

THE SIMPLE DESIRE.

O Master, let me walk with Thee,
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, let me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me Thy patience, still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way,
In peace, that only Thou canst give,
With Thee, O Master, let me live.
—Washington Gladden.



"WE KNOW IN PART."

Dr. James McCosh is said to have begun a sermon on the text, "We know in part," by saying, "Yes, but, thank God, we know!" It is something to emphasize — "we know!" It gives Christians a foundation on which to build.

It is a pitiful thing not to know — to be driven hither and thither, like a rudderless ship, by every new opinion, or, like others, to simply give the whole thing up, and say that we cannot know that we know anything! Some philosophers will tell us that we cannot be sure even of the existence of a material world, or that we hear and see what others hear and see. We laugh at them and take the evidence of our senses as the answer to their quibble. The overwhelming weight of evidence makes us say "we know," and we act in the full confidence of our knowledge. Yet we recognize that we know only in part, and that there is a vast realm of knowledge which we can never hope to penetrate.

There is a story told of Henry Ward Beecher's boyhood, that one day, when at the blackboard in the school, the teacher stopped him with a thundered "No!" He sat down, another boy worked the same problem. Again the "No!" But the boy worked on, and proved that he was correct. Young Beecher protested that he, too, had been correct, but the answer he received proved a lesson for his life. "Young man, it is not enough to know how to do a thing, you must know that you know, and insist on it in spite of everything." The lesson was learned, and after that the teacher could shout his most emphatic "No!" without his yielding, if he "knew that he knew."

"Now we know in part." Thank God that we "know." Our Lord has not left himself without a witness, and in his dealings with a world we may not know all the workings of Providence, or understand all that we would like to; but we have a certain starting-point: we know whom we have believed. We know the promises of God. We know the facts of sin and the need of salvation. We know the elemental truths with a certainty as great as that with which we know the facts of nature, and knowledge brings its duty and responsibility. "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them."

What if a great "No!" sounds, like the boy Beecher, we can stand firm in the knowledge that we are right, and then work out our problem in this life of ours to the end on the lines that our Master has taught!

"We know in part," and day by day

we are being led to further and further knowledge, as we are able to bear it; to greater and greater certitude of faith, until at last, in the great beyond, we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Then the great mysteries of the present shall be revealed. Then the things which perplex us now will be plain as the problems that seemed difficult to reconcile with the love and mercy of our God will be plain and clear in the light of that full knowledge.

"I know!" That is the Christian's watchword! A partial knowledge, to be sure, but a knowledge clear and definite — a knowledge which shall not only be a foundation on which to build, but a motive power in life, and which, based on God's own word of promise, shall enable us to go onward in perfect trust and love.—*Lutheran Observer.*



EXPOUNDING THE SCRIPTURES.

The Book of Nehemiah contains an account of a wonderful Bible reading. It was given by Ezra the scribe in the city of Jerusalem. Ezra stood on a pulpit above the people. On either hand were priests and Levites ready to assist him in the duties of the day. The remarkable thing about that Bible reading is this: "They read in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused the people to understand the reading." That was an expository discourse. This kind of preaching was particularly appropriate on that occasion. Ezra was confronted by an ignorant multitude. They had been so long in captivity beyond the Euphrates that they had not only forgotten the law of the Lord, but we have reason to believe they had forgotten in part their mother tongue. The sense was not clear, but the preachers took pains to make them understand. The Methodist Discipline tells ministers to "make out what they take in hand." If this counsel were carefully followed the Word of God would have a better chance.

All congregations are not so ignorant as the one that heard Ezra on that memorable day. The modern Christian preacher preaches to intelligent congregations as a rule. Among his hearers there are often found men and women who understand the Scriptures and might easily instruct the minister. But there are multitudes of men and women who have had a liberal education but know little about the Bible. There is need to expound the Scriptures in our day also.

"They read distinctly." What is the use of reading the Bible in such a way that those present can not understand what is read? A minister once preached a sermon in a prominent pulpit. He spoke for nearly an hour, and it is safe to say that not one-quarter of his congregation understood one-quarter of what he said. He had a good voice, and could easily have made all the people understand, but did not. He began almost every paragraph on a high key and uttered half a dozen words distinctly. Then his voice dropped into a loud whisper. Most of the time he seemed to be talking to himself. After the service one of the official members was asked if he had heard a good sermon. "No," he said, "I did not hear a sermon, I witnessed a pantomime."

Preaching should be so plain that all can hear and understand. It is the glory of Christianity to make things plain. The words of Jesus are read by intelligent men with unspeakable satisfaction, not only because he was a teacher who came from God, and spake the wonder-

ful things of God's kingdom, but also because he spake so plainly that children could understand what he said. Teachers of false religions take pains to cover up their meaning. A Mohammedan prophet once undertook to gather his people together and expound to them the Koran as Christian teachers expound the Bible; but when the authorities discovered what he was about they put a stop to it. They declared that such a proceeding would bring their religion into contempt. The Koran will not bear exposition before intelligent men. The strength of false religions lies in secrecy and darkness. Christianity brings things to light. It publishes its message from the pulpit and the housetop.

The Bible will bear exposition. It differs from all other books. It is a rare book that will bear reading more than once. But one may begin to read the Bible when he is a child, and continue to read it every day until he is old. If he should live to be fourscore years old, he will find the Word of God more sweet, more fresh, more interesting, more profitable at the last than at the first. Few books live more than twenty-five years. One can scarcely find a book a thousand years old, except hidden away in an old library as a specimen of dead literature and a relic of effete civilization. But the Bible is thousands of years old; yet it is as well suited to modern thought and modern life as it was to the ancients among whom it was written. The diligent student of the Bible may find exhaustless treasures of truth within its pages exactly suited to the people who come to hear him. Here is something for the old and something for the young, something for the learned and something for the unlearned, something for the rich and something for the poor, something for the saint and something for the sinner, something for those who weep in the valley of adversity and something for those who sing on the mountain top of prosperity. To one who takes a correct view of the work, expounding the Scriptures is a task of infinite satisfaction and profit.



"HAVE FAITH IN GOD."

Dean Farrar tells how an English clergyman visited two fine ships about to sail on their voyage of Arctic discovery into the land of snow and darkness. He found the brave captain full of confidence, and, raising his eyes in the cabin, he saw there, as almost its only ornament, an illuminated text, which read, "Have faith in God."

"Ah! there," he said, pointing to the text, "there is the true pole."

We like to think of those gallant men carrying with them into the cold and midnight that faith, that hope. It is a faith which will lighten their darkness more than the stars that glitter over the flocks of ice. It is a hope which will make the heavens glow with a more vivid splendor than the aurora which flushes the fields of snow.

Take with you that faith, that hope. You, too, may sail hereafter, in your little boat of life, into the cold, into the hunger, into the darkness, into the exploration of unknown hopes. Be sober, be vigilant. Have faith in God and in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and He will give you the victory.

We can not see what is beyond time and earth, but faith gives us confidence in the unseen.

Longfellow, with great insight and beauty, compares our earth life to a tarrying in the crypts of some vast ca-

thedral. We can hear the organ above us and the chanting of the choir. As some friend goes up before us we catch a gleam of light streaming through the door. Shall we be afraid when our turn comes to mount the dark, narrow stair case that leads us out of the crypts into the cathedral glory above?

A dying sailor was near his end. A mate said, "Well, how is it with you now?" The dying man replied, with a smile, "The anchor holds; the anchor holds!" God grant that every one of us may be able to say this.

Faith is the soul's anchor. But the anchor must have something solid on which to hold. Christ is the rock for this anchor. Faith can not of itself save us. The anchor can not hold the ship unless it is flung out. So faith must venture on Christ. We must be fixed in his strength.—*Christian Commonwealth.*



THE LOVE OF JESUS.

What is it in Jesus that so draws men; that wins their allegiance away from every other master; that makes them willing to leave all for his sake and follow him through peril and sacrifice, even to death? Is it his wonderful teaching? "Never man spake like this man." Is it his power as revealed in his miracles? Is it his sinlessness? The most malignant scrutiny could find no fault in him. Is it the perfect beauty of his character? None nor all of these will account for the wonderful attraction of Jesus. Love is the secret. He came into the world to reveal the love of God — He was the love of God in human flesh. His life was all love. In most wonderful ways during all his life did he reveal love. Men saw it in his face and heard it in his voice and felt it in his touch. This was the great fact which his disciples felt in his life. His friendship was unlike any friendship they had ever seen before, or even dreamed of. It was this that drew them to him and made them love him so deeply—so tenderly.

Nothing but love will kindle love. Power will not do it. Gifts will not do it. Men will take your gifts and then repay you with hatred. But love begets love; heart responds to heart. Jesus loved.—*Dolan.*



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