Notes of a Sermon Preached at the Dedication of the First Baptist Church, Yarmouth, June 7, 1896.

BY REV. JOHN CHIPMAN MORSE, D. D.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I claim your patience and prayers while I proceed to address a few words to you on this very interesting and solemn occasion.

Perhaps I may just say a little before calling your minds to a portion of God's word that may be regarded as a bit of history. One hundred and forty years ago my grandfather, Handly Chipman, was born in the State of Rhode Island. His boyhood days were spent in Kings County, and while there, in his youth, he was saved by the grace of God, after having awakened to a sense of his sin and guilt through the preaching of the Rev. Henry Allen. That man was present with the venerable Harris Harding when he was about 35 years of age, in 1791, and started this church from which, after a few years, was established the regular Baptist church. It was in the first, I believe, mixed communion. I am the youngest son of his eldest daughter whose maiden name was Jane Chipman; and so, by the grace of God, after more than 77 years, I am here, two links, you will see, in the chain dating back to 140 years ago.

The word of the Lord to which I now purpose calling your attention for a little while is recorded in the Epistle to the Ephesians; you will find it in the 22nd verse of the 2nd chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians: "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

I felt some little uneasiness this morning as my esteemed brother, the Doctor, was addressing you, for he was going very close upon a few thoughts which I had arranged in my own mind and purposed speaking upon and presenting for your consideration, and, I humbly trust your acceptance. He spoke of the dear Builder, the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is therefore not necessary that I should say anything with reference to him, except not to forget my Lord who died upon the tree of the cross. I know that I have loved my Lord and Saviour but not enough; I never loved him in any measure as I should until he poured his love into my heart by his Holy Spirit.

I want for a little to institute an enquiry respecting the *materials*; where the materials were prepared out of which this building spoken of was, or is, constructed. Were they some fine specimen of God's intelligence called Man and Woman with which our earth is now teeming; or that were found in the times in which the Apostle wrote these words? Were they from the rank of respected sinners? Of men of strict morality? Are they now obtained from that class? Did God select the noble, the mighty, the wise, the learned, the best that were to be found among the sons and daughters of men? No! from the Apostle's teachings we find that it was not among this class but among the sinners; and there is no respected sinner. This is what Christ said of sinners, and yet the church, or houses are being built by the sinner, and they are taken from the mass; from the race that has fallen; from the race that is despised; from the family that is condemned; from the rebels of God; from the violators of his Holy Law; from those in whose bosom is hatred, and who will not conform to him in any manner; who have no love for him in their hearts, and no faith in his Son.

Let us consider the *workmanship*. There must have been on the mind of this great Architect at that time what would seem to us to be a mass of confusion, but out of which the beautiful earth and the stars and everything that you see so grand and good has been made. You read the chapter where in the text is written and you see that there is a preparation indicated in those words; that while this Christ is represented as a builder of that house, he selects and prepares the materials that are used in the building first spoken of. And I wish just to ask of you: Are those whom he is to elect to erect this beautiful edifice, or temple, or building, that is spoken of here, are they volunteers of their own accord? Is there inhering in them a principle that will cast aside their wrong doings and their want of qualification? Will they reform? Will they return? "Ye will not come to me" were the words of my Lord; "Ye will not come to me"; and what he says was meant for poor sinners dragged to the bottom of the pit and the mire; and I tell you, my hearers; none but God himself can lift these wrecks, these ruined souls from their fallen depths.

I stand before you and proclaim unto you God's blessed truths. I would not trifle with any here. I respect you as fellow-sinners and you can be saved alone by the grace of God; but where are you, and who has made you to differ? and why are you so comfortably placed in such an exalted position as are so many as are constant in the Church of Christ? Why you might just as well ask where were the brick and stone that are now placed in position and form the exterior of this most beautiful building; and where was the wood 140 years ago. Perhaps young saplings. Is there a spark of life in either? The stone has been quarried and prepared to be placed where it is seen today. Nor do the bricks have life in them, but the stones all have life in their composition. It is not the spark which God kindles in man individually; it is the life that is imparted when he is brought in contact with the Lord Jesus Christ, and when there is any portion of living faith. This is most beautifully illustrated and explained in the relation of the branch to the vine. Go examine it, if you please, and trace it to the parent stem, and there you will see the life.

Now, my dear hearers, it is the work of God's Holy Spirit (you know I must be brief) Ruin by the Fall, Redemption by Christ and Regeneration by the Holy Ghost.

I have been more than half a century—five years more than half a century—in the ministry, and I have tried to preach God's Gospel. I have wept for my fellow-sinners; I have sought to increase the number of God's people by trying to be faithful. I humbly trust that God has used me as an instrument to his glory. I am the simple means used when he wishes me. You know there is a great difference between the earthen vessel and the treasure contained in it. I am, and so are you, but earthen vessels; and the treasure we have is in the vessel, and we are only the crude vessel that holds the treasure. There are grand vessels too. I mean to say that we are just what God has been pleased in his purpose to make us by his grace, and so we must look for more from the church, and more by the means that have been provided for carrying on church work in the Holy Ghost and His regeneration; for no man can regenerate save God alone. While He prepares the material, you see, it is the fallen sinner that makes the ruin, the woman out of whom He cast seven devils, and persons who are so run down.

I saw a man some time since, an offender in the judgment of all Christians, who was very much carried away with Romanism, and I was trying to impress upon this dying brother that I, or any one else, had just as much power as the mighty Pope, or any person anywhere; and it was my privilege to tell him about the one Saviour who is able to save.

You may talk about the will. I believe we have a will. I have one. And I believe in the freedom of the will, and the law constituting the law of character; and I believe the will is controlled by the character; and character is what I am, and what you are. It is not what men think we are, but what we REALLY ARE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD; what he KNOWS we are. Hence he says unto men "He that hath heard and hath learned of my Father cometh to me."

And now I just want to observe to you that it is not as perhaps very many persons might suppose, that God is trying experiments with men.

Now, just let me remark to you in respect to this, that the omnipotent power of God has purposed to impart something to those persons being brought into the fellowship of Christ; and do you know that it is said in the Apostle's teachings that we were chosen in Christ before the world began, and every stone was there, and every stone was made a part of the divine process; every stone will be set beautifully in the construction; as the last stone is set into position everything will be complete. And Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

All things are represented as working together for good to them that love God and do his purpose. Not by works alone which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace given to us before the world began. I am sure that this cannot offend you, a thing that was planned before the world began.

I saw the plan of this house before it was finished. A picture was made—a design—and it had a designer. It is very probable that the architect, understanding his business, had almost every piece marked and fixed in his mind before setting about his work; its dimensions, length, breadth, height, every particular, so that persons could be set to work after his plans were made understandingly. Now is that possible, do you think? I learned the carpenter's trade and worked at it two years. My employer had to erect a building, and we were to do the work for him. He could not square a piece of timber himself, but he knew perfectly in his own mind just how it ought to be done; so he told us what to do, and we did it, and it came together so nicely, just as if every joint had been fitted or tried.

Now, my dear hearers, God works upon the same principles; and we will not deny Him the right and the supreme power to do that which we are speaking of here; and so you see the divine purpose in relation to this matter. Everything God does is in harmony. The building must go up, must be finished, and there is ample means for its accomplishment.

Now just let me remark that there is one grand fact told with reference to this point, and that is, these very persons are represented who constitute this glorious building; they are represented as being in Christ Jesus in this respect; sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And God loves these old-fashioned revivals, and instructs his children to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Oh, yes, in these grand uprisings, spiritual uprisings, Christ manifesting Himself, man in the enjoyment of the peace of God that passes all understanding, we find heaven is begun below. I have sat in my seat and waves of glory have rolled over my soul. I have felt that there was but a little space between here and the home of God. Sitting together in heavenly places; in the sweet places of concealment, where his people retire for communion with him in their closets. But was it only in the Apostle's day? Was it only among their followers? It it not possible for you now? Do you not experience it occasionally here? I know you do, and individuals have experienced it. And having experienced it in a measure, what will it be in a greater degree in the glorious hereafter?

"Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God." How solemn; how important. "Are ye builded together for an habitation of God." Is it meant that we in this matter are just as the material, the brick and the stone there, and that we are here as the cement that is employed to unite them together. In this way do we come together in the construction. Christ is here tonight; he is here now with us, but he is not occupying a pew with us; he is not here in his divine ministry. "Lo," he says, "I am with you alway." He is here in the heart of all who believe on him; and my dear fellow-sinner, he is waiting for you to open the door of your heart unto him. I will not hesitate to bring these facts before you. God fills us with his presence, so that there is no room for individuals. The home of the Spirit is filled with the presence of God. Oh, I know what it is to experience the peace and presence of God, and I know I have the sympathy of them that have experienced the love of God, and I want my fellow sinner to know its sweet blessedness. I would like to persuade men to become reconciled to God, and that you might be filled with the presence of God, the unseen one. He dwells in the heart. Do you want the truth? What do men think of this? A word from the scriptures; He says in the prophesy of Isaiah, "I dwell in the high and holy places, with him that is poor and of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." This is a fact that is gospel, and the prophet proclaimed it unto us.

And now hear what the Lord says to us, "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Yes, and sisters too, and every person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ.

My dear brethren, when your pastor was so kind as to ask me to come here and to take part in the opening services of this beautiful new building I hesitated some time as to what subject of thought to pursue, and after carefully considering the matter decided on THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST. I looked over the beautiful earth, the fields, the sun, nature in all her grandeur, and I said "The field is very large, and I need a large field, because I cannot enter upon a small field," and I prayed to God most earnestly before I left my home that it might be his pleasure that I might drop a seed on this soil for his glory. You understand what I mean.

I preached a few years ago on these words of Christ, and there was a young lady in the congregation, and when I talked with her after the service she said to me "Why cannot I be saved?" I tried to represent to her the grand truth that God was rich in mercy and to ask Him to direct and guide her. From that moment she had no rest until last spring a year ago she came into the house of God, and when I saw her I quoted that passage, and she said to me "Is not that a dear passage of scripture? That is what led me to seek Christ." Another brother, who was at sea, cursing and swearing, with ruin in his soul, was converted and I had the honor of baptizing the brother and sister on the same day. After his baptism he loved me, and I loved him, all because he was a converted man and my heart was warm with the love of Jesus. That is the service that we are enaged in, leading men to Christ, the Church in Christ Jesus. "In whom ye also also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. That is just what is in the heart, and do not let us rest until we are assured that God rests in our heart.

Now, poor sinner, just a word to you, and I will close. If there is in your heart a desire to seek the face of Christ, there is encouragement. Just seek his face and love; let your desire pursue the course indicated in God's blessed word. He knows that you are a sinner. Do not let your unworthiness hinder you. When you are found in the church you are unworthy, and you are unworthy when you come to die, but God loves you and will forgive you if you will but seek his face.

I will leave these remarks with you; I pray God to bless them to your good.

THE CROSS AND CONSECRATION.

The Cross is the key to Consecration. Nearly all written on Consecration is on the superficial side of separation from the world. Let us grasp the higher thought of *separation unto service*.

Fellow christians, when you died with Christ on the cross you died to the world that you might live again to God. Consecration is the surrender of the life to the Lord that we may serve Him in the ministry of our life.

"Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to Thy Cross I cling,"

is the proper attitude for prayer. But if you are going to be a religious pauper all your days; if you are simply to look down on empty palms forever; if your idea of religion is exhausted by coming to God in prayer and in faith you are not worth redeeming. Yonder in a tree is a little nest, and in the nest half a dozen eggs; and soon there are as many little birds. How delicate they are, simply appetites up in a tree. Day by day the mother bird brings the needed food and drops it into the open bills. The little bodies round out, take on feathers, develops strength, tumble over the edge of the nest, and soon the winged songster goes out to build its own nest and rear its young. In prayer the soul is like the newly fledged bird. Looking to God, it cries for bread from heaven. But when the food comes it is for us to bring our full hands to the service of God through the service of humanity. The soul that never develops the power of wing or of song, the soul that never leaves its needs and ministers to others, is unworthy the heavenly food. Your hands are filled for the service of God and of humanity. "Your ability coupled with Christ's willingness will revolutionise your neighborhood; with your unwillingness and Christ's ability you will accomplish no more than you are doing today."

Give the Cross of Christ its true place in your life and you will realize that you are saved, not to enjoy religion, but to serve. Then the enjoyment will care for itself. This consecrates all to Christ.

Your time will be held as His. There can be no religious life of the right sort apart from the consecration of days. I distrust very much those who have no need of special days for religious service. One day in seven is divinely set apart. Sinai reveals the need of human life. The need for rest and worship is wrought into the fabric of human nature. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. The seventh day is the Lord, thy God's." In it thou shalt do no work for thyself. If you see the Cross aright you will set apart one day in seven for *special* soul culture, and that setting apart is your recognition that God has it all.

The setting apart of places to sacred uses, and of men to religious leadership, implies the setting apart of money; for those who minister in sacred things must live thereby. The consecration of a part is not meant as a substitute, but as a recognition that all belongs to God. The conquered army surrenders its flag. But the flag carries with it batteries and forces. The flag is not a substitute for the army; its surrender is the submission of the whole army to the victor. So, one day set apart is a recognition that the seven days belong to God. Likewise, the setting apart of a portion of the income to God is a recognition of our stewardship of His property. No christian has the right to use one cent of his income for personal expenses until he has recognised God's ownership by setting apart some portion of it for christian work.

The Cross of Christ is our redemption. When that Cross works in us its perfect work, it brings a consecration which separates from the world by such a separation unto service that one recognises that his time, talent, and property is God's, while he is simply God's steward. Nothing else under heaven does this. Then,—"Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

R. OSGOOD MORSE.

Lyons, N. Y.

THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY.

1 Cor. 15-49.

Our faces darkened by the shade of sin,
And by the sorrows that with life begin;
Upon the resurrection day will shine
In all the grandeur of the Light Divine.

Our forms, distorted by remorseless pain,
And strife with error that is strife in vain;
In beauty, without blemish, shall arise
When Jesus comes to give the final prize.

And as we bear the earthly image here
With all the ills that man has learned to fear,
So shall we bear the Heavenly Image there
In all the joy that heavenly ways declare.

But of that joy the keenest mortal eye
Or fancy winged to sore above the sky,
The faintest outline never will behold
Or touch the ecstasy it must unfold.

Imagination could not strive to paint
The picture of a resurrection saint!
And only in the resurrection light
Will God unveil this rapture waking sight.

ADDISON F. BROWNE.

Lockeport, June 18, '96.

The supreme court of Indiana has decided the consolidated liquor cases, involving the constitutionality of what is known as the Nicholson law. The law is found to be valid. It provides that liquor selling may not be carried on in the same room with other business, and gives the county commissioner direction to inquire into circumstances in passing on applications for license. The court holds that the remonstrance feature of the law which the liquor people denounced as virtual local option is valid; remonstrance must be special against applicants and not general, but signatures to remonstrances may not be withdrawn when the case has been submitted.

"Can there be a more abjectly pitiable spectacle, can there be a more fearfully dismantled bulk on the rolling waters, or a more ghastly wreck upon life's lonely shore—than the habitual drunkard? He cannot resist a chemical product; he has made himself the negro slave of a dead thing; he has impawned that which is divine within him to the meanest and loathliest of all the fiends. What is this but demoniacal possession? What is this but the undying worm and the quenchless flame, self-introduced, self-kindled in the heart.—Canon Farrar.

Faith has two hands; with one it pulls off its own righteousness, as David did Saul's armor; with the other it puts on Christ's righteousness over the soul's shame, as that in which alone it dares see God or be seen of him.—Sinclair.

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Literary Note.

Rudyard Kipling, as he showed himself to his intimate friends just before he became known to all the world, will be the subject of a paper in *McClure's Magazine* for July. It is written by the man with whom Mr. Kipling was associated in the editorship of a newspaper in India, and it will be illustrated with portraits and other pictures from photographs furnished by Mr. Kipling's family.

Believe in hell because you believe in the love of God—not in a hell to which God condemns men of His will and pleasure, but a hell into which men cast themselves from the very face of His love in Jesus Christ.—George Adam Smith.

"It's not so much where you are as what you are that makes your heaven." The bright, cheery soul who lives the life of trust only sees the sunny side of everything; she has learned to endure cheerfully and wear a bright face when everything looks dark.

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