

CONVENTION SERMON.

Our Mission, as seen in the light of Christ's mission.

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE BAPTIST CONVENTION OF NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND P. E. ISLAND, AT SACKVILLE, N. B., ON MONDAY, AUGUST 28TH, 1876.

By REV. E. M. SAUNDERS, A. M. (Published by special request.)

"As thou hast sent me into the world even so have I also sent them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth."—JOHN XVII. 18, 19.

IN THE ANALOGY OF OUR TEXT LOVE IS PRESENTED AS THE MOTIVE POWER BY WHICH BELIEVERS ARE SENT ABROAD INTO THE WORLD.

Love, drawn from the original source, is the only impelling power by which the christian can be kept true to his mission. Nothing less than love divine will cheer the heart, defy opposition, smile at defeat and go on heroically till the work is accomplished.

"God is love." Love is the all-pervading element of the divine nature. It appears in all the works and ways of God. The heavens above testify to it, and the earth sends back the answering, Amen. The music of the natural world and the hymns of heaven are strains in praise of matchless love.

In the gift of Christ, we have an opening into the divine nature, through which we see the heart of the Father, yearning towards his rebellious children.

Hundreds of generations have been blessed by the nourishing presence of the Nile. It gave them cooling draughts and fruitful fields in desert wastes; so they must know its source. From the earliest day, has not the human family been nourished by the love of God? Shall not the Christian desire to know its source? that he may "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that he might be filled with all the fullness of God."

The power of love is exhibited in the manifestation of God in human form.

We retire in thought behind the purposes of God and, with such helps as we are able to command, contemplate the love of the Father, demonstrated in the incarnation of the Son. There is no analogy, in the light of which to see this great truth. We have symbols of the death of Christ in abundance; but for type or symbol of the Union of the Eternal God and a mortal man, in the person of Christ Jesus, the realm of nature and the history of the world have been explored in vain. It was the trial of paternal love—infinite love. As God presents Himself to us, as a Father, we are permitted to employ fatherly instincts and affections, when we think of the Father condescending to give his Son to appear in human form—first a "babe"; then a "child"; and finally a "man"—"the Son of Man." The series of manifestations of Christ, previous to his appearance in the flesh, forms a succession of acts in which we may see the Divine Nature yielding to the constraining power of eternal love.

But the evidence here is shadowy, when compared with the greater mystery—"God manifest in the flesh." He entered the garden to talk with Adam; He ate and drank with Abraham in his tent; He conversed with Elijah in Horeb in a still small voice; He walked with the three young, heroic Hebrews in the hot hissing furnace at Babylon; when Joshua, with shoes plucked from his feet, fell prostrate before the captain of the Lord's host, above whose head the drawn sword flashed terribly, he was in the presence of the Captain of our salvation. Here we see marvellous condescension, wonderful love! We adore the love that sent the Son to linger in simulated, human forms among the saints of olden times. But we say, oh the "depths" of the love that sent the only begotten of the Father, to be born of a woman when the fullness of the time had come.—As love sent Christ into the shame and humiliation of man's form, let the same love, both lead and send out our pious young men and young women to the heathen of India. Is knowledge power? Surely love is power.

Patriots, philanthropists, and philosophers may search the annals of the world, and the teachings of their systems, for motives to engage in undertakings of benevolence and peril; and they will all seem as nothing when compared with the power of example of self-sacrifice, given by Christ in the fact of his incar-

nation. This is the live coal that kindles the fire of zeal in the christian's heart. Inflamed with it the apostles and early christians went through the world with irresistible power. It has burned in the bosom of the church ever since. Modern missionaries have been filled somewhat with this fullness of God.

Another aspect of the example of Christ, that constrains us, is presented in the submission of Christ to sufferings.

He came into the world to live with his enemies, to suffer for them and to die for them. Between his character and life-purposes and their character and life-purposes, there was deep, moral gulf. Intercourse was antagonism. Under these circumstances, exposed at every point to the world, the flesh and the devil, the Son of God was required to pass his life. The scenes of shame and suffering which mark the way of Christ's public life were all fore-known. He was spit upon, smitten with fists and covered with the mockeries of the wicked—those whom He came to save? So plain were all the sufferings of Christ to the divine mind, that they are spoken of in prophecy as if they had then actually occurred. He was poor and afflicted: "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Out of the darkness of the cross, this cry of agony is heard from the lone sufferer—"My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me." To all this God sent His Son.

The death of Christ is another expression of the Father's love.

In the sketch of Christ's condescension given by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians, death is the lower point, and the death of the cross is the lowest point to which the Son of God descended in the progress of his humiliation. He made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the fashion of a man, the form of servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Irrational life shrinks from death with instinctive dread. It is its enemy. It is also the last and most terrible enemy of man. It consigns man's honor and strength to the helplessness and humiliation of the grave.

Justice required the death of the Son of God. He could not escape it as Enoch and Elijah did. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" and so Christ tasted death for every man.

The exposure of the Son of God in human form for more than thirty years to the Devil and his angels, is another test of the love of God.

"We know thee who thou art," are the words of demons to Christ when they were about to be driven from their strong holds. They had worshipped Him, when they were in their "first estate." Now they will follow Him with infernal revenge. Christ laid aside God's "form," and assumed man's "form," and thus, in lowliness, and weakness, stood exposed throughout his whole life to the devil and his angels. Love did not fail here. Through the temptations of the wilderness and the agonies of the crucifixion, the malevolent foe followed Christ our Saviour. Such a relation as this, did infinite love constrain the Son of God to assume with the prince of darkness.

But love is also exhibited in the substitution of the innocent for the guilty.

This is one phase of the great mystery of godliness. It involves a principle, unknown to the purest and soundest systems of earthly government. It is peculiar to redemption. He who knew no sin, became sin for us: and the reproach, merited by man, fell upon the Son of Man; and it broke his heart. Had it been possible, He would have escaped from it. We look into Gethsemane and are dumb; we look upon the cross and, with the terrified Roman soldiers and crowd of spectators, smite our breasts, and say, "Truly this was the Son of God."

What then were the chief obstacles to the Saviour's mission? He submitted to the humiliation of appearing in the flesh, formed like a sinful man; a life of unutterable sufferings were appointed to him; He was compelled to bow to death, even the death of the cross: for more than thirty years the divine nature was held exposed, in human flesh, to the devil and his angels; and the sword of justice was summoned from its scabbard, and the innocent and Holy One fell by its terrible strokes. To this test, the love of the Father, which sent the Son, was subjected.

As He was sent, so He sends his followers. The dangers and sufferings which menace the disciples of Christ may all be overcome by the help of that impelling love which enabled Christ to endure the cross and despise the shame.

The love of God shed abroad in the soul is the secret and power of self-sacrifice! The operation of the law of self-sacrifice is everywhere seen in the government of God. The bud of autumn robs the leaf of the previous spring; the wasted health and strength of nurses reappear in convalescent patients; the bloom of health that fades from the face of the young mother is kindled on the ruddy cheek of her happy boy. It is love that reigns in the service of self-

sacrifice. Helped by such suggestions, we rise higher, and look out upon the broad field of love's mission: without it no man can follow Christ.

Believers are not their own; they are bought with a price. They and their possessions are the means love employs to accomplish her mission in the world. The dread of responsibilities and the fears of privations and suffering are dispelled by the presence of love; and the bold language of the heart in which it dwells is, "Here am I, send me."

As Christ gave Himself and laboured, so He requires the Christian to give himself and to labour. He gave all for them; He demands all from them.

Neither believers nor their possessions are too precious for Christ. Have they gold and silver? Have they gifts and talents? Let them give them to Christ who, although He was rich, yet for their sakes became poor. Have they children whom the Master requires for the Foreign service? They too should be given freely to the Lord. Parental love folds its arms desperately around these treasures of the cradle and the home; but Christ's love unbinds the arms of the mother, soothes her heart and leads her son or daughter across the seas and the Continents to a home among the heathen. But love began these duties in heaven; the arms of infinite love were unclasped, and the only begotten Son of the eternal Father, was conducted down from the throne of God and laid in a trough from which dumb brutes ate their provender: but his mission did not terminate in that lowly place. From the manger in Bethlehem He was led to Golgotha, and there received cruel spikes in his tender hands and feet. All this his mother saw, and when this sword pierced Mary's soul her bitter wailings mingled with the dying groans of her Son. Mothers in Israel will you call your babes your own? Will you hold back your children?

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE NEUTRALIZES DISCOURAGEMENT.

The large amounts of money expended, the health wasted and the lives sacrificed are sometimes contrasted with the small number of heathen who become Christians. This contrast is sought to be used against the missionary enterprise. Under what circumstances did Christ perform his labour? He began it at the end of four thousand years. What had been the results of the labour to turn men to God through this long period? What had become of the millions who had pledged themselves to Moses by baptism in the cloud and in the sea? Seven thousand men in Elijah's day was a very small result for the length of the time and the vastness of preparation and the extent of means that had been employed.

When Christ appeared the whole world was steeped in self-righteousness and idolatry. But this did not dishearten the great Missionary. There were a few Simeons and Annas to take Him in their arms and break the silence for the patient waiters in ecstasies of joy; but there were only a few. He surrounded himself with a company of illiterate men and went about doing good.

What, let me ask, is the result now, at the close of eighteen hundred additional years? I draw upon your knowledge for a reply.

Truth is progressing; the great Galilean is conquering! God is giving the heathen to his Son for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.

To the orders to march, believers are everywhere responding. The enrollment goes on; the regiments multiply. On their floating banners we read this motto: The world, the whole world, and nothing less than the whole world for King Jesus!

Shall the fifty thousand Baptists of Canada, fresh and vigorous in the bright morning of this missionary day, go out and take an advanced position in this onward movement to take the world for Christ? Surely they cannot remain behind! What an accumulation of reasons might be adduced to urge them forward.

If we would make ourselves worthy successors of Carey and Judson and all the fallen Baptist heroes; if, above all other considerations we would be faithful to Christ, we must go forward, in the name of the Lord, assured, notwithstanding all discouragements, that our labors will not be in vain in the Lord.

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger. To a Delinquent Delegate.

Dear Thomas,— You were not at the Convention, as you should have been—because you are a representative man. One such person as you is worth a dozen of the delegates who attend for the sake of having a good time. But you, like many another modest fellow—or was it for that other trouble which afflicts some of us more even than our modesty—that chronic malady among preachers, impecuniosity, preferred to stay at home among your people, thinking that it did not matter whether you went or not. Are you not a Baptist? A graduate of the College? and moreover pastor of one of our

In Memoriam.

WILLIAM GAY

died Aug. 14th, 1876, aged 92 years. The deceased was born in Wiltshire, England. Early enlisted in the British Army; served loyally under Wellington in the Peninsular war; was in twenty-three general engagements; received two wounds; actively participated in the battle of Waterloo; after which, on account of loss of sight, was honorably discharged, and drew a pension until the time of his death. He is supposed to have been the last surviving Waterloo soldier on Prince Edward Island. Whether or not this is strictly true, Mr. Gay's life was a memorable one, and his death a noteworthy event. Especially is this the case, as he became a soldier, not alone for his country, but afterwards for his God. Mr. Gay emigrated to P. E. Island about the year 1837, and settled in Wilmot Valley. Soon afterwards he experienced religion under the ministry of Rev. Alexander McDonald. He had doubtless been christened in infancy, but he now saw the unscripturalness and insufficiency of that unconsciously received ceremony, changed his views of baptism, united with the Baptist church at Bedeque and continued in the main through life an exemplary soldier of Christ. Shortly before his death he requested his Saviour to take him to Heaven as the "Thief on the Cross." The prayer was, we trust, soon answered, and he was then immediately transferred from earth into Christ's triumphant kingdom, and thus also permitted to join his Christian partner who had preceded him about ten months. May the seven children left behind be comforted in their loss, serve the same Saviour on earth, and dwell with their ransomed kindred after death. A. CHIPMAN.

MISS EMILY STUART,

youngest daughter of the late Deacon John Stewart of West River, East Point, Prince Edward Island, died of consumption, April 22nd, 1876, aged 36 years. Sister Stewart's death was deeply regretted by a large circle of relatives and friends. In early life she professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and was baptized and received into the Baptist Church of her native place by Rev. John Shaw. The religion which she professed in her life gave abundant consolation in death, and the friends who visited her to comfort and cheer her in her last illness, were themselves comforted by her resignation to the Divine will. On her death-bed she was asked if she found Christ precious to her soul. She replied: "None but Jesus, none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good."

The night of death came slowly stealing over her, she enquired if there was light in the room. On being answered in the affirmative,—she seemed satisfied and almost immediately after bade them all adieu, and with unshrinking faith in her Redeemer—an evidence of an indwelling spiritual life which was being strengthened and developed as the frail earthly tabernacle was about being laid aside—she exclaimed, "Lord Jesus into thy hands I commend my spirit" and calmly closed her eyes in death. Thus she surrendered the cares and sorrows of earth for the unending joys of heaven, thus she left behind a world where faith in Christ, the hope of glory constituted her only abiding comfort to enter upon a scene where faith is lost in sight and hope in glorious fruition.

Our departed sister ever manifested a deep interest in the cause of God in Home and Foreign Missions and freely contributed towards them. On her dying bed she bequeathed \$12.00 to Mrs. W. F. Armstrong now laboring in the Telooquo Mission Field. She was a member of the Woman's Missionary Aid Society from its formation till her death where her presence is now sadly missed and her voice no longer heard pleading her Father in heaven for the perishing heathen. May we be enabled to imitate her virtues and follow more closely that Saviour whom she found so precious. Soon we will rejoice in a happy re-union.—Com by Miss Anna Scott.

The Rev. Andrew G. Fuller, the eldest son of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller has presented the Missionary Society with its First Minute Book. It was written entirely by Rev. A. Fuller's own hand. This gift is accompanied with more than thirty original and valuable letters bearing upon the early days of the mission.

Always yours, JOHN. Busyville, Aug. 30, 1876.