, but it only confirms the belief that we did right in walking in the light which God previously gave us. He who is truly sanctified to God is never sorry that at the very beginning of his Christian life he repented thoroughly and brought forth fruits meet for repentance. He who in building lays a good foundation, passes on, but he does not go from the roof to the cellar to tear down the wall on which the building rests. So he who builds up a true Christian character, does not take back what he has given to God. To do this is to go back, and not forward; it is to tear down, and not to build up.

It is astonishing what a change takes place in one's physical appearance, when he looks back, and begins to draw back. The light goes from his eye, the divine glory from his countenance, the elasticity from his step, and the inspired ring from his voice. He is dark and gloomy, or light and trifling, severe or over-lenient, or all by turns. He is variable and inconsistent, and no one can tell where he will drift; but there is great danger that he will wander in the blackness of darkness forever. O beloveds, walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you.

#### 615 WANDERINGS in the Wilderness

The journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the promised land lasted forty years. There was no necessity for it. It might have been made in a few weeks. The wanderings in the wilderness might have been avoided. So there is no need that a Christian should be forty years, or one year, in reaching the Canaan of perfect love—

"The land of corn, and wine, and oil,  
Favored with God's peculiar smile,  
With every blessing blest."

Many of the battles the ordinary Christian has to fight, and of the difficulties he has to encounter, are the direct result of disobedience and unbelief. Crosses there always will be, and burdens to carry; but to a determined soul, trusting in God, they are easily borne. Beloved, give up your wanderings by giving yourself wholly to God. Claim the exceeding great and precious promises that are given you to enable you to become a partaker of the Divine nature. Meet the conditions. Bring yourself to a complete surrender to all the will of God. Make all the confessions that God calls for. Throw yourself on the atoning blood, and believe to the salvation of your soul from all inbred sin.

**616 WARNED, Every Man Should Be**

No one can become truly religious unless religion has a beginning in his soul. The Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Much of the religion of the day is purely sentimental, because it has no foundation. It does not rest on the fear of God. The popular preaching of the day lays the whole stress upon the love of God. The *New York Sun*, a well-informed paper, says:

"The whole doctrine of everlasting punishment has become unpopular among Protestants of recent years. It is not preached as of old. Refined and polite congregations regard a clergyman as coarse and boorish, if he thunders forth the warnings with which every sermon of the past used to end. 'Hell' and 'damnation' are words they require to be expunged from the pulpit vocabulary."

This is the natural result of filling up the churches with unconverted members. Those who have not themselves fled from the damnation of hell do not like to listen to words of warning. But the man of God hears a voice within him, saying: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me" (Ezek. 3:17). And he obeys.

**617 WARNINGS, Faithful**

John the Baptist preached that men should flee from the wrath to come. Two-thirds of the warnings to men to keep out of hell, expressed in the New Testament, were uttered by the Savior. Paul said he preached, "warning every man."

**618 WISDOM, As Well as Zeal, Necessary**

To insure success it is not enough that our cause is good and our motives pure. We must act wisely if we would win. There was a time when the Protestants of France were a large and influential portion of the population. They were gaining ground rapidly, and bid fair soon to be in the ascendancy. But a few injudicious movements led to their overthrow; and since then Protestantism has never been able to regain a foothold in that fair land. Their principles were right, but their policy was wrong. A good cause may easily be defeated by the injudicious measures of its friends.

Too little attention is paid by some real Christians to the charge of Christ, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Many seem to think that it is enough to be harmless. They lay little or no stress upon the injunction to be wise. Having settled it that a course of action is right, we should seriously consider the question, "Is it wise?" It is not so much for lack of zeal as for lack of wisdom that the cause of God makes comparatively such slow progress among us. We need to pray more for wisdom, and to put in active exercise all the sense and grace we have or can possibly get. Many, because the object at which they aim is good, will not see that the course they are taking will defeat that object.

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

**619 WISDOM Indispensable**

Although grace effects a perfect revolution in one's moral character, yet the bent of the natural disposition is still

seen when the work of grace is fulfilled. The amiable John becomes the loving disciple; the impetuous Peter, the bold preacher of Pentecost; the zealous persecutor, Saul, becomes the indefatigable apostle Paul, who carries the gospel to the ends of the world as known at that time.

Those who would labor for souls, must learn to work along the line of the natural disposition. To split rails, you must follow the grain of the log. To polish wood, you must work with the grain; or, if you are obliged to cross it, you must have sharp tools, and take off but little at a time.

In short, whether a man has little learning or much learning, if he would win souls he *must have wisdom*. This is indispensable. He must know where to strike. It is the well-directed blow that does execution. "*He that winneth souls is wise.*"

#### 620 WISDOM, True

The men whom I consult most frequently, and on whose opinions I place the greatest reliance, are not men of learning. They know but little of books, they never had any great advantages of schools, or of society. But they are meek and humble followers of Jesus. And God says, "The meek he will guide in judgment." They are men of prayer.

One may have a great amount of learning, and but little wisdom; and he may have much wisdom and little learning. If a person has but one, heavenly wisdom is to be preferred. He may have both. Only do not make the mistake of supposing that *this wisdom* can be gained from books. It can not. Books and schools have no necessary connection with it. If you would have practical wisdom to guide you in important matters, you must come to God directly for it. Your consecration to God's will must be complete. You must have no doubts, no misgivings. "Every one that asketh [in this manner] receiveth."

#### 621 WISE in Their Own Eyes

God promises to save us from folly; but if we still persist in foolishness he does not promise to save us from the con-

sequences of folly. If we can not swim, and will go into water over our heads, we must expect to drown. If we would look to the Lord more for direction, we would not have to cry to him so much for help. We have hard traveling because we take the wrong road. If a woman will marry a drinking man, she must bear the abusive treatment of a drunkard. "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 5:21-24).

#### 622 WOMAN Uplifted by the Gospel

In all nations where the true God is not known and worshiped, woman is degraded. Generally she is in a state of servitude. Often, the rights that are conceded to a man-slave are denied the free-born woman.

Christianity concedes to her the same rights that it does to man. But many men are slow to see it. The "old man" loves to play the tyrant. The "new man" does not, but is ready to be the servant of all. The measure of love that Christian husbands are to have for their wives, is that which Christ manifested for his church when he gave himself for it. This pure, deep love will make any husband considerate of his wife and careful to promote her piety, and her happiness. It will not allow any man to domineer over his wife.

#### 623 WOMEN: Earnest Gospel Workers

"I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel" (Phil. 4:3). The word here translated "laboured" deserves particular notice. In the original it is *sunethleson*. From the latter part of the word comes our English word athletics. It de-

notes the highest pitch of exertion; an athlete is one who has great strength and power of endurance, and who, upon occasion, exerts all his strength and skill.

So there were women who contended side by side with the great Apostle in the conflict against the powers of darkness, and who endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The gospel has exalted woman and she, in turn, has been from the first ready to do and bear and suffer for the gospel.

“Not she with traitor’s kiss her Savior stung,  
Not she denied him with unholy tongue;  
She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave;  
Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave.”

While the churches generally admit that under the gospel dispensation “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free,” yet they still insist upon it, in the bestowment of positions in the church, that there is “male and female.” It takes a long while for some who embrace the gospel to understand the gospel.

624 WORD OF GOD, Meditation Upon the

A man may be perishing of hunger, while a cow is near at hand with a bag full of nutriment. But if he would get the food he must milk her. So many a soul is starving while God’s Word is full of substantial food. But to get it he must sit down and, by patient study, draw it out. To get benefit from words—even God’s words—we must get down to the thoughts which the words are intended to convey. We must put our mind on the Scriptures, and then we will find in them wisdom and strength. The Psalmist said: “Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word” (Ps. 119:148). The good man described in the first Psalm is one who meditates on God’s law day and night. The Apostle Paul, writing to a young minister, charges him: “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all” (1 Tim. 4:15). And St. Peter directs young converts:

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2).

In no other of his epistles does Paul speak more re-provingly to those to whom he writes than he does in his epistle to the Corinthians. But he begins with words of commendation. He shows that he is not in ill-humor with them, but is as free to praise their good qualities as he is to reprove their faults. What can be more conciliatory than the following language: “I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge” (1 Cor. 1:4, 5). He thus prepares himself to speak of their faults in the mildest manner possible, and prevents them from entertaining the suspicion that he is prejudiced against them, and so underestimates their piety.

How much alienation and hard feeling would be prevented if, in reproofing others, we took a similar course! How much more good is effected by reproofs when they fall upon hearts softened by kindness, than they do when they are discharged at hearts hardened by a harsh manner and cruel words!

#### 625 WORDS, Careless

For a careless word a soul may be lost. For a neglect of duty, some precious soul may be found on the left hand in the day of judgment.

#### 626 WORDS, Pure

The words of the pure are pleasant words (Prov. 15:26). They are not impure words: they are not *slang words*. The preacher who uses slang words *in the pulpit*, or *in private*, gives unmistakable evidence of a lack of grace. If he was ever sanctified, he has lost the blessing. He may be an ordained minister; but he is a backslider. If he lived in Canaan he would talk the language of Canaan. If he walked with God he would use God's words. “Every word of God is pure” (Prov. 30:5).

If a minister, when he is with the ungodly, adopts

their language and tells coarse jokes, or laughs at them, and uses slang words, it is because he is *in heart* one of them. He should speedily get to the Lord and get forgiven, and have all vanity and vileness taken from his heart; or he should quit preaching. He has no business in the pulpit. He should never enter it again in his present condition. He should cry to the Lord, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He should wait upon the Lord until a live coal from off the altar is laid upon his mouth, and it is said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isa. 6:7).

**627 WORK, Steady, Required**

No degree of piety or genius can take the place of hard work. The successful aspirant for a crown of life is the one who makes it a business to serve the Lord. No one can tell what he can accomplish until he sets himself steadily at work for some worthy object.

Louis XIV. succeeded to the throne of France when he was a young boy. As he grew older he applied himself to business. Later in life he wrote concerning this early period of his history: "I laid it down as a law to myself, to work regularly twice a day. I can not tell you what fruit I reaped immediately after this resolution. I felt myself rising, as it were, both in mind and courage; I found myself quite another being; I discovered in myself what I had no idea of, and I joyfully reproached myself for having been so long ignorant of it. Then it dawned upon me that I was king, and was born to be." He became the greatest monarch of his day.

Settle down to steady work in God, and you will win at last a crown of life.

**628 WORKERS, Develop Your Own**

Do you want help on your circuit? Do not send abroad for any till you have seen what workers may be developed among your own members. Put them in training. Get them to work. Call them out; put them forward. If they

are not in a spiritual condition to work, they will find it out, if they attempt to work, much sooner than they will from any amount of preaching and exhortation. Get them blessed clear up to boiling heat, and you will be astonished at the talent which will be manifested by some timid, shrinking, unlettered men and women.

“In the still air the music lies unheard,  
In the rough marble beauty lies unseen.”

Give the “still air” the proper motion and what ravishing music you will hear! Take off the superfluous chips from the “rough marble” and what a beautiful statue stands out for the admiration of mankind! You have the materials and the tools; show yourself “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” by turning out those who do good work for God. They will abundantly pay you, by their help, for all the pains you have taken with them. You will need but little other assistance.

#### 629 WORKS

Many appear to think that if they gain Heaven all is gained. This is a great mistake. All in Heaven are happy; but there are degrees of happiness in Heaven. The farms in Illinois are all good and desirable, but some are better than others. So any mansion in Heaven is to be striven for; but the more ardently we strive, the higher will be our seat in glory. This Paul explicitly declares. “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead” (1 Cor. 15: 41, 42). That is, there is a wide difference in the glory of the stars: so will there be a corresponding difference in the glory of men in their eternal state. And this difference depends upon their works. Hence the Apostle concludes this wonderful chapter with the exhortation: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15: 58). We may work for men and lose our pay, but for everything we do

for the Lord we shall receive a glorious recompense. "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:41). The least we do for Christ will, in the end, amount to more than the utmost we can do to secure worldly advantages.

We do well to ponder seriously the weighty words of Christ: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

#### 630 WORKS Rewarded

Men are rewarded by their fellow men according to their position; and often it happens that he who does the most work receives the least pay. But it is not so with men who work for Christ. They do not receive their recompense here. Nor are they paid, in eternity, in proportion to their talents, or the offices they filled, but in proportion to the honest, hard work they did for Christ. Many who are least now will be greatest then. "And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:44).

Do you believe this doctrine, that men are rewarded by Christ according to their works? If you do, then you will work. You will not want to go where there is least to do. You will not be seeking an easy position. You will be zealous. You will seek to put into the cause of Christ *all the time, all the talent, all the property that you possibly can*. You will not seek to impose upon others the duties which you should do. You will fill up each day with usefulness.

#### 631 WORKS and Rewards

Twenty-five years ago he was thought to be in danger of dying soon of consumption. He was a devoted Christian. He looked to the Lord for direction, and was led to go to the far West, where the air is dry and the sunshine is seen nearly every day in the year. By the blessing of God he regained his health, and prospered in business, and became wealthy. His children settled around him and were well off as to the things of this world. A few months ago he died in

peace and, we trust, went to Heaven. But we have no doubt his death would have been more triumphant, and his eternity happier, if he had remembered the cause of God in his will. But all of his large property went to his children, who had already enough and whose affections appear to be set on the world. He made a great mistake: and what is worse, his mistake can not be corrected.

Why are not the words of Christ more generally believed? Why do not professed Christians act as if they believed them? "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Reader, are you doing work which Christ will reward?

**632 WRITING for the Public: Be Sure of Facts**

Do not write unless you have something to say. If you undertake to teach others, see that you have a clear understanding of the matter about which you write. Be sure of the facts. In traveling, I have been directed wrong so many times that now, when I approach a man for information, I ask him first if *he knows* the way to the place I mention. I find that many people are ready to tell the way to a place when they do not know it themselves. It is so in writing. Many are forward to shed light upon a subject concerning which they are in darkness. At best their knowledge of it is extremely superficial. Such should study up their subject before they write.

**633 WRITING for the Public: Be Manly**

Truth is truth, no matter by whom it may be uttered or written. But the force that it carries with it depends not merely upon the manner in which it is presented, but upon the character of the one that presents it. Hence, when an audience is asked to listen to a stranger, they are informed who he is. He does not attempt to speak in disguise. The same principle should hold in writing for the public. As a rule, one should not write that for which he is afraid, or ashamed, to stand responsible. Especially is this true of all criticisms upon individuals or associations. If you feel

called upon to attack others, do it in an open, manly way. Give them a chance for self-defense. Do not shoot in the dark. Then do not waste your time by sending us articles without your name. Though we may not always publish them, yet we must have the name of the writer.

**634 WRITING for the Public: Do Not be Contentious**

The Apostle says, "Avoid foolish questions, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus 3:9). We are very anxious to obey this command. It comes to us with Divine authority. Our own peace, and the prosperity of the church, are intimately connected with its observance. The disregarding of it will be followed by disastrous consequences.

But we do not see how we can do it without assistance, Divine and human. We devoutly ask God for help to follow this direction. We also humbly beg our correspondents to assist us in this important matter. If they *will* ask "foolish questions," and *will* keep up "contentions and strivings about the law," how can we avoid them? So, after you have passed favorably upon your communication for the FREE METHODIST, as to its literary character, please examine it critically as to its moral character, and if you find it comes under either of the above heads, please do not send it. Though it may be true, and well written, but if you know the decision of an apostle that it is "unprofitable and vain," why should you wish to have it published?

**635 WRITING for the Public: General Suggestions**

When you write for publication, use white paper, black ink, and a good pen. Faint pencil marks on tinted paper are read with difficulty.

Do not write in a hurry. See that you use words which express your meaning. If you quote from the Bible, or from any author, to prove a statement, quote correctly, and give the reference, so that your quotations may be verified.

If you controvert what some one else has written, take pains to understand him before you write a word in reply.

Put the best construction on what he writes that his language will allow. If you state what he wrote, then state it in his own words. To put your own construction upon the language of another, and then assert that he wrote what you say he meant, is not honest; it is not right. To do it intentionally is a sin. It is bearing "false witness against your neighbour." If there was more candor there would be less controversy. Avoid all offensive personalities. Do not use opprobrious epithets. Let your spirit and your tone be conciliatory. In your writing, as in everything else, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

If your article does not come out in the next number of the paper, do not get excited over it, and come to some hasty conclusion about it. Wait. Have patience. In due season it may appear. But if it does not, bear it.

#### 636 YIELDING Spirit

A touchy spirit that can not bear criticism or contradiction, is not the Spirit of Christ. We are all liable to mistakes. No one is perfect in knowledge, or in judgment. But the greatest mistake that any man, young or old, can make, is to assume, or to act upon the assumption, that he is infallible. Suppose some one does disagree with you. That is not conclusive—nay, it is not always even presumptive evidence that he is wrong. If it is a father or mother, or some one whose means of information on the subject are much better than your own, the presumption is quite likely to be the other way. Before you say or do anything rash, you had better look the ground over, and see if *they* may not be right, and *you* wrong. Admit in your own mind the possibility, at the outset. If you find you are wrong, have the frankness to confess it. To give up our own wills, and our own opinions, when we should, is a most valuable means of grace. To principle we should be unwavering in our allegiance. For no consideration should we deviate in the least from the purity of the gospel. But when questions of means and measures come up, we should be ready to yield our own opinions to the judg-

ment of others who are equally interested with us, and some of whom, at least, are as competent as ourselves to give a sound opinion on the matter.

637 ZEAL, Intemperate

Our zeal for the cause of God is always to be suspected when it takes the form of zeal against an individual. We must see to it that our hatred for heresy does not spring from a spirit of envy or jealousy towards the suspected heretic. Not but that it may sometimes become our duty to call offenders to account. But it should always be done in a spirit of meekness and of genuine compassion towards the party against whom complaints are made. We should always be ready to receive explanations. Whitehead wisely says, "Immoderate zeal is always to be suspected; especially when it appears in pursuing such measures as tend to injure or ruin an individual. A bad cause which originated from hatred or malice, will almost always be carried on with more intemperate zeal and bolder measures than a consciousness of acting right will ever produce. The pursuit of any end in view, when governed by the passions, is always more violent than when directed by reason and truth."

638 ZEAL Tempered by Grace

Jehu was full of zeal, but it was not of the right kind. He was more ready to slay, than he was to pray. He was death on *one form* of idolatry, while he practised it in *another* form. He slew with the sword the worshipers of Baal, but he himself worshiped the golden calves. "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin" (2 Kings 10:31). Yet he boasted of his piety. To one of God's servants he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." We must be careful that we do not serve Jesus with the zeal of Jehu. Our uncompromising zeal for the truth must proceed from grace and not from grit. We may drive fast, but not furiously. We must tell the truth; but it must be in love.

We must not ourselves practise in substance what we condemn in others. We must be firm, but kind.

**639 ZEAL Must Result from Union with Christ**

No amount of zeal for any reform, however needful, can take the place of personal union with Christ. Whatever we do, if we would gain Heaven, we must have the Spirit of Christ. Jehu was a valiant soldier, a radical reformer. He executed faithfully the judgments of the Lord against the wicked house of Ahab, yet failed to walk before God with a perfect heart.

We must see to it that we are not reformers after that sort. We must ourselves follow the rules of holy living which we lay down for others.

**640 ZEAL: Not for Notions, but for Christ**

Indifference in the cause of God is dangerous. Luke-warmness is damning. An almost Christian is altogether out of Christ. We must be full of faith and love, and full of burning zeal for the cause of Christ. But we must see to it that our zeal is not for our notions, but for Christ, and for the salvation of souls. Dr. Stephen Olin says: "Individuals, and sometimes churches, are zealous in trifles, or even mischief. There is a zeal of God, yet not according to knowledge. This does not condemn high degrees of zeal, but its misdirection. The more we know of divine things, the more zealous shall we be. The Jews had zeal, not for the truth, but for their sect. Men are often zealous for sect, especially for peculiarities—for trifles which come to fill the mind. It is natural to be zealous in false notions of religion; and he who takes a notion, a ceremony, for Christianity, must swell it into monstrous dimensions in order to satisfy his own mind. The more trivial the notion, the greater need of zeal. True zeal seeks benevolent ends by lawful means—else it is fanaticism. It seeks practical ends by wise means—else it is enthusiasm."

**641 ZEAL, Properly Balanced**

We can not by our zeal for one class of Scriptures atone for our neglect of other Scriptures of equal importance.

This was the fault of the Pharisees. They laid great stress on little things. They were careful to tithe everything they raised, even down to garden vegetables. They were exceedingly scrupulous about their dress. But they paid but little attention to what the Bible says about having right affections towards God and our being governed by right principles in our relations with our fellow men. Did Christ commend them for this? On the contrary, he poured upon them the strongest denunciations. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law."



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