

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letters to a Young Preacher.

LETTER VIII. WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

The admonition to "walk in the Spirit," (Gal. v. 16, 25,) applies to Christians in general. Without the observance of it they can neither be happy nor useful. It is incumbent on them to "shine as lights in the world," (Matth. v. 16, Phil. ii. 15, 16). In order that they may reflect light to others, it is indispensable that they "walk in the light." While this is important with reference to all believers, it is especially so with regard to the ministers of Christ. They are peculiarly designed to be the means of diffusing the light of the gospel. Of them the apostle says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," Cor. iv. 5-7.

The preaching of the gospel is the ordinary means by which sinners are brought to Christ through faith; but it is the Holy Spirit that renders the word effectual by regenerating them, (Rom. x. 14, 17, 1 Cor. i. 21, Jno. i. 13, iii. 5, 6, xvi. 8, 2 Cor. iii. 3, 1 Thes. i. 5, 1 Pet. i. 22, 23). Preachers should, therefore, implore His influence, and live under it, in order that He may render their labors efficacious. Those ministers who have been the most spiritual, have usually been the most successful in promoting the interest of true religion. This is accordant with Scripture and reason, and it is verified by history and observation.

It must not, however, be inferred that a man is not called to the work of the ministry, nor that he does not walk in the Spirit, because he is not very successful in the conversion of sinners. The edification of believers, with the useful discharge of pastoral duties, may be his peculiar calling. Or the soil of his field may be unusually barren. We have no proof that one sinner was converted through the faithful labors of Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," in the course of "a hundred and twenty years," (Gen. vi. 3, 1 Pet. iii. 18, 20, 2 Pet. ii. 5). Jeremiah, who was expressly called to the prophetic office, and was eminently devout, earnest, and affectionate, so that he is justly styled the weeping prophet, complains of the want of success, saying, "No man repenteth him of his wickedness," (Jer. i. 5, ix. 1 xiii. 15-17, viii. 6, xxiii. 14). Stephen preached under an extraordinary influence of the Spirit; and yet his preaching did not effect the conversion of his hearers, (Acts vi. 5, 8-10, 15, vii. 54-58). Even the personal ministry of our Lord, who possessed the Spirit without measure, was attended with comparatively little success, so far as the immediate conversion of sinners was concerned, (Isa. xlix. 3, 4, liii. 1, Jno. i. 11, 12, xii. 37-40).

These remarks are not intended, my dear brother, to induce you to rest content without seeing the present fruit of your ministry in the salvation of souls. They are designed to correct an error into which people sometimes fall, who undervalue the ministrations of a faithful preacher, because his efforts are not at present attended with numerous manifest conversions; and also to encourage any one that may be laboring under such discouragement, to persevere in "the work of faith," sustained by the hope that his labor will prove ultimately to be "not in vain in the Lord."

Before leaving this part of the subject I may remark, that a man ought not to feel certain of his call to the ministry, or that he is walking in the Spirit, because numbers profess conversion under his labors. In the mysterious arrangements of Providence, this has sometimes taken place when the preacher's conduct has become decisive testimony against him in both these respects. Ps. lxxvi. 18, Matth. vii. 22, 23.

These considerations, however, do not at all invalidate the general principle, that in order to be essentially useful a minister must live under the influence of the Holy Spirit, (Jer. x. 21). Without this, though he may be scriptural in sentiment, able in preaching, and irreproachable in his conduct, yet his ministrations will be, at least in a great measure, inefficient. It can not, indeed, be reasonably expected, that, in ordinary cases, his preaching will be accompanied "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." If, then, a preacher would be successful in convincing and converting sinners, and in edifying and comforting believers, he should sedulously endeavour, by devotional exercises, and all scriptural means, to maintain communion with the Father of Spirits. He should cautiously avoid

grieving the Holy Spirit of God, earnestly pray for His influence, and attentively regard His emotions.

Admonitions received at the time of my ordination, (July 17, 1817,) are still distinct in my recollection. The venerable S. Harding, in his sermon, from Titus ii. 1, enjoined upon me care to teach "sound doctrine;" and my worthy Pastor, Edward Manning, in his charge, strongly urged upon me the necessity, and vast importance, of a close walk with God. So also my venerable father according to the flesh, in his letters addressed to me after I entered the ministry, almost invariably charged me to be careful to live near the Lord. I can not say, indeed, that the kind and faithful admonitions of these men of God have always been duly regarded by me; but they have undoubtedly been serviceable to me, and consequently beneficial to my hearers.

This encourages me, my dear young brother, to admonish you on this important point. A spiritual frame of mind will tend to preserve you from all improprieties of conduct. Under its hallowing influence you will be impressed, with a lively sense of the infinite worth of undying souls, and will be led to put forth earnest efforts for their salvation. When you can in truth adopt the language of the poet,

"My God, I feel the mournful scene,
My bowels yearn o'er dying men;
And fain my pity would reclaim,
And pluck the fire-brands from the flame,"

There will be reason to anticipate happy results from your faithful warnings, and affectionate entreaties. Good will doubtless be effected.

May the gracious Lord enable you to be indeed spiritually minded, and render you abundantly successful in feeding the flock of God, and winning souls to Christ.

Yours in gospel bonds,

CHARLES TUPPER.

Aylesford, March 14th, 1861.

For the Christian Messenger.

Critics and Commentators.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have read with much interest the letters of the brethren Dr. Tupper and Armstrong on Luke xviii. 7. As far as they are concerned, the discussion, I presume, may be regarded as closed. I have no wish to re-open it, my present purpose being rather to furnish some information respecting the opinions of translators and critics.

The inquiry relates to the meaning of the phrase, "though he bear long with them." The verb *makrothumeo*, here translated "bear long," ordinarily means to be patient, long-suffering. Then, by an easy transition, it conveys the idea of waiting patiently for any thing that seems to be long in coming. See James v. 7, 8.

But how is it to be understood in Luke xviii. 7? To whom does the pronoun "them" refer? It is generally held that it refers to God's elect, and that the verb *makrothumeo* is in this passage used in a peculiar sense, which it sometimes bears. Hence Schleusner, in his *Lexicon in Novum Testamentum*, gives as one of its meanings "differo," to delay or defer: and in his *Lexicon in LXX.*, he has "tardus sum ad vindicandum," adducing in illustration, Sirach xxxv. 18, thus translated, "Dominus non faciet moram, nec tardus erit erga illos fortis," or, as it is rendered in Matthew's Bible (A. D. 1537), "And the Lord will not be slack in coming, nor tarry long."

On the other hand, it has been alleged that the pronoun "them" refers to an unmentioned or suppressed antecedent, viz. the adversaries of God's elect (answering to the "adversary" of the widow), and that then the verb *makrothumeo* may be taken in its usual acceptation.

I will now give you the recorded judgments of a number of translators and critics in this matter.

1. WILLIAM TYNDAL, A. D. 1534:—"yea though he differeth them."
2. ARCHBISHOP CRANMER, in the "Bishops Bible," A. D. 1539:—"yea—though he differeth them."
3. GENEVA ENGLISH VERSION, A. D. 1557:—"yea—though he deferre them."
4. GENEVA FRENCH VERSION, A. D. 1588:—"quoiqu'il differ sa vengeance"—"Although he defer his vengeance."
5. HUGO GROTIUS, A. D. 1641, observes that the word includes here the idea of delay—"que ut debitori prodest, ita gravis est ei, qui vim patitur," and he refers in confirmation to Sirach xxxv. 18, the passage mentioned above.
6. DE SACY, A. D. 1667:—"et il souffrira toujours qu'on les opprime?"—"and will he always suffer them to be oppressed?"

7. DR. WHITBY, A. D. 1700. "For *makrothumeo* [the present participle], some read *makrothumei* [the present indicative—this reading is adopted by Dr. Alford], and so interpreters read the whole by way of interrogation—'and will he be slack towards them?' that is, towards his elect. And this well agrees with the following words, 'I tell you he will avenge them speedily,' and with the words *ep' autois*, which have no other substantive to refer to but to the elect—and with the like passage, Eccles. xxxv. 17-19." He then remarks—"Others make the sense run thus, 'Shall he who is thus long-suffering towards the worst of men, and the persecutors of his people, be slack to avenge the cause of his people, whom he loves, and to whose prayers his ears are always open?'"

8. JEAN LE CLERC, A. D. 1703:—"quoiqu'il differe a leur egard?"—"although he defer [or delay] with respect to them."

9. DE BEAUSOBRE, A. D. 1718:—"useroit-il d'un plus long delai, a leur egard?"—"would he exercise longer delay with respect to them?" In a note he says—"Others, 'quoiqu'il use de delai a leur egard?'—"although he exercise delay with respect to them."

10. OSTERVOLD, A. D. 1724. The same as the Geneva French.

11. DR. GUYSE. "Though for wise ends he may exercise forbearance towards their enemies, and may try his people's patience by deferring his vindication of their righteous cause to the fittest season."

12. DR. GILL, A. D. 1746. "Though he bear long with them." Either with their adversaries, their opposers and persecutors, who are vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, whom he endures with much long-suffering, till the sufferings of his people are accomplished, and the iniquities of those men are full; or rather, with the elect, for the words may be rendered, 'and is long-suffering towards them'—delays his coming, and the execution of his vengeance, as on the Jewish nation, so upon the whole world of the ungodly, till his elect are gathered in from among them."

13. ELSLEY. "Is he slack towards them?"

14. DR. DODDRIDGE. "Though he may seem to bear long with them, to give them space for repentance."

15. DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL. "Will he linger in their cause?" He says—"As *makrothumein* commonly denotes to have patience, and as it sometimes happens that patient people appear slow in their proceedings, it comes, by an easy transition to signify to linger, to delay." He also refers to Sirach (or Eccles. xxxv. 18,) as a "perspicuous and decisive" example of this use of the word.

16. NEANDER. "Though his forbearance may seem like delay, his justice will not fail."—"It is pre-supposed that those who are addressed pray, like children, to their heavenly Father; but they are exhorted not to waver, if the answer to their prayers be delayed." (*Life of Christ*, p. 319. New York, 1848).

17. OLSHAUSEN. "The assistance from on high is expressly represented, with reference to verse 4, as delayed according to the counsel of God. To the expression 'he would not for a time,' the term 'to suffer long' stands parallel. . . . Here the only thing brought forward is the general idea of delay which is implied in the exercise of long-suffering."

18. ARCHDEACON TRENCH. "When God is said to 'bear long' with men, the phrase is most often used to set forth his patience in giving to them time and space for repentance; it would therefore avoid perplexity, if here another phrase were used, as for instance, 'though he bear them long in hand?' or 'though he delay them long?'—long, that is, as men count length." He observes in a note that "some refer *autois* to the oppressors on whom vengeance is taken," but intimates his dissent from that opinion.—(*Notes on the Parables*, p. 499.)

19. DR. ALFORD. "He delays his vengeance in their case."

20. DR. BARNES. "The most natural meaning is, 'Although he defers long to avenge them, and greatly tries their patience, yet he will avenge them.' He tries their faith, he suffers their persecutions and trials to continue a long time, and it almost appears as if he would not interpose. Yet he will do it, and will save them."

21. AMERICAN BIBLE UNION. "Though he beareth long in respect to them."—"This pronoun (*autois*) refers to the 'elect.' Hence, as the scope of the passage shows, the forbearance of God (bearing long) has reference to the claims which his people have on their compassion." (Revised version of the gospel of Luke).

22. ANNOTATED PARAGRAPH BIBLE (Religious Tract Society). "Rather (as in James v. 7.) 'though he hath long patience in regard to them'; delaying in mercy the vengeance which he will inflict for them upon their persecutors."

23. DR. BLOOMFIELD. "*Autois* cannot, without violence, be referred to any other word than *eklektos*. We must therefore suppose some other sense of *makrothumein*. And as the word signifies properly to be slow-minded, it may very well denote to be slow in avenging or affording assistance. And in this sense the word occurs in a kindred sentiment in Eccles. xxxii. 18. (xxxv. 18). This interpretation (which alone suits the scope of the parable), is adopted by almost all recent commentators, and is confirmed by Euthymius."

The preponderance of opinion, you perceive is in favour of the view propounded by brother Armstrong.

In his last letter Dr. Tupper observes, in reference to the passage adduced from Eccles. xxxv. 18—"There is no rule of Grammar more unexceptionable than that which, in all languages, so far as I know, requires that pronouns agree with the nouns for which they stand in number."

I beg to call Dr. T's attention to the following extract from Winer's "*Grammar of the New Testament Diction*," p. 154:—"Pronouns referring to a noun singular are put in the plural; when the noun has a collective signification, or is an abstract used for a concrete." He confirms this remark by referring to Matth. i. 21: xiv. 14, Phil. ii. 15, 3 John ix., Mark vi. 46, John xv. 6, Luke vi. 17, and to the Septuagint in Josh. xv. 1, Exod. xxxii. 11, 33, Deut. xxi. 8, 1 Sam. xiv. 34. This seems to be entirely conclusive. The word *tapeinou*, in Eccles. xxxv. 17, relates not to an individual, but to a class, and therefore the plural pronoun is properly employed. The verbs *braduno* and *makrothumeo*, in the 18th verse, are synonyms, or nearly so; and the use of two words to express the same thought is characteristic, as is well known, of Jewish style.

Yours truly,

J. M. CRAMP.

Acadia College, March 25th, 1861.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Country—its advancement.

What virtue is there the exercise of which calls for more of our admiration than the love of country? How much more is there of 'the triumph of good' in the career of a statesman who sacrifices his own interests and wars only with that which is prejudicial to the interests of his fellow men, however little of success he may meet with; than in that of the most successful leader of a party, the price of whose victories is the defeat of many of those whose rights it is the glory of every true statesman to defend.

How much higher in the scale of human advancement does that nation rise, whose pulse throbs full under the healthy stimulus of industry, whose people are content because God has given them the power of supplying their wants by their labor, whose hearts are fired with a love of their native land, and nerved to suffer or achieve or it, because its rugged rocks and barren soil are the haunts of freedom; than one whose vital energies are weakened by luxury, whose people wealth has corrupted, and turned from the noble enterprise of self-conquest, the nursery of freemen, to the mere desire for dominion. The love of country is admirable because it is the exercise of the greatest of all virtues—that of universal charity. Our Creator is also our lawgiver, the commands which he gives us are suited to our nature, and by yielding obedience to them we shall raise ourselves to the highest and most happy station which it is possible for us to attain, we shall clear ourselves from the evil which we daily deplore, and be able to grasp all that is desirable. If, in obedience to his laws, each would labor for the good of all, then each would be benefitted by the labor of all, and the advancement of mankind would not be by faltering steps but by a steady march. It is the acknowledgement of this principle, the physical benefits of which we see exemplified in the division of labor, which raises man from a barbarous to a civilized state; it is the pursuance of this principle which will enlighten and refine, which will bestow proportionately great moral benefits, will banish darkness by the presence of light, will slay evil by maintaining the life of good. Man's selfishness often blinds him to the fact that the advancement of one is a step in the advancement of all, that direct good is as seed thrown into the ground from which an hundred fold increase of indirect blessing cannot fail to spring, and that he has cause of self-gratulation not merely in his own prosperity, but that he is enriched by the success of another. If then it is incumbent on each to strive for the good of his fellows, if by so striving he can secure so much of good, can there be a more important question than that which so often presents itself to the mind of a thinking man, 'what will contribute most to the good of our country?'

God has given us a land stored with resources of wealth; how can those resources be the best developed? He has blessed her with sons who can tread the heights of ambition or the halls of science with as firm and as familiar a step as any; how shall the talents which they possess be cultivated to the highest degree, and turned into the proper channel? History tells us how nations have grown great, and history is the record of the achievements of men, how many a