

Glorious and Awful.

REV. SMITH BAKER, D. D.

A few years ago in a journey through a down East wilderness, an old man sat in the next seat in front of us, intently reading a book. Soon he turned and addressed us by name. We assured him of our pleasure in meeting. He replied, "I am a tremendous poor preacher of a glorious Gospel," and added, "It is glorious but awful work." Those words have been ringing in the memory for more than twenty years, and we doubt if the old minister ever preached a sermon which made a deeper impression. "It is glorious but awful." The older we become the more eloquent and true they seem. We are sure the old man's words have helped one poor preacher to be more faithful in the pulpit. "Glorious but awful."

It is unspeakably glorious to be permitted to preach Christ at all, anywhere, to anybody. The privilege of preaching is the greatest honor in the world. The being set apart to tell the story of the cross and proclaiming Christ's dying, even to lost men, is enough to satisfy the ambition of an archangel. No congregation is so small or uncultivated as to be beneath the best effort of the greatest talents. Our Lord preached one of His most profound, spiritual and beautiful sermons to one poor woman at a wellside. No place is beneath any gospel preacher.

When a young man thinks there is no opportunity for his ability and culture in the gospel ministry, then it is a blessing to the church for him to stay out of it; such a man, no matter how great his attainments, is not fit to preach Christ. When salary or size of the church has anything to do with a man's entering the ministry, he has not received the vision of a gospel preacher.

Some of us, many, many years ago, felt if we could only be permitted to preach Christ somewhere in a little red school house, at the four corners in the wilderness, that would be glory enough; and we have found it so, yea, the half did not come to our then dim vision, it has grown more glorious for half a century. The being permitted to tell the story of the cross has been an increasing song in the soul. God pity the man with spiritual life so low and cold, that to preach is a mere duty, a drudgery, without the thrill and intoxication of a delight.

The privilege of being the messenger of Christ to other hearts rises above all other opportunities given to men. It is glorious. The ministry has some hard things, some trials, some burdens! Yes, but what of it? Does not a mother have burdens and disagreeable things? The privilege of motherhood covers them all up. She is glad to work and do hard things for the child God has given her. The call to motherhood is a privilege before which poverty and hard work and sacrifice dwindle into little things. Thus the call of God to the privilege of preaching the gospel, lifts a man above such little things as poverty or position, and turns sacrifice into joy; yea, rather makes it a sacrifice not to preach. No man makes a sacrifice in entering the ministry when called of God; he makes a sacrifice not to.

How much sacrifice did St. Paul make? or Cary or Mills, or Marks or Jonathan Sewall, or thousands or other home and foreign missionaries who have counted it all joy to spend and be spent for Christ?

We never are more indignant than when we read in some paper or hear men in a religious gathering write and talk about a man's sacrificing to enter the ministry, and what hard times ministers have. Every young man should be congratulated when God and the church give him the privilege of preaching. It is glorious; glorious in the sweet joy it brings to the heart, in the fellowship it brings to the life and in the rewards it secures at last.

The older we become the more the other part of the old minister's words ring in the heart: "It is glorious and awful." It is gloriously awful and awfully glorious. Not awful in the sense that some great catastrophe is awful, but awful in the unknown, immeasurable and fearful possibilities connected with it. Preaching is a savor of life unto life to some and of death unto death to others.

No minister ever knows how much he is doing with the poorest sermon, before

the smallest congregation. The pulpit is the last place in the world for tameness, for glittering generalities, for doubts, for merely fine rhetoric, for the display of original ideas, for little questions about ethics, or for talking merely about human relations. It is a serious place, an awful place in its possibilities.

Some man is there struggling with a burning, physical temptation, some woman is there with her heart bleeding with sorrow, some person is there full of mental doubts, some one is seeking the higher spiritual assurance, some one is burdened with business perplexity, some young person is almost persuaded to commence the Christian life, souls are there with social and spiritual perplexities, some have come for spiritual food, some are there for the first time, others are there for the last time; the Spirit of God is striving with some heart. The destinies, not out of this life but out of the life to come, may be decided in at least one soul by what the preacher says and how he says it.

It is awful. The preacher knows nothing about the results of his sermon; It is possible that the future course of the most unlikely hearer may be decided by the most common words. No other place this side of the day of judgment is so awful as the gospel pulpit. No only awful on what men call great occasion, but awful on the most common occasion yea, every sermon is an awful opportunity because of the unknown possibilities connected with it. The preacher without spiritual earnestness, who makes his sermon only a bridge to span the Sunday with, whose soul is not oppressed as he enters the pulpit, with the awful and tremendous possibility and responsibility of preaching before half a dozen human souls, such a man is recreant in his heart to the call of God.

When the powers of an endless life take possession of the minister, then he preaches as a dying man to a dying man, and his soul is fixed with the glorious awfulness of the privilege of preaching.—Morning Star.

Scripture Illustrations.

REV. W. H. POOLE.

ROOM IN HEAVEN.

Rev. 21, 16, "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

There are some who never think of heaven. In their mind a thought of the better country would starve for very loneliness. Others think of it occasionally, when the voice of sweet music steals upon their ear, or Providence or the preacher lift them above earth. But when they do think of it, how poor and meagre their thoughts: to them it is a narrow circumscribed spot in the universe, a small place just large enough for their Church, but too small to admit within its pearly enclosure, even the good beyond their communion. Such are not the views entertained by John when, on the lonely Isle, he saw, in grand panoramic view, the heavenly city.

John was in the Spirit on the mountain of holy contemplation, and he had a delightful conversation with one of the royal surveyors of the heavenly country. He says, ver. 15, "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the walls thereof." The idea he gives us, is, that there was solidity, firmness, durability, and strength, all combined with indescribable beauty, surpassing grandeur and infinite glory.

The city, as he saw it, was in the form of a magnificent cube, of vast dimensions. The surveyor had the golden reed, and he measured the city in the presence of his visitor. It was 12,000 furlongs (stadia) long, and 12,000 furlongs broad and 12,000 furlongs high. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

Here is absolute uniformity, a thing long talked of and prayed for, but some thing not to be realized on this side the heavenly home.

In the cubic form the new Jerusalem recalled somewhat the form of the far-famed old Jerusalem, on its escarpment above the valley of the Kedron.

In this view of the great city we are quite in harmony with the rabbinical books. I need not occupy room with quotations,

In almost every other theory proposed great violence is done to the Greek text. In this interpretation the sense is natural and the grammatical construction respected.

We take the passage as it reads, "15,000 furlongs," which, when reduced to feet and cubed, is 948,938,000,000,000,000,000 cubic feet. The half of which we reserve for the throne of glory and the heavenly court. Half of the remainder I reserve for the angel's thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. Half of the remainder I reserve for celestial gardens of heavenly fruits and flowers. Half of the remainder for shady bowers and lovely parks. Half of the remainder for the golden streets and walks, and the remainder, or one thirty-second of the whole, I divide into rooms of twenty (20) feet square, and ten feet high, of rooms we have 7,413,579,125,000,000,000,000.

Then I suppose that this world was populated as at present with say 900,000,000 of human beings, and that three generations passed away every hundred years, that is allowing 33 1/3 years for each generation, and that at the close of the seventh thousandth year, the trumpeter of heaven would proclaim that "time would be no longer," and that earth's population would be all brought home to the city of God.

I also suppose that in the universe of our Father there are (800,000) eight hundred thousand worlds like ours existing under the same circumstances, and for the same term of years as ours; each having the same number of inhabitants as our own, and each inhabitant obedient to the universal "come."

Take all these multitudes of human or created beings, and the heavenly home and the angel measured for John and for us, dear reader, would afford (49) forty-nine such rooms as are measured above for each inhabitant of all the 800,000 worlds, and leave more than four millions of cubic feet yet unsurveyed. "And yet there is room." Oh, how true it is that in my father's house there are many mansions.

A Sinner Freed

A German prince traveling through France, visited the arsenal of Toulon, where the galleys are kept. The commandant as a compliment to his rank, said he was welcome to set any of the prisoners free, whom he should choose to select. The prince, willing to make the best use of this privilege, spoke to many of the prisoners in succession, enquiring why they were condemned to the galleys. Injustice, false accusation, oppression were the only causes they could assign. They had been ill-treated and were all innocent.

At last he came to one who, when asked the same question, answered: "My lord, I have no reason to complain; I have been a very wicked, desperate wretch. I have often deserved to be broken alive on the wheel. I account it a very great mercy I am here."

The prince fixed his eyes upon him, gave him a gentle blow upon the head and said, "You wicked wretch! It is a pity that you should be placed among so many honest men; by your own confession you are bad enough to corrupt all of them, but you shall not stay with them another day." Then, turning to the officer, he said, "This is the man, sir, I wish to see released."

Let us take this story to our hearts! All of the prisoners were offenders, all equally guilty, but only one owned and confessed it, and he was set free. So our gracious God deals with us sinners. If we confess that we are sinners, then we can claim the sinner's Saviour, as our Saviour, and his blood is sufficient for wicked wretches.—Sel.

Boldness.

"Let us have boldness to enter into the holies by the blood." A winning characteristic of these Apostles was their boldness. They were not overbearing or rash, nor did they lack modesty; but they were bold, in a Scriptural sense, and God gave them the full benefits of His grace as an immediate reward.—Selected.

Suppose every intelligent being on earth lived by the golden rule. Stop and think a moment what would be the result!—Sel.

Policeman and Lady

REV. A. MCLEAN.

A Christian lady from the country was standing on Broadway at one of the crossings, waiting to pass over. The broad thoroughfare was, as usual, thronged with carriages rapidly rolling along right and left, making it dangerous for a footman to attempt to proceed. For a long time she waited, yet dared not venture to cross, lest she should be thrown down. Looking over to the opposite side of the street, she saw a policeman standing and beckoning with his finger for her to come to him. He was one of the "Broadway squad," on special duty to protect all footmen, possessed of absolute authority over all vehicles to halt at his command whenever and whatever he would.

The lady being assured by his uniform and beckoning finger, that his authority was her protection, stepped unhesitatingly down from the sidewalk among the fiery horses. Instantly every rein was drawn up, the rolling carriages stood still, and she walked over, passing through them as safely as if on her parlor floor.

The way to Jesus seems to many beset with difficulties insurmountable. They stand at life's crossings earnestly desiring to go over, but through unbelief, afraid of the horses, they wait, hoping for a more convenient season, when this evil and the other cross shall be taken out of the way, and then they will pass pleasantly over to him. But troubles roll along and never cease. On the other side Jesus stands, having "all power in heaven and in earth," and gently beckoning, "nor lifting up his voice in the streets." He softly says, "Come unto me." Step down from off the curb of unbelief, looking unto him nor fearing in thy heart, and at once all earth and hell is "reined up short," to make thee a safe passage through.—Guide to Holiness, 1968.

Couldn't Look Father in the Eyes.

Disobedience to parents is the first step in the downward path. A circus was in the town and a little boy stood watching the great tent curiously. A neighbor, coming up, said, "Hello, Johnny; going to the circus?"

"No, sir," answered Johnny, "father don't like 'em."

"Oh, well, I'll give you the money to go," said the man.

"Father don't approve them."

"Well, go in for once. I'll pay for you."

"No, sir; my father would give me the money if he thought it best; besides, I've got twenty-five cents in my box, enough to go."

"I'd go, Johnny, for once; it's wonderful the way horses do," said the man. "Your father needn't know it."

"I can't," said the boy.

"Now, why?" asked the man.

"Cause," said Johnny, "after I'd been there I couldn't look father in the eyes, but I can now."

The boy who will never do anything that will prevent him looking straight into Father's eyes will never be a rebel.—Selected.

Making a Man

Hurry the baby as fast as you can,

Hurry him, worry him, make him a man.

Off with his baby clothes, get him in pants,

Feed him on brain foods and make him advance.

Hustle him, as soon as he's able to walk

Into a grammar school, cram him with talk.

Fill his poor little head full of figures and facts,

Keep on a-jamming them in till it cracks.

Once boys grew up at a rational rate,

Now we develop a man while you wait.

Rush him through college, compel him to grab

Of every known subject a dip and a dab.

Get him in business and after the cash,

All by the time he can grow a mustache.

Let him forget he was ever a boy,

Make gold his god and and its jingle his joy.

Keep him a-hustling and clear out of

breath,

Until he wins—nervous prostration and

death.

—NIXON WATERMAN.

Unholy tempers are always un-

happy tempers.—J. Wesley.

Five Cent Schools of Crime.

Chicago has a new "attraction"—five cent theatres have been opened here and there throughout the city to which men, women and children are alike invited. Moving pictures representing train robberies, lynchings, safe-blowing, and a host of "shows" less hideous, perhaps but all vulgar and demoralizing, are served up for the amusement of any who have a nickel and an idle hour. A large percentage of American boys and girls go and come between home and school with no guardianship save the general and not always heeded injunction. "Be sure to come straight home." Generous parental love (!) keeps the juvenile purse in nickels. The lads and lassies run in "gangs," "sets" and "crowds." The five cent theatre lies in wait. The leader of the "crowd" leads to the theatre. Natural modesty receives its first shock. Crime is made "interesting," "romantic," "exciting"—everything but criminal. Deformities of the human frame are made laughable. Age is represented as a target for youthful scorn and laughter. Parents wonder "what has come over" John and Mary, they are "so different." They have been at school.

Eternal parental vigilance is the price of unsullied womanhood and manhood.—Union Signal.

The Spirit Level to Live By.

A little boy saw his father using a spirit level to see if the board he was planing was "true" and straight.

"What's the use of being so careful, papa?" he asked. "It is pretty good, I guess. It looks so."

"Guessing won't do in carpenter work," said the father, "sighting" along the edge of the board and shaving it the least bit in the world. "You have to be just right. Folks guess at too many things. God doesn't like that way of living."

"I guess there ain't any spirit levels for living by!" laughed the little boy, watching him.

"Yes there are," said the father, earnestly. "You will find them in the Bible. Try all your actions by that. Mark them true, straight, and no guess work in them."—Michigan Advocate.

The Issue Paramount.

When Stanley found Livingstone in the heart of Africa, he begged the old hero to go home. There seemed to be every reason why he should go back to England. His wife was dead, his children lived in England, the weight of years was pressing upon him, the shortest march wearied him, he was often compelled to halt many days to recover strength after his frequent attacks of prostrating illness. Moreover, he was destitute of men and means to enable him to make practical progress. But, like Paul, none of these things moved him, nor counted he his life dear to himself. "No, no," he said to Stanley; "to be knighted, as you say, by the Queen, welcomed by thousands of admirers, yes—but impossible. It must not, cannot, will not be. I must finish my task."—Selected.

Cheerful Thoughts.

Boys keep the mind filled with cheerful thoughts. Dwell on achievements, success, advancement. Some one has told the story of a young writer who had in a short time won favorable notice. He was working buoyantly, his brain teeming with ideas to be used in future work, when some one said to him, "Aren't you afraid of writing yourself out?" The suggestion lingered in his mind. He began to look ahead anxiously. His ideas deserted him. The quality of his work fell off. In short, he made a failure as a writer because he began to apprehend failure instead of success. Avoid his mistake.

"It doesn't cost much to remember the poor, but if you want the poor to remember you, it will cost you something every time."