Spiritual Life.

BY REV. J. E. CHAMBLISS, D. D.

If we are saved people, if we are Christ's, children of God, we are "new creatures." As unsaved, apart from Christ, alienated from God, in our oldness, we were "carnal," affections, imaginations, aspirations, will, conscience,—all, taking character from the flesh. We followed our senses. Even the higher that was in us, lingering hints of primeval glory, blinded, deadened, enslaved, did degrading service grinding in this mill, and loved the bondage well. "Being after the flesh, we did mind the things of the flesh."

As saved people, in our newness, we are no longer sensual but spiritual. Our being, life, character, energies, complexions, affinities, aims, destinies, all spring from the Holy Spirit. We tell our experiences in the words, "God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and made us sit together with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The philosophy of our being is stated by the Apostle, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me," and out of a full consciousness of higher life we exclaim with a later saint of God, "It is not I, it is not I, it is another."

There is a carnal life, and there is a spiritual life. A carnal life! Oh! fatal, sad truth. All things attest it. All history proclaims there is a carnal life, and our own consciences cry with wailing emphasis, "There is a carnal life."

There is a spiritual life. All about us, what strange, new beauties, mysterious, heavenly, are seen, suddenly clothing characters long deformed and hideous. What glorious transmutations of grace gem all the ages! lights of God contrasting the sensual gloom. But, does my personal consciousness say "there is a spiritual life?" It is a vital question.

That is a most marvelous, an almost divine distinction, that somewhat in us which seems to dispense with thinking, with every process of reasoning, which out-rubs all our faculties, and reaches the certainty of self-existence by simple sense of being. And does it belong to the carnal to say I am, and is not the spiritual life a conscious life? What is that testimony of the Spirit "bearing witness with our spirit" but the inspired response of the saved soul to those words of Christ, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

The old carnal suffering to the earthy—insensitive to all sublimer as to the spiritual, the heavenly, but an unvital mass: touched, penetrated by the Holy Spirit, turns spiritual. These come to be Holy Spirit sensibilities, affinities, graces, powers. An easy fellowship with the unseen, a felt freedom from the dominion of passion, an experience that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." There is clearness and unspeakable blessedness in the words, "As many as have received the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Spiritual life is the true distinctive life of God's children and we must spell Spiritual with a large S. It is the word which classifies us. It tells our origin, nature, mission, destiny; the very breathings of our souls are in it, our holiest ties and titles. The springs of purity and strength and skill and knowledge and power are in it. How essential that spiritual life be deep and full and free and strong and abiding, that we "have life and have it more abundantly."

Entire Sanctification.

The *Western Recorder* makes the following trenchant and truthful remarks on a delusion all too prevalent, although not very popular, in our provinces. We commend them to the careful thought of our readers:

A brother writes asking whether we would advise making a deacon of a man who professed entire sanctification. We certainly would not. Such people are to be born with, within proper limits, like other delinquents, with Christian forbearance, but they should not be put in positions of trust. A church can tolerate what it cannot be responsible for. In electing a man to the office of deacon a church puts him forwards as a representative man, and becomes responsible for him to the public. Even if entire sanctification be possible in this life, which we do not believe, it is certain that no man who professes to be sanctified is really so. The very fact that he makes the profession is proof positive of the falsity of the claim. The man who talks about how good he is, is never a true saint. The more pious a man is the less he boasts of his sanctification. Light does not make any hurrah about its brightness, it simply shines and all can see how bright it is.

Early in his Christian life the Apostle Paul spoke of himself as "not meet to be called an apostle." After he had labored abundantly for God, and had grown in grace, he called himself "the least of all saints." And when near the end of his godly life, having grown in grace, as perhaps no other man has ever done, before or since, then he calls himself the chief of sinners. His progress is marked by these expressions. While he was a Pharisee he professed sanctification, for he declared he was "a Pharisee of the Pharisees." When he became a Christian he felt himself "not meet to be called an apostle." He felt deeply unworthy of the high service to which God had called him. His sanctification pretensions all vanished on the road to Damascus. From that point he was led upward, till with spiritual vision cleared and horizon widened, he declared himself the least of all saints, the poorest Christian of them all. And at last, when ripe for heaven, he recognized himself as a sinner saved by grace, and rejoiced in that "faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and added with deepest emotion, "of whom I am chief." Not meet to be called an apostle, least of all saints, and chief of sinners—these are the three degrees of growth in grace.

No, brethren, if any of you are wholly sanctified, which we do not believe any of you are, do not tell it. People will find it out in due time. No man needs to tell his neighbors what a good man he is. If his sanctification is genuine, they will be certain to find it out, and the less profession he makes on the subject, the better. Our experience with professedly sanctified people is perhaps unfortunate. We do not assume to speak of those whom we do not know personally, but we can speak of those we have known. And we have known a good many people before and after they professed sanctification, and in every case their characters were injured by the process. They became sensitive, egotistic, unreasonable, selfish and domineering to an extent we would not in advance have believed possible. In our pastorates we have had a very few cases in the churches we served, and invariably the parties became practically worthless as church members so soon as they professed entire sanctification. Now it may be that our experience has been unfortunate, and that the cases with which we have come in contact are not fair specimens, but judging from what we have seen we can heartily pray—from persons who profess entire sanctification—good Lord, deliver us. We will add that we have known cases where people have been attacked with this spiritual malady who have recovered from it and have afterwards made useful Christians. So such people must not be abandoned as hopeless. Let them be labored with "in the spirit of meekness."

Dr. Fulton and his Work.

Our readers will be interested in the following article which we take from the *Canadian Baptist*, as very many of us have long been carefully following this worker with earnest prayer for his success:—

For inserting the kind words of Rev. Justin K. Richardson, pastor of the First Baptist Church at Brooklyn, permit me to thank you. Your intimation that sermons referring to Romanism were preached by me simply to attract a crowd is wrong in theory and in fact. Sermons referring to Romanism are preached by myself for three reasons, (1) to tell the truth regarding an error that confronts us, that interferes with our politics, our literature and our religion; an error that has taken root in every part of the world, and is deluding millions on millions of immortal souls, whelming them in ruin, and an error to which Protestants seem to be very largely color blind, and when uncovered and exposed it is then "consumed with the Spirit of His mouth and destroyed with the brightness of His coming." (2) These sermons not only expose Romanism but they lead Romanists to Christ. You, with me, feel that they who reject the doctrine of the New Birth need to be born again. When born again they pass out of Romanism into Christ, and become new creatures of God: old things are passed away, and with them, as with others, all things became new. (3) There is a third reason widely overlooked. In the States and Canada thousands are feeling that the church of Christ alone can deal with Romanism. Politics is timid and dare not tell the truth, and the whole truth. The child of God has nothing to fear. He grapples with error and throttles it, and is praised for so doing. Thousands gladly lend a hand in aiding on this work who may be indifferent to ordinary revival methods. General Sheridan once said, "*The only safe Indian is a dead Indian.*" Of a truth we may say that a Roman Catholic becomes an individual about whom we need have no concern when brought from the night of Rome into the light of this truth as it is in Jesus.

In Lowell, Mass., while preaching one evening, I noticed a man in tears. He had a large, fine head, and a noble look. At the close of the sermon I went to him and said, "Are you a lover of Christ?" "No, sir, I am an infidel. I have all of Tom Paine's and Robert Ingersoll's works, and am only here because I am interested in your attempt to overthrow the most gigantic enemy threatening the life of the Republic." I turned, went home in time, and tried to pray for him as an infidel. In vain, it was as dark as midnight. When I thought of him as a man who had once been a church member but was now trampling on the covenant of mercy I saw the light and knew that the man was deceived in regard to himself. The next afternoon I saw his wife in the inquiry room, and she came and asked prayers for her husband as an out-and-out infidel. I said "Your husband is not an infidel." "Why do you say that?" I told her, and we prayed for him as for one wandering from the fold. That night he was in the same place, weeping as before. I went to him again; once more he avowed his infidelity. I assured him that he was deceived; that the fact that he was against this error, the invention of Satan, proved that down in his heart he was on the side of God. "You have become offended with this church, of which you were a member, and have turned from her, but in your heart you love the Master, and are in antagonism with his enemy." "How do you know that?" "I learned it when I tried to pray for you as an infidel. It was dark as midnight, but when I prayed for you as a backslider, as one trampling on the covenant of mercy, I saw my way clear." Said he, "*You are right!*" For twenty years I was in the church, but when I saw them doing nothing more than managing socials and sewing societies, and afraid to antagonize errors hurting communities and destroying this government, I left the church. But when I saw you attacking this 'Mystery of Iniquity' I determined to bear a hand and do what I might to aid you." "Come in and say so in the second meeting." In he came, and broke down, and is now a mighty worker. Thousands are like him. Romanism is to this age of the church what Universalism and Antinomianism were in the days of Knapp and Finney. The people are ready to hear the truth concerning it, and to help oppose it whenever it is assailed in the spirit of Christ and with a sincere love for Romanists.

Thanking you for your kindness in printing the commendation of the *Watchman*, let me ask the insertion of this for the sake of the cause, and believe me your friend and brother in Christ, JUSTIN D. FULTON.

[The "intimation" to which Dr. Fulton takes exception was not ours, but that of the paragraph quoted, as any one may see by referring to it. The motive was not, however, ascribed to Dr. Fulton, but avowed by the pastor whose words were quoted.—*Ed. Canadian Baptist.*]

The Case Plainly and Honestly Stated.

In the *Christian Index* we find this quotation, in confirmation of the honest, and unassailable position the Baptists occupy on the right administration of the Lord's Supper:

Here are some weighty Presbyterian words for "the principles of restricted, as distinguished from latitudinarian, communion." The reader will see that many of them might well issue from Baptist lips. We give first several paragraphs by Rev. J. P. Lytle, D. D., of the United Presbyterian Church:

"The declaration of our Testimony that 'the church should not extend communion in sealing ordinances, to those who refuse adherence to her profession, or subjection to her government and discipline,' contains a principle agreeable to both Scripture and reason; and it applies to all organized bodies, whether ecclesiastical, civil, social, literary, or commercial. The peculiar privileges of an association belong to those who are its members and are subject to its laws.

"It may be observed that the principle of open communion is rather a theory than a practice. In those branches of the church which hold, and even boast of the principle, the practice is occasional and scant. Presbyterians do not, as a rule, commune with Methodists, nor Methodists with Presbyterians. And this is true of all other bodies holding this principle. Members of different congregations in the same denomination do not, as a rule, commune with each other. Our church hold in this matter what other churches practice. . . The conduct of these denominations toward each other strongly suggests that their opposition to our principle on the subject of communion arises mainly from that original trait of humanity which covets the forbidden. The barrier once removed the desire for communion ceases.

"Those who imagine that all difficulties and intricacies on this subject vanish when once the principle of open communion is admitted are greatly mistaken. When is open communion properly practiced? The advocates of the principle do not agree in its application. Some invite those who know themselves to be in good standing in other evangelical churches. It is not a violent presumpt on to suppose that all churches consider themselves evangelical. Others extend the invitation to all Christians. Others again, more liberal and charitable, urge all who have a desire to commemmorate the Lord's death, whether they have membership in any church or not, to come forward. And the sage remark is sometimes added, "This is not our table, but the Lord's table:" as if there were no distinction between the church and the world, and it had not been said, 'Give not that which is holy unto dogs.' A Methodist minister, after having given this broad invitation, was surprised, mortified and stunned to see the greatest loafer and dead-beat in town, and one who had basely swindled and vilely slandered himself, come forward with the members of the congregation. He reports that his views underwent a change.

"The practice of ministers or sessions devolving upon the individuals of promiscuous assembly the right to determine their own soundness in the faith and fitness for the Lord's table, is unscriptural and unreasonable, and tends to the destruction of that order, decency and purity which belong to the Lord's house. 'Let all things be done decently and in order."

The editor of the *United Presbyterian*, in publishing these views, gives them his approval, and says:

"Cases of intercommunion between different denominations, and even between different congregations of the same denomination, are comparatively rare, and when such cases arise, the session is the proper authority to deal with them. It is subversive of ecclesiastical order to leave such a matter to the sole decision of the person applying for the privilege. The invitation of open communion is an acknowledgment that church officers are useless ornaments, and that every man is the supreme law unto himself."

Something to be Guarded.

It is doubtless for some wise, though not always easily understood, purpose, that the best and brightest things in this world are made so delicate and frail. The rose petals are sometimes scattered by a zephyr; the hurricane leaves the thorns unharmed. The virgin white of the camelia is hopelessly blackened by a touch, while the sunflower is indifferent to the sun and rain alike, and wears its brazen crown in lofty defiance, though the storm buffet by day, and the birds of heaven make it their roost by night.

Ministerial reputation is one of those "bright, particular" flowers that may be ruined by a breath. Unfortunately, too, in almost every community there are lips that are ever ready to utter that breath. It may be envy, it may be sheer malice, and all uncharitableness; it may be only a prurient spirit of half-malicious gossip that is at the bottom of the mischief. Very few ministers of a positive character ever yet lived, who did not sometimes find themselves dangerously near the smouldering fire of this conflagration of evil. Providence may mercifully avert or check its disastrous spread, and yet some little error of judgment, or unwise utterance, or misinterpreted act, may prove to be the "little fire" which lying or uncharitable lips shall kindle into a most destructive and all-devouring blaze.

Ministers are required to have "a good report of them that are without," and, in a general sense, the apostolic requirement comes not only with the force of a divine command, but it commends itself to the good judgment of all as a wise and necessary provision for the purity and progress of Christianity. Still, it is an injunction with some very obvious limitations.

By "them which are without" cannot be intended those who make a business of slandering and traducing the ministry. Those whose lives or principles are so hostile to Christianity that they rejoice in evil, and take pleasure in dragging down others to the same level with themselves can hardly be considered competent judges, much less custodians of ministerial reputation. They are "without," but altogether too far "without" to be entrusted with the "good report" which every preacher of the gospel should strive diligently to possess.

Undoubtedly, the apostolic injunction is to the general and more or less diffused reputation which every active minister possesses among those who may be supposed to be friendly, or at least impartial judges. Happily, in most cases, the general sense of justice that pervades every Christian community, is a safeguard around every faithful minister, that protects from the attacks of malice and slander.

And yet, for all this, the world has only too many sad illustrations of the exceeding delicacy of ministerial reputation, and the readiness with which it may be tarnished or ruined, by a single error or mistake. A lawyer may do a thousand things of doubtful honesty, or wisdom, without affecting disastrously his reputation. The tradesman may cheat in his goods, the farmer may make "sharp bargains," which is usually a mild name for dishonesty; the mechanics slight this job and botch that, and yet by no means ruin, or in all cases, injure their business prospects. Church members may be, and in point of fact, are guilty of these things, and still retain their membership. Even if it comes to the worst, and a man's reputation becomes so bad "with them that are without," that the church refuses longer to recognize or fellowship with him, still he is not utterly ruined. He can earn a living still. He is not entirely, like the minister of the gospel, at the mercy of public opinion.

The position of the minister before the community is, in every sense, more dependent. His investment—aside from the grace of God in his heart, the talents God has given him, and the learning and skill he has been able to acquire—is all in reputation.

More than any other person, he is in the hands of the community, especially of those of his friends who are usually able to make of him much or little, or nothing, as they may elect. To reduce him to zero, they do not need to make great exertion—a word, a look, an ominous silence at the right moment, or a sly innuendo, gives the fatal stab to reputation. He may protest and deny, but in vain. He is dead to that people, and has nothing more to do but to pack up and be off for parts unknown. Even then the slander may travel in advance of him, and be ready to stab him in the face the moment he arrives on the spot.

A thing that is so valuable and sensitive to the slightest injury, should certainly be guarded by both preacher and people, with the most zealous watchfulness and care. It is a sacred trust, which it concerns all good and true men to keep, and to help others to keep. No church can afford to be indifferent to the reputation of its pastor. The family relation does not more distinctly require that every child should speak well of its father, than that the church requires that every member should speak well of, and sustain, the reputation of its faithful pastor. This involves neither a failure of candid criticism, nor a suspension of honest judgment. But it does require a loving loyalty to the cause of Christ, and to those who are under God, its representatives; and it frowns with absolute interdiction upon that mean spirit of idle gossip which makes free with the most sacred thing that a minister can possess, and is ready to magnify every fault, or foible, of these "earthen vessels" into important flaws, or dangerous moral defects.—*Christian Index.*

Wise Words.

In an admirable article in the *Homiletic* upon Mr. McNeill, a pastor in London who is called the Presbyterian Spurgeon. Dr. A. T. Pierson, speaks these wise words. Alas! that they should be needed! Thank God, we have thousands of churches in which they are not:

"His versatile humor is no doubt a temptation. We say his humor must be a constant temptation, for he sees through a droll eye. He is exceedingly alive to the ludicrous aspect of affairs, and his own cheery nature invests every object with a smile. He must feel a promptness to present the comical, or at least the humorous side to his auditors, especially as he cannot but be sensible that such address is very "taking" with the public, and especially invites the notice of the press.

"Were we to advise Mr. McNeill we should caution him along this very line. When that remarkable Swede, Dr. Waldenstrom, who is not only a professor of theology, a member of Parliament, but perhaps the most successful preacher of Europe, was lying very ill in Chicago, he sent for Mr. D. L. Moody, and tenderly besought him not to make people laugh when preaching, or to countenance it in others; for, said he, solemnly, "I have observed that this is the time which the devil takes to *catch away the seed that was sown in the heart.*" Quite sure we are that not a few sacrifice spiritual power and effectiveness by yielding to the temptation to indulge in humor and wit. There is a sobriety, not to say solemnity, which is inseparable from the highest and most permanent impression. The line between the humorous and the frivolous is a very faint line, and easily crossed; and frivolity does not consist with the themes of the pulpit and the cure of souls. To deal with men touching the very foundations of character and the issues of eternity, is no light matter. How can an auditor feel that a speaker is in dead earnest who, in preaching the Gospel of salvation, provokes laughter and tickles the sense of the ludicrous? A solemn seriousness characterized the greatest preachers and soul-winners of history, and that is a degenerate age of the pulpit, when there is a growing tendency to turn the sacred calling into a mere source of popular entertainment; and when the minister of Christ descends to a mimic, a comedian, a clown or a buffoon for the sake of pleasing men.—*Exchange.*

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— The editor who gave up his seat to a lady in the street-car, and went out and stood on the rear platform, said he was crowded out to make room for more interesting matter.

Nominal Christians and Mission Work.

It is not easy for a barbarous or semi-civilized people to distinguish between nominal and real Christians. Not unnaturally they conclude that every white man is a Christian. The result is that the vices of traders, the tyrannies of European officials, all the varied misdeeds and short-comings of the so-called pioneers of civilization are put down to the discredit of the Christian religion. Few facts are more surely established than the fact that the murder of missionaries has been dictated by revenge for evils suffered at the hands of white men, and should, therefore, be considered as "reprisals." Our pride as Englishmen is shocked by the estimate which many foreigners have formed of us, and we resent the Chinese synonym of "foreign devils." A striking passage in a speech by Dr. Wayland, of Philadelphia, has suggested these remarks. The editor of the *National Baptist*, in pleading for the evangelization of the 100,000 Chinese in the United States, said: "When I think how Christianity has been represented to China by the cannon of Great Britain battering down the walls which pagan China had erected against the opium plague, and by the aggressions of France, oldest daughter of the church, and by the ruffians and murderers of the Pacific Coast, I stand in wonder that any Chinaman has accepted Christianity as coming from the just and good God. That any of them have become Christians is itself a testimony, on the one hand, to the candour and impartiality of the Chinese, and, on the other hand, to the power and majesty and self-commendation of Christ's religion, shining through the sins and madness of its professors." Let prayer be made continually that Christian people may be just in their treatment of heathen nations, that white men may be righteous in all their dealings with and relations to pagans and idolators, for then the Word of the Lord would have free course among the heathen, and the conduct of nominal Christians would testify to the reality of the religion of Christ. The conversion of the men who come into contact with the heathen would hasten the conversion of the world to their Saviour and Lord. —*Freeman.*

— We do not praise God enough. Listen to the sermons and prayers we hear, and how little praise to God is in them; how little holding up God's character and attributes, that the people may rejoice in Him. And even in the hymns we sing where the root idea is praise, how little of real praise to God can be found. Many of our hymns are rhymed exhortations to sinners to repent or to Christians to be comforted, and many of the best are simply prayers to God.

It is right to sing exhortations to sinners to "Come to Jesus just now," right to sing to Christians, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus," and right to sing a poetical prayer, "More love to Thee, O Christ," if we sing with the spirit and the understanding, really meaning what we say, instead of simply following the tune with our lips while our hearts do not join in the sentiments uttered. But this should not be allowed to take the place of praise to God. It must be admitted that we greatly neglect to praise God even when we gather to worship.

There is a tendency in our recent hymnology to address our hymns to man rather than to God. Some recent hymns are very beautiful and powerful as exhortations, and taken with them and forgetting that the fundamental idea of a hymn is praise to God, we are filling our hymn books with "gospel songs," and leaving out the grand old hymns of praise to God. It is true that in many of the best hymns praise and prayer are combined, as in "Come thou fount of every blessing," and this is well. So it is well to blend praise and exhortation as in "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." But let there be praise in the hymn.

Let us praise God more; praise Him in public worship; praise Him when He crowns us with loving kindness and tender mercies; praise Him in the night of pain as well as in the morning of gladness; praise Him for what He is, glorious in holiness; praise Him for what He has done for us, and most of all for the great love wherewith He has loved us.

"O praise the Lord all ye nations; praise Him all ye people. For His merciful kindness is great toward us; and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord."—*Western Recorder.*

— WHY NOT AN INFIDEL?—"I once met a thoughtful scholar," said Bishop Whipple, "who told me he had read every book he could which assailed the religion of Jesus Christ, and he said he should have become an infidel but for three things: First, I am a man. I am going somewhere. To-night I am a day nearer to the grave than I was last night. I have read all such books can tell me. They shed not one solitary ray of hope or light upon the darkness. They shall not take away the guide and leave me stone-blind. Second, I had a mother. I saw her go down into the dark valley where I am going, and she leaned on an unseen arm as calmly as a child goes to sleep on its mother's breast. I knew that was not a dream. Third, I have three motherless daughters. They have no protection but myself. I would rather kill them than leave them in this sinful world, if you blot out from it all teachings of the gospel."

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