

# The Religious Intelligencer.

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ev. E. McLEOD, {

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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## Religious Selections.

### "I've no Thought of Dying So."

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

A—B— was a son of wealthy and influential parents, in one of the northern counties of the State of New York; and the substance of what I am about to relate is well known in the neighborhood where he lived and died.

He commenced business for himself early in life, and exhibited considerable shrewdness and energy of mind. But the safeguards of virtue and piety did not shield him in the perilous season of youth; and he soon became, in the language of the world, a bold, generous-hearted fellow, growing in popularity and wealth. He was above the fear of religious admonition and the authority of the Bible; and was considered quite able to confute any Christian believer. He was indeed a young man of promise; but his life was a dreadful illustration of the words of holy writ: "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live;" and his end was a scene of thickening horrors.

About a year before his death, and not above five years ago, A—B— was riding with an intimate friend, when the conversation which follows was held. This friend, as he now says, was, at the time, considerably impressed by religious truth; but that he might be comforted in his impenitence by the scepticism of his more intelligent and reckless comrade, or for some other reason, he felt desirous to know B's sentiments fully in religion. Accordingly, after a little hesitation, he commenced by saying:

"B—, you and I have been much together, and have confidence, I believe, in each other as friends. We have conversed freely upon almost every subject; but there is one that we have never seriously talked about. It is a subject that has troubled me for some time; and I should like to know what are really your candid opinions. If you don't wish to have them told, I will keep the matter to myself."

"O, certainly," was the reply, "I've no objection against making known any of my opinions."

"Well, then," said Henry—for so I will name his friend—"what do you think about the Bible? Is it true? And is there any such thing as religion; or is it all a delusion?"

"Why, as to that," said B—, "I've no more doubt that there is a God, and that religion is a reality, and that it is necessary to be what the Christians call pious in order to be happy hereafter, than that we are riding together."

Henry was greatly surprised; and looking at him intently to see whether there was not designed trifling, B— proceeded:

"It is plain enough that the Bible is true. It's a book that no mere man could ever have written; and a book, in my opinion, that no one, however wicked he may be, can read and believe in his to be an imposition. I have tried often to believe so. And no one can look at the Christian religion, and see what it is designed to effect, without feeling that it must be from God. In fact, no man can be a Deist who isn't a fool. For reason and conscience confirm the Christian doctrines, and satisfy me that there is a place of happiness and of misery hereafter."

Henry was amazed at these confessions from one who had been nurtured in infidelity, and was regarded by the pious as a heaven-daring young man. At length he replied, "If this is your belief, B—, you're in an awful situation. What can you think of your present course?"

"Why, it's a pretty bad one, to be sure; but I've no thought of dying so. I mean to become a Christian. But the fact is, a man must have property; unless he has, he is scarcely respected even by Christians themselves. And I mean to make money and enjoy life; and when I've got things around me to my mind, then I will be liberal and feed the poor and do good—that's the way church-members do."

"But how long do you think it will be safe for you to indulge your present habits? Being out late and drinking have already injured your health."

"I've thought of that," answered B—, "But I'm young and hearty; though I intend to quit cards and drinking pretty soon."

"I speak as a friend, B—; but I did not suppose, from what I have heard you say, that you believed in a Saviour, or in heaven or hell."

"I do, as much as you or any man."

"Do you remember playing cards at —?" And here Henry referred to most horrid profanity uttered during a night of carousal.

"Oh, when I awoke so, I was a little intoxicated; but I felt sorry for it afterwards. I know it's wrong, and I always feel sorry. But when I'm among those fellows, I can't very well help it."

"But how often," continued his still doubting friend, "have I heard you say, that religion was nothing but priestcraft, and that Christians were a pack of fools?"

"I know I've said so when they've crossed my path, and made me angry. And I think now that a good many of those who pretend to be Christians are nothing but hypocrites. But that there is real religion, and that there are some who possess it, and have what you and I know nothing about, it's no use to deny."

The conversation continued much in this strain

for some time; and made a deep and most happy impression on the mind of Henry.

As for his companion, "madness was in his heart" as long as he lived, and he soon went "to the dead." He continued to drink, until he was known to be a drunkard. He mingled with gamblers, till his moral sensibilities seemed wholly blunted. At length after a night of dissipation, he started for home—was thrown from his wagon, and badly bruised; disease set in, with dreadful severity, upon his constitution, greatly enfeebled by irregularities; and in a little space delirium tremens hurried him to his grave.

Every reader may well be astonished at the inconsistencies, as well as shocked at the impiety of this poor wretch; yet who can avoid seeing that his character is essentially that of thousands who mean finally to enter the kingdom of heaven? Are there not many who read this respectable before the world; tree, as they think, from gross vices, and from danger; that have already entered the path which sunk this young man to eternal night? Let the gay and the fashionable, and especially let every young man remember, that the steps which take hold on hell are by no means seldom those which first lead to the convivial card-party. Here the lovers of pleasure find an atmosphere peculiarly intoxicating, which renders serious society and instructive employment altogether distasteful; and are drawn step by step, into the associated vices which destroy body and soul.

Let him who pursues this narrative also remember, that however confident and bold he may be in scepticism, his confidence will desert him at the hour of need. Nay, his hopes from any system of infidelity will vanish now, if he will only sit down and reflect—if he will but seriously listen, for a few hours, to the sober decisions of reason and conscience.

And finally, let no one imagine that religion is something always, as it were, waiting on him: a prize which, at any future time, he has little more to do than to reach out his hand and take. It is not so. And yet many trust in this delusion, and quiet themselves with this hope, at the very hour that they are passing the bounds of mercy. Reader, are you saying, "I've no thought of dying as I am—I mean to become a Christian?"

Beware.

### Martyrdom of Ignatius.

In the year 106, commenced the third persecution of the Christians, by the Emperor Trajan. A remarkable letter, written by Ignatius, the Proconsul of Pontus and Bithynia, to the Emperor, in which he gives a great deal of information as to the character, the modes of worship, and charges brought against these innocent men, has been preserved to the present time. During the reign of Nerva, which followed that of Domitian, the Church had enjoyed much tranquility, and had increased greatly in numbers, daily becoming a more formidable enemy to heathen practices.

On one occasion, Trajan was passing through Antioch, when Ignatius, one of the Fathers of the early Church, was summoned before him. It has been affirmed by some that Ignatius was the only person of all the Fathers who saw Christ in the flesh. He was about twelve years old at the time of the crucifixion, and is said to have been that child whom Christ took and set amidst His disciples, as an example of simplicity and humility to His followers in all ages. Be that as it may, he was intimately acquainted with Peter and Paul, and was ordained by John, the "beloved disciple" of our Saviour. He had been forty years pastor in Antioch when thus called to stand before the Emperor.

When Ignatius came into the Emperor's presence, Trajan thus addressed him:—"What an impious wretch art thou, both to transgress our commands and to inveigle other souls in the same folly to their ruin!" Ignatius replied:—"Theophorus ought not to be called so; for wicked spirits are departed from the servants of God; but if you call me impious, because of my hostility, I own the charge in that respect; for I dissolve all their snares, sustained inwardly by Christ, the Heavenly King." "Pray, who is Theophorus?" "He who has Christ in his breast." "And," said Trajan, "thinkest thou that gods reside in us also, and fight for us against our enemies?" "You mistake," said Ignatius, "in calling the demons of the nations by the name of gods; for there is only one God, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; and one Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, whose kingdom is my portion."

"His kingdom, do you say, who was crucified upon Pilate?" asked the Emperor. The martyr replied, "His, who crucified my sin with his author, and has put all the fraud and malice of Satan under their feet who carry Him in their breast." "Dost thou, then," said Trajan, "carry him who was crucified within thee?" "I do; for it is written, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them.'" Then Trajan pronounced sentence against him:—"Since Ignatius confesses that he carries within himself him that was crucified, we command that he be carried, bound by soldiers, to Great Rome, there to be thrown to the beasts, for the entertainment of the people."

The orders of the Emperor were immediately put into execution. The aged pastor was seized and carried to Smyrna; during his short stay in which city he held many discourses with Polycarp, who also had been a disciple of John. The conversation of these venerable men contributed

to their mutual support and comfort; and Ignatius anxious to avail himself of the little time which remained to him, had interviews with deputies from various churches, to whom he communicated consolation and instruction. The Epistles which he wrote during his journey to Rome to the Christians are highly valued for the pure and earnest devotion which they throughout exhibit and are considered as among the most precious relics of ancient uninspired writing. As he wrote in the near prospect of death, they show the strong faith which he had in the Saviour when about to enter eternity. These words ought to cheer and comfort Christians in all ages when in the valley and shadow of death. "Write," he said to his friends, "that I go joyfully to die; you do not oppose yourselves. I beseech you then, yet again, not to nourish a tenderness which would injure me; suffer me to become the food of bears and lions, it will afford me a very short passage to heaven. I am God's wheat; it is necessary that I should be ground, that I may be made bread fit to be offered to Jesus Christ. When the world shall see no part of my frame remaining, it will then be known that I am a true disciple of Jesus Christ; pray to the Lord that I may be to him an acceptable sacrifice. He who lives and speaks in me whispers continually in the recesses of my heart, 'Hasten to come to my Father.' I employ these last moments of my life to let you know that I desire nothing so much as its speedy termination. I have no longer any desire for what men usually seek; the bread which I desire is the adorable flesh of Jesus Christ, and the wine which I demand is his precious blood, that celestial wine which lights in the soul the living and immortal fire of an incorruptible love. I belong no longer to the world, I no longer regard myself as living among men."

On the arrival of Ignatius in the neighbourhood of Rome, the Christians went out in a body to meet him; and many continued to entreat him that he would not prohibit their employing whatever interest they possessed to save his life. But he persisted in his resolution not to suffer any compromise whatever to take place on his account. And after a short interval had been allowed him for praying with and addressing the people, he was conducted to the amphitheatre, and being placed in the arena, was speedily devoured by the wild animals let loose upon him; a fragment or two of his bones being all that was left for his friends to collect and convey to Antioch. So departed Ignatius, on the 20th December, 107.

[Abridged for the Church Witness.]

### Scripture Illustrations of the All-Sufficiency of Christ.

Vast numbers have fallen short of the salvation which has been offered to their acceptance. But how is this? It is not owing to any unwillingness in the Saviour to receive them. It is just because they have rejected him in the spirit of infidelity, like the malefactor who rallied against him on the cross—or lifted up the heel against him, like the traitor who betrayed him into the hands of his enemies—or abandoned themselves to the spirit of persecution, like Herod, who set him at nought and mocked him; or perverted the right ways of the Lord, like Elymas the sorcerer, who was full of all subtlety and mischief—or departed from him sorrowful, like the young man who had great possessions—or deemed themselves independent of the riches of his grace, like the proud Pharisee, who trusted in himself that he was righteous, and despised others—or satisfied themselves with the form, without the power of godliness, like the foolish virgins, who went out to meet the bridegroom, but had no oil in their lamps—or sought to escape from their conviction, like Felix, who deferred the overtures of the Gospel to a more convenient season—or manifested the indecision of Agrippa, who, though almost, was not altogether persuaded to be a Christian—or lightly esteemed the blessings of the great salvation, like Galileo, who cared for none of these things.

But with regard to ALL WHO HAVE COME TO THE SAVIOUR, in sincerity, sensible of their burdens, their helplessness, and their misery, how different has been their experience and how encouraging! Just look at a few of the cases recorded in the sacred volume, and mark how cordial was the reception they met with, yet how varied the attitudes.

One is standing afar off, with a cloud in his countenance, a burden of guilt on his heart, not venturing to lift so much as his eye unto heaven; thus did the publican when he smote upon his breast, and gave utterance to the humble but accepted prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Another appears to be rising up, as if coming to his right mind, disgusted with the abominations after which he had been walking, and so touched with the tender mercies he had hitherto despised, as to be saying in his heart, "I will arise and go to my Father;" thus did the prodigal; and his father saw him, even while he was yet a great way off, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him.

Another is in the act of coming to the Saviour secretly, satisfied in his own heart that he is a teacher come from God, who teaches savingly and to profit, yet afraid of the reproaches of a men and scarce fortified as yet for the bold and open avowal of his name: thus did Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews, when he came to him by night.

Another is coming to him openly, and with great ardor and impetuosity of spirit, heedless of every difficulty, and in the very face of peril and of death: thus did Peter, when he walked alone on the bosom of the dark and tempestuous sea.

Another is following after him, but with a less bold and intrepid spirit, timid, silent, trembling, shrinking from the presence of his awful majesty; thus did the woman, who came behind him in the press, and touched but the hem of his garment.

Another is running before him, almost afraid he may lose the sight of him, yet putting himself in the way by which he was to pass, and diligently seeking him while he was to be found; thus did Zaccheus, when the Saviour looked up and saw him in the sycamore-tree, and said to him, "Make haste and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house."

Another is sitting at the very feet of Christ, entertaining the recollection of past guilt, and weeping for an only child; thus did the penitent in the house of Simon the Pharisee, when she washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head.

Another is lying prostrate on the ground, overwhelmed with the force of irresistible convictions and crying out in the agony of his spirit, "What must I do to be saved?" Thus did the jailer at Philippi, when the glad message fell like music on his heart, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Another is seeking for the Saviour, the same Saviour whom she had formerly found, and whose footsteps she had been following, but whose presence had again departed, seeking him with sorrowfulness of heart, early and with intense desire, seeking him in the dark, and at the grave where her sins had laid him; thus did the Mary Magdalene out of whom seven devils had been cast.

Others, again, are attending eagerly on instituted ordinances, or searching the Scriptures with all diligence, such as Lydia of Thyatira, whose heart the Lord opened when frequenting the place where prayer was wont to be made—or Mary of Bethany, who sat at the feet of Jesus listening to the words of everlasting life—or Timothy, who from a child had known the holy Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation—or the Eunuch to whom Philip preached Jesus on his return from Jerusalem, where he had gone to worship—or Apollos, who was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, and instructed in the way of the Lord.

And others still, are occupied with the solemn exercises of prayer: the blind man crying in his darkness, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me"—the leper in his uncleanness, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"—the woman of Canaan in the extremity of her distress, "Lord, help me"—the persecuting Saul amid the terror of his convictions, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—the woman of Samaria at the well of Sychar, "Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw"—the malefactor in his last agonies, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"—and the martyred Stephen, with the view of heaven's glories opening up before him, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

It is especially deserving of notice, that in the experience of each of these individuals, there was something peculiar or characteristic. Not one of them was possessed of the same attainments, or position, or state of mind as another. There was dejection in one, and penitence in another; intrepidity in one, and trembling in another; expectation in one, and weeping in another, and apprehension in another, and serenity in another, and full assurance in another. Nevertheless they were all coming, or had already come to the Saviour. Therefore none of them was cast out.—They were all treated as children of the same family—as believers: and whether they were standing afar off, or coming by night, or sitting at his feet, or weeping at his grave, or reclining on his bosom, or looking to his cross, or interceding at his throne—the throne where light is given to the blind, and purity to the unclean, and help to the afflicted, and direction to the doubtful, and relief to the destitute, and the bright entrance into heaven to the dying—still, the Saviour had a kindly look, or a helping hand, or a word of comfort for them all; and how diversified soever were their cases, the experience of every one of them was accordant with the declaration of the great Redeemer, "him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

And what is the practical lesson taught by these cases, and which every man should be anxious to learn for himself? It is this: that there is an all-sufficiency in the riches of the Saviour's grace, that is equal to the necessities of your own case, however urgent these necessities may be; if you come to the Saviour as you are, with all your burdens and miseries, you will assuredly meet a kind and gracious reception and he enabled to set your seal to the truth of the Gospel Declaration, that it is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief."

PAPAL CHAPLAINS.—The Chaplaincy of the British army is exciting attention. For the soldiers in Great Britain and Ireland alone, there are one hundred and forty-five Romish priests in the pay of the Government for chaplain services, and costing, during the past year, four thousand seven hundred and forty-five pounds, or nearly twenty five thousand dollars. Besides these, there are twenty-one priests appointed as commissioned officers, and bearing rank as officers. To circulate Romish tracts and books among the soldiers, about six hundred pounds were expended.—Thus reckoning the supplies of those priests and their appliances to the soldiers in India and the colonies, it is estimated that not less than eighteen thousand pounds, or about ninety thousand dollars, are paid by Protestant Britain to help Rome exert its worst influence upon the British army.

### Startling Words!

We copy the following startling words from an article in the "British Messenger" by the Rev. James Weir of Inverness. May the Holy Spirit apply them to the hearts of the readers of the INTELLIGENCER:—

Reader, whoever thou art, or wherever, throughout the wide world, these lines shall meet thine eye, one thing is certain, that thou art either among the saved or the lost—among the tares or of the wheat. To which do you belong? If the trumpet of doom were to-night to sound—if "the harvest," which is "the end of the world," were indeed to arrive now—if the great Husbandman said to the angel-reapers, "Gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather my wheat into my barn"—would you be among the tares, among that congregation of hell, that devil's church on which, fierce and eager, the fire of Tophet would seize and wrap up in misery unending? As you are now, with or without Christ, is the true test of your prospects for eternity. There is a hell, and its fires are everlasting. It is "ordained of old." To use the recently-spoken words—Bunyan-like or Baxter-like—of my friend, C. H. Spurgeon, a witness-bearer who keeps back nothing that is profitable, and who shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God—"O sinner! why need I argue that 'Tophet is ordained of old? Is there not something within thyself which tells thee that there is such a place? Hast thou never been brought upon a bed of sickness? And when conscience has a talk with thee has he never told thee that there is a place appointed for the wicked? When thou hast been tossed with pain hast thou not sometimes shut thine eyes in horror and begged of God to annihilate thee, because thou hadst a dread foreboding—of what? \* \* \* O man, thou mayest stand up and defy thy Maker, and say he will not punish thee, but conscience will not let thee deceive thyself. There are moments when the falling of a leaf makes thee quiver, when your very blood is chilled with the thought of death. Why? Because thou knowest that after death cometh the judgment."

Does any reader tremble at this language? Then read also the words of the same true London revival preacher:—

"The true believer need not fear: There is no hell for him. Racks are not for him—Christ suffered them. Eternal torment is not for him—Christ has suffered, not the same, but he suffered that which was an equivalent. 'O, saith one trembling sinner, 'do you think I can have any part or lot in that matter? Yes, assuredly thou mayest, if thou feelest thyself a sinner. If thou confessest thyself to be ungodly and lost, I have a precious gospel to preach to thee. It is the GOSPEL OF SUBSTITUTION—that Jesus stands in the room of every penitent sinner, and suffered all he ought to have suffered, so that he may go free."

LIFE A DISCIPLINE.—"The minister said, in his sermon to-day, that the world was a school in which God was educating men for eternity. It struck me as a singular idea," said Susan Orr to her older sister, Ellen.

"It is singular, because it has not been present to your mind before," said Ellen. "The world is a school, and life a discipline."

"What do you mean by life being a discipline?"

"I mean that God orders events concerning us in a particular manner, for the purpose of making us holy."

"It does not have the desired effect on many. Very few become holy. Why does not God make men holy at once? What is the need of such a course of discipline?"

"Why does not God make a forest of full-grown trees at once? Why does he not create the harvest at once? What is the need of such a long course of means as are employed to create the forest, and prepare the harvest for the sickle?"

"I don't know. God has seen fit to order it otherwise."

"Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—S. S. Times.

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT.—A lady slipped a bit of paper into the hand of a minister of the gospel as they were leaving the church, and immediately after he had finished a sermon from the text, "When he had tired me, I shall come forth as gold." As they parted, and she walked away, he opened the paper, and found the following words:—"I can go in the strength of this meat many days." There was no flattery here, but encouragement. He was not told that he had preached a great sermon, but that he had strengthened a weary spirit. Flattery would

have done him no good. Such a word of encouragement was "a word fitly spoken," and "how good it is!" Such a word was a compliment indeed. Hearers of the precious word, be not anxious to bestow fulsome flattery on those who preach to you. But if they nourish you, if they feed you, if they strengthen you with spiritual food, be not anxious to conceal this fact from them. Be not afraid with kind and discreet words to encourage them. You love to know if your endeavors to do others good are appreciated by them. A thank is not a flattery. A word of grateful acknowledgment will do no harm. Nothing that you can do will aid a devoted, spiritually-minded pastor more than to let him know at the right time and place that you are spiritually nourished by his preaching. This is the best of all compliments. The food he gives you is not his own. He knows it. It is manna from heaven. But it will do him no harm to let him know you love to receive it from his hand. Receive it. Eat it. And be not afraid to tell him it does you good.—Presbyterian Standard.

"THE MORNING COMETH, AND ALSO THE NIGHT."—What a picture do these few words give us of youth and age, life and death, time and eternity! Reader, are you in the morning of life? Are youth health, friends and earthly comforts yours? Oh, remember this gay, bright morning cannot always last. Troubles may come, age may come, death must come,—what preparations are you making for them? "The morning cometh, and also the night." Are you making good use of your health and time? Or are you trifling all away in idleness, crying, with restless dissatisfaction, in the morning, Would God it were even, and at even, Would to God it were morning? Oh! I entreat you consider your ways. Be not like the butterfly, sporting from flower to flower; but imitate the ant and bee, and lay up wintry store. In the morning sow thy seed; soon the night cometh when no man can work. Have you no treasure secured in heaven? no tears for sin noted in Christ's book? no cups of cold water registered there as given to his disciples? Oh! delay no longer! "This night thy soul may be required of thee!" So spend the morning of life, that when the night of old age and death come on, you may have that sweet promise fulfilled to your soul: "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." Yes; for them the last rays of the sun of righteousness, while sinking for the night of death, will cast their warm and cheering influence on your soul. "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee; and will look up."—Psa. 5:3.

STOLEN.—Stolen! There are many thieves about. Not merely those against whom omnibus proprietors warn us, nor those who are on the way to prison. But we, careful of our treasures as we may imagine ourselves, are very often grievously robbed.

Stolen—good temper. Do we not remember the time? Jokes were passing about, and smiles and politeness plentiful enough, but some random shots struck us, and being unwary the jewel was taken away, and we left miserably poor thereby, as our disappointed hearts felt too well.

Stolen, patience! We thought we had a large amount of it too, which we generally carried about with us. But there was just one unguarded spot, not very exposed—but an enemy found it and stole it all away.

Stolen, consistency! We knew the value of that possession very well. Usually we endeavored to keep it bright and clean, and protect it whenever we came to dangerous places. But once it seemed so very safe, such good people were around us, such trusty friends, we thought it could do no harm to relax our care and anxiety—and join freely in every pleasure around us. So, alas! when it was all over, and we looked for our gem, it was gone, and if it may be replaced, it was yet a great loss.

Stolen, time! There came a thief dressed gorgeously in splendid colours, who surrounded us with luxurious ease, and made everything so pleasant we forgot to beware of idleness. And we appeared to have so large a portion of this treasure, that a loss of a little did not affect us much. Ah! but it can never be regained—and we should learn to hate anything that robs us of so valuable a possession.

Beware of Robbers!

DO YOU WANT A CONGREGATION? Get a good Sunday school; and if you want the largest and best congregation in the town make your Sunday School the best in the town. You cannot do this, perhaps, in three months or in six; but you can see changes for the better even in as short a period as six months, if you will set out for it. Do you think that your ends can be secured without liberality in labor, and perhaps generous pecuniary liberality; not to get scholars, but in the care of those you have? A generous course of treatment with your Sunday Schools will verify to you, as readily as you can expect, those remarkable words: "Give and it shall be given unto you." You will be surprised at the measure you will get, and find you were never in a more paying business.