Love That Passeth Knowledge.

Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest hell,
Is God's love to guilty sinners
Who, through disobedience, fell.
Why love them so?
I do not know;
But this I know:
Redeeming love, and it alone,
Can break a heart as hard as stone.

Purer than the purest fountain,
Wider than the widest sea,
Sweeter than the sweetest music,
Is God's love in Christ to me.
Why love me so?
I do not know:
I only know
That nothing less than love divine
Could save this sinful soul of mine.

Stronger than all evil powers
Is the fortress of our faith.
"Our life is hid with Christ in God,"
In Him we'll triumph over death.
Why love us so?
I do not know:
I only know
That for His boundless love to me
I'll praise Him through eternity.

Swifter than the swiftest seraph
Ever flew from realms above,
Swifter than the lightning flashes,
Is God's swifter wing of love.
"Before I called
He answered me."
He loves me so.
But why? I'll know when I have lived
Throughout the countless years of God.
—James McLeod.

Weak vs. Strong Churches.

There are in churches at least three kinds of strength—numerical strength, financial strength, and spiritual strength. The first and the second kind are important, but the third is absolutely essential.

The organization that has the first and second in abundance, but lacks the third may be popular and influential in the eyes of the world, but as a church it is a dead failure. That was the condition of the church of the Laodiceans. (See Rev. 3:14-18).

And yet, to a very great extent today, the rage in the churches is for members and wealth. If only a crowd can be drawn to the services and the church treasury kept full, then the church is believed to be a great success.

The writer loves to see the church services well attended and the church finances in a healthy condition; but he realizes deep down in his soul that where these are secured at the sacrifice of genuine worship and true spirituality, then the church is a failure, no matter how strong it may be both numerically and financially. It is a failure because the work for which the church exists, namely, the true, devout worship of God and the spiritual upbuilding of the people, is not secured.

And right here we perceive a serious, dangerous error upon the part of very many church-members. Their hearts are set on large numbers and a full treasury, rather than on the true worship of God. Hence they soon tire of going to church unless the services are such as to "entertain" and 'draw a crowd," rather than to inspire true devotion and develop spirituality.

The demand in this direction began years ago, especially in the large city churches, and has increased more and more, until to-day the rage in the churches, and the purpose in attending the church services, even on the part of the great majority of the members, is "entertainment," instead of worship.

The sermon must entertain, the music must entertain, even the public prayers must entertain—the ear must be tickled, the eye must be pleased, vanity must be truckled to, prejudice and taste must be consulted, rather than the plain, practical, solemn gospel of sin, righteousness, and a judgment to come preached.

Oh, if but one-half of all who have their names recorded on the church roll would attend the regular services, would go there with a hearty good will to truly worship God, rather than to be entertained, what a mighty revolution would be speedily wrought in the spiritual life and power of the church.

This craze for novelty in the church service, together with its consequent substitution of mere pulpit entertainment for the power of genuine worship how it has robbed the churches of their spiritual power and given the membership leanness in their souls!

What a power-destroying, soul-damning vice it is! How unwise they are who turn to it as a means by which to recruit the strength and increase the growth of the church. In doing so they overlook the fact that the religious idea is, after all, the most powerful factor in human life, and that only such devices in church services as appeal to and satisfy the demands of man's religious, spiritual nature can be successful in the upbuilding of the church.

It is not creeds and liturgy, not art, incense, and music the human soul in its thoughtful, solemn moments, standing face to face with death, cries out for; but for a revelation of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the only truth that measures up to the longings of the human soul and satisfies its thirsts. This it is the true mission of the church to supply; this it is that the members of the church should be thirsting for when they go to God's house, and not for entertainment.

Let it once become well known that the membership, as one united body, on the Lord's Day, go up to the house of the Lord imbued with a true desire to worship, that there the truth of Jesus Christ is so presented, warm from the soul of God-inspired preachers, as to convict sinners, edify saints, and cause the shouts of new-born souls to ascend to heaven at almost every service, and soon the unconverted, the pleasure-seeker, and the wayward will be drawn in and converted also, and the house filled.

But this can never be while but one-half of the enrolled membership attends church, and two-thirds of that half go to be entertained instead of to worship.

O God, in thine infinite mercy and power, alarm the non-worshiping, pleasure-seeking church-members in all the branches of thy Zion. Help them to see and feel that their devotion to amusement and luxury, while thy house is neglected, and their spirit of truckling to the whims and prejudices of unbelievers for fear of appearing "narrow," will in the end necessarily evoke from thee the rebuke, "Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth!" The Telescope.

Lights That Are Gone Out

The religion of Christ is light. "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness." Jesus Christ is "the Light of the world." To His disciples He said, "Ye are the light of the world." They were illuminated by the word of God and the Spirit of God. All true followers of Christ have the light of truth in the intellect, the light of faith, love, joy, and assurance in the heart. The true light is in them, and they are the light in the Lord.

This light may go out, and in some cases it has gone out. This is one of the lessons of the parable of the ten virgins. The five foolish virgins awoke at the announcement of the coming of the bridegroom, and were overwhelmed with consternation when they saw that their lamps were gone out. The admonition of our Lord at the close of the parable is this, "Watch ye therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.'

The wise man never lets his lamp expire or burn low. The need of the light is great, and its value beyond all price. But many lamps have gone out, and others are going out. There are men and women in almost every Christian community who once rejoiced in the light of the Lord, but a change has taken place. There faith has failed. They no longer believe as they once did. A certain wellknown man of somewhat remarkable gifts who a few years ago, traveled up and down the land as a flaming evanglist, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, calling sinners to repentance, and professing to rejoice in the consious experience of the salvation of ihe Gospel, said the other day:

"We have lost belief in the Bible as the ultimated and authoritative relation of God. We have lost the fact and doctrine of the fall. The fact is man is not a sinner in any sense. We have lost the old fictitious idea of Salvation. There has never been need of a salvation of man.'

What a long step downward this man has taken in a short time! How much more he will lose before he finishes his course none can tell. He is not alone. Others have traveled the same road. And if prominent evangelists and preachers lose the light of truth it is not strange that others should follow their steps. It is to be feared that a careful inquiry would reveal the fact that many lamps are now going out and many more have been entirely extinguished.

Some have lost something more than their belief in the Bible as a revelation from God. They have lost the joy, the peace, the hope of Christ. They have lost their spiritual emotions their Christian principles, and their inward righteousness. They are now lying down in the darkness of sin and shame.

Whose fault is it that their lamps are gone out? It is not the fault of God. He is not willing that any should perish. The smoking flax He will not quench." There are many evil winds to blow out our lamps, but "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man;" and He "will not suffer you to be tempted above ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape." It is He that gives us light, and He will replenish our oil without price It grieves Him when a lamp is extinguished. We are told that His Spirit is said to be quenched when Christian people lose the light of God.

It is our own fault when our lamps go out. We cannot charge the evil to the fierce temptations that sweep about us. No fierce temptation is required when the oil of grace runs low. The most insignificant agency will accomplish the awful mischief then. The lamp will go out of its own accord when the oil gives out. If the Christian should watch and pray, there is no danger. It is only when he sleeps that his lamp goes out. As a rule the lamp does not go out suddenly. It is a gradual process. First it burns with a less brilliant flame. Then it flickers, trembles with a convulsive shudder, and slowly expires, leaving a small live coal at the end of the wick, which sparkles and sputters for a moment, emitting an offensive odor, and then dies. So gradually does the light fade from the heart and life when the supply of holy oil has been exhausted. Note the first indication that he flame is growing weaker, and fly instantly to the unfailing fountain of love and life. Does thy light begin to burn with a feeble and unsteady flame? Has the joy of salvation departed? Awake, and fly to Christ now, or it may be too late. —Chris. Advocate.

How to Hear a Sermon.

BY REV. SMITH BAKER, D. D.

That is, how to make good preaching better and poor preaching good. Good preaching is not that which in itself is a good sermon, but that which most blesses the hearer. Some great sermons are poor preaching, and some small small sermons are good preaching. A good sermon is one which produces a good result.

GET READY FOR IT.

1 In order to get the most out of a sermon, we should come to the service with a receptive mind and tender heart. Farmers always prepare the soil before they sow the seed. They pulverize and enrich it, put it in a condition to respond to the life in the seed, and then the seed grows, because the soil is good. To bring a thoughtless mind and cold heart to the hearing of a sermon is like casting good seed upon hard and dry ground, in which it cannot hide itself. The photographer's plate must be prepared and in a receptive state before the beams of light can impress a picture upon it. The soul must be in a proper condition before the rays of truth from the sermon can leave an impression upon it. The hearer should come prepared for the sermon, as well as the preacher come prepared with the sermon.

The trouble too frequently is that persons come to the service expecting the preacher to prepare both them and the sermon. They come with thoughtless minds, expecting to be made to think, and with cold hearts, expecting to be warmed; or, to use an old adage, "the preacher must find both the sermon and ears."

EXPECT SOMETHING FROM IT.

2. Come to the service looking for some special help. The seeking soul has a quickened perception. When one is looking with open eyes for flowers in the field, he sees a hundred where the unseeking walker discovers one. To simply stand upon the beach, with no purpose except to hear the waves murmur, will not discover the bright shells; but he who goes down to the beach that he may find shells will see them, for the purposee of his heart will make his eyes quick to discover. Thus when our hearts are hungry and seeking some truth to help us in life, then the most common hymn or prayer or sermon will be full of pearls for us.

When we read a railroad guide-book simply to pass away the time, it will not have much for us, and we shall gain nothing from it; but when we read it to help us on our journey to a particular place, then it is alive with interest and full of instruction. It becomes a new book to us, not because it is new, but because a new motive fills our minds. Most persons can testify that very able sermons have been dull and without profit to them, when they have heard them seeking no help, but that the most ordinary preaching and the most commonplace sermon has been full of strength and comfort, when they have heard it with a seeking heart. The purpose of the soul, when it listens to a sermon, decides how much we get out of it.

THINK IT OVER.

3. To think about a sermon makes it more to us. One reason why so much of the reading by young people does them so little good is that they only read, and do not turn over in their minds what they have read. One book read and thought about is worth ten books read without thought. Many sermons are only heard. We listen to them as to the rattle of wheels as they pass upon the street, and when the sound is gone the sermon is gone. Let the truth which the sermon has cast into the mind be silently thought over, held in the closet of the soul for a while in meditation, and it will become a part of the mind.

TALK IT OVER.

4. To talk over a sermon recalls it and reproduces it, and it becomes a kind of second sermon, as to talk over a book is like the second view of a landscape. To talk over a picture we have seen recalls its beauties and fixes the image of them in the mind. To talk over a sermon is a kind of review, and reviews are necessary to the greatest benefit in any study. Do not criticise the sermon, for that will destroy the good it was intended to do; but tell, one to the other, which part most interested or most helped you. Sometimes a good social meeting is one in which the last Sunday's sermon was talked over and prayed over. Ask the children to tell how much they remember, and have the parents do the same. A social discussion of the leading thoughts of a sermon leads to new thoughts. A good sermon is one which causes the hearer to think, and to talk over a sermon has the same result.

DO A LITTLE WRITING.

5. Take notes of the sermon, write out its plan, its heads, its most important thoughts. Every Christian audience is a kind of class in religious instruction, and every preacher or lecturer, and every student, knows that the note-book is one of the most important helps in the lecture-room. We recently saw a note-book of sermons preached years ago, and taken by a then young girl. It made sermon-hearing a new thing to her. It fixed her mind upon the truth, it helped her to remember the truth, and it became a source of delight in after years.

LIVE IT OUT.

Lastly. Take at least one thought of the sermon, and try to live it out for one day. Practice it. Reproduce it in your life, and that attempt will magnify the sermon - for it must be a very poor sermon which has not at least one good suggestion.

It has been said that "a sermon is never done until it is lived by those who heard it," as the life of a seed is not finished till it is reproduced by the soil which has received it. We know not how like a grain of mustard seed one thought is, till we let it into our souls and feel its influence on our lives. Remember we never know when a truth will find its way into our hearts unless we listen; and, as we listen, all unexpected, some common truth will lodge in our minds. Therefore always look at the preacher, for a respectful hearer helps the preacher and helps himself. With a receptive, seeking, thinking, confessing, recording, and practising soul, the commonest sermon becomes very uncommon in its results.—C. E. World.

A lady belonging to the Society of Friends suggests the following cosmetic: For the lips, truth; for the voice, prayer; for the eyes, pity; for the hands, charity; for the figure, uprightness, and for the heart, love. Zion's Watchman.

The Life of a Happy Man.

The following unique and glorious testimony came from one who passed on over fifty years ago in England. Its date is 1832. He who spoke it was the grandfather of a young man now among the earnest preachers of the Gospel in Chicago. The author made this his living testimony, also his dying tribute to the power and glory of divine grace:

"The Happy Man was born in the City of Regeneration, in the Parish of Repentance unto Life; was educated at the School of Obedience, and now lives in the Plains of Perseverance. He works at the trade of Diligence, notwithstanding he has a large estate in the County of Christian Contentment, and is many times profited by self-denial. He wears the plain garment of Humility, and has a better suit to put on when he goes to court, called the Robe of Christ's Righteousness. He often walks in the Valley of Self-Abasement, and sometimes climbs the Mountains of Spiritual-Mindedness. He breakfasts every morning on Spiritual Prayer, and sups every evening on the same. He has meat to eat which the world knows not of, and his drink is the sincere milk of the Word. Thus, happy he lives and happy he dies. Happy is he who has Gospel Submission in his will, Due Ardor in his affections, Sweet Peace in his conscience, Sanctifying Grace in his soul, Real Charity in his breast, True Humility in his heart, the Redeemer's Yoke on his neck, a Vain World under his feet, and a Crown of Glory on his head. Happy is the life of such a man. In order to enjoy such a life pray fervently, believe firmly, work abundantly, live holy, die daily, watch your heart, guard your temper, redeem your time, love Christ, and long for glory,"—Epworth Herald.

Our Help in Trouble

BY REV. MARK GUY PEARSE.

What springs of precious consolation lie in these words! That saying is true, "Troubles never come singly," Every trouble brings God with it; as of old, when men believed that where the poison grew there grew its antidote beside it, ever ready with its healing. When we can go on our ways, He gives His angels charge concerning us—just as the mother bids the nurse-maid take care of the little one; to keep it out of winds and find the sunny path and to avoid the perils of the crowded street. But to-night the cheek is flushed, the head drops, and the eyes are heavy; and now the little one can find no rest but in the mother's arms, and the only soothing is in the sound of her voice and the touch of her gentle hand — "I will be with the little one to-night,' says the mother—even so tender and pitiful is our God. "I will be with him in trouble." The angels may protect and minister in a thousand gracious ways; but trouble makes us so sacred that God Himself comes then to soothe and cheer us.

Do Something For the Truth.

You cannot set the world right, or the times, but you can do something for the truth; and all you can do will certainly tell if the work you do is for the Master, who gives you your share, and so the burden of responsibility is lifted off.

Go to the man who is carving a stone for a building, ask him where that stone is going, to what part of the temple, and how he is going to get it into place, and what does he do? He points you to the builder's plan. This is one stone of many. So when men shall ask where and how is your little achievement going into God's plan, point them to your Master, who keeps the plans, and then go on doing your little service as faithfully as if the whole temple were yours to build. Phillips Brooks.

"Whiskey, you re the devil!" says the Irishman, who nevertheless employs it to cast out the uglier devil, a cough or cold; how much more sensible to employ Allamon's Botanic Cough Balsam, which never fails. 25c. all Druggists.

Totally Deaf.—Mr. S E Crandell, Port Perry, writes: 'I contracted a severe cold last winter, which resulted in my becoming totally deaf in one ear and partially so in the other. After trying various remedies and consulting several doctors, without obtaining any relief, I was advised to try Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil. I warmed the Oil and poured a little of it into my ear, and before one-half the bottle was used my hearing was completely restored. I have heard of other cases of deafness being cured by the use of this medicine.

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Mr. J. Evanson, the well-known pa and decorator, 50 Oxford St., Tor Ont., said: About eight weeks ago taken with an excruciating pain in my over the kidneys. It was so bad tha wife had to apply hot cloths till the do came and gave me morphine.
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