

God's Tomorrow.

On the level stretches of dust road,
Flooding along 'neath the weary load
Of every day cares and doubts and fears,
Tis hard to be brave; yet the mist of tears,
By a resolute will kept bravely back,
Though blotting and blurring the onward
track,
Pierced by the sunbeams of hope, may
follow
The beautiful colors of God's tomorrow.

Be patient, dear, when the hands grow
weak,
And the words of cheer that the lips would
speak

Falter and die in a voiceless prayer:
For a blossom is folded in every care.
And hidden deep in each doubt of thine,
A dewdrop of truth doth glimmer and
shine,
Waiting the light that shall surely follow
The flush of the dawn of God's tomorrow.

Today may be long and hard to bear,
But God will answer thy yearning prayer.
Each feeble struggle toward nobler life,
Now choked by the weeds of passion and
strife,

Each helpful impulse, each lofty thought,
To a glad fruition shall be brought.
When the angels, whom thou hast called
Pain and sorrow,
Shall gently awake thee in God's tomorrow.
—MABELLE P. CLAPP, in "CHRISTIANITY."

The Emotional in Preaching.

Cold facts may or may not move to action. To the doomed man, his sentence is a fact; but there must be he d out to him some hope of success or he will not plead for mercy or pardon.

The terrors of the law, the certainty of death, the reality of judgment, the fact of an endless hell—all these must be preached. But if they are set forth only as cold facts, the great majority of hearers will not be moved to flee the wrath to come.

God's fatherhood, his justice, his mercy, the reasonableness of his requirements, the helpfulness of his yoke, the ennobling effect of his service upon human life and character, the story of the cross, the certainty of human immortality, the endless and indescribable joys of heaven, are all important truths to be proclaimed and elaborated from the pulpit; but when they are only set forth as cold facts, or read off in scholarly, literary, matter of fact way, they fail to take hold of the hearts of the people—fail to move to action those who hear both in and outside the church.

And, by the way, is not this exactly what is the matter with three fourths of the preaching to-day? The intellect is fed, the reason and judgment are satisfied; but the heart is not reached—the emotions are not stirred.

We are satisfied that right here is the difficulty with the great majority of preachers in all denominations to-day; right here is where they need to improve. If the gospel as preached by them is to be or to become the power of God unto salvation to those who hear it, the preachers must learn to reach and stir the emotions. Men may deary as much as they please the idea of appealing to the feelings in order to move men to become religious; but it is the natural and the only effective way. Men's feelings must be stirred or they will not act, and in religion there is no salvation without action. The faith that does not ultimate in action is a cold, lifeless, historical, matter of fact faith, and both it and its possessor are religiously dead.

But many preachers, in their attempts to reach the heart and stir the emotions, make great mistakes. Some think that to do so they must be loud, boisterous, must stamp, pace the rostrum, and "saw the air." None of this is absolutely essential. Of course there must be earnestness, but earnestness in the pulpit is a very different thing from storm. There may be earnestness so great that everyone present can see and feel it, and, with very little boisterousness. On the other hand, there may be excessive ranting and noise and little or no real, heartfelt, gospel earnestness.

Then, some preachers greatly miss the mark by an artificial attempt to work on the emotions, manufactured for the occasion. Such efforts often succeed for the time, but the effect is not lasting. Like a local shower in the midst of a prevailing drought, no lasting fruits are seen.

To successfully reach the heart and arouse the emotions, the sermon must come from a soul that is deeply imbued with a sense of the importance of the message delivered. The preacher must have his own emotions aroused, truly, sincerely, and profoundly, with the conviction that he stands in Christ's stead, that the message he is then delivering is Christ's message to both believers and unbelievers, and that to them it may prove a savor of life unto life if faithfully delivered, otherwise it will prove a savor of death unto death, and that unless he is intensely faithful, in the truest sense, their blood will be required at his hands in the great day of God Almighty!

Under these circumstances he may become boisterous; nor will his boisterousness be at all objectionable, but helpful, provided it is evident in his manner that his soul is all on fire with a deep realization of the importance of the occasion and the message, and that the inspiring motive of his effort is to bring his people to Christ. When this motive, and this alone, inspires the preacher, the emotions will be stirred and souls will be moved whether his manner is boisterous or mild; and they will not be effectually stirred in any other way.

One of the sermons that most deeply and most lastingly affected the writer since his conversion was preached years ago by a Presbyterian minister in a vacant storeroom in Jefferson, Iowa. The audience was not large, nor was the preacher boisterous or demonstrative. But his sermon was a clear gospel message, and the preacher's manner, such as one could manifest who was duly impressed that he spoke in Christ's stead to the pioneer settlers who had come together to hear the message of salvation. God's justice and mercy, man's sinfulness and lost condition, and God's yearning desire to save as manifested in Jesus Christ, were all so clearly, so tenderly, so winsomely presented—the tears in the preacher's eyes evidencing the depths of his own feelings and his obvious effort to restrain rather than display emotion—that his audience, almost to a man, was melted and moved by the power of his unpretentious eloquence. We said then, and have said ever since, that this was an exemplification of the real secret of effective preaching. Of course, the people both saints and sinners, unanimously desired to secure that man for their pastor; but they could not, for the reason that his congregation in the eastern part of the state clung to him like wax and would not give him up.

Not merely scholarly and literary men, but men who can reach the hearts and stir the emotions, are the kind of men that the great majority of the people desire for pastors to-day. The need is men who not only have the necessary educational qualification, but men who put their whole soul into the work of the ministry—who are absolutely sure that God has raised them up to preach the gospel, that he has as certainly given them the gospel to proclaim to the people as he gave a message to Jonah to deliver to the Ninevites, and that woe is to them if they do not, as standing in Christ's stead, lovingly and faithfully preach the whole gospel to the people, whether men will hear or forbear, whether they will pay him or not. If a preacher thus commissioned fails to go forward and preach, and the people are lost, the woe is to him; if he does go forward and preach, and the people do not support him, the woe is to them. But the fact is, such preachers do reach the hearts of the people, and move them to Christ, and are supported. Oh, for a mighty endowment from on high of the Christ spirit upon the ministry! Then, and only then, will they reach the hearts, stir the emotions, and bring the people to Christ.—The Telescope.

The Will in Religion.

Everything depends upon the state of the will. The will is the governing power in a man's nature. By the will I do not mean the wish of the man, nor his feelings, nor his longings, but his choice, his deciding power, the king within him to which all the rest of his nature must yield obedience. I mean, in short, the man himself, the "Ego," that in personality in the depths of his being which he feels to be his real self. A great deal of trouble arises from the fact that so few seem to understand this secret of the will. The common thought is that religion resides, not in the will, but in the emotions, and the emotions are looked upon as the governing power in our nature; and consequently all the attention of the soul is directed toward its feelings; and as these are satisfactory or otherwise, the soul rests or is troubled. But the moment we discover the fact that true religion resides in the will alone, we are raised above the domination of our feelings, and realize that, as long as our will is steadfast toward God, the varying states of our emotions do not in the least affect the reality of the divine life in our souls. It is a great emancipation to make this discovery; and a little common sense applied to religion would soon, I think, reveal it to us all. For we must all know that there is something within us, behind our feelings and behind our wishes, an independent self, that after all decides everything and controls everything. The Bible calls this central self the "heart," and declares that out of it are the "issues of life" (Prov. iv, 23; also Luke vi, 45).

The will is the stronghold of our being. If God is to get complete possession of us, He must possess our

will. When He says to us, "My son, give me thy heart," it is equivalent to saying, "Surrender thy will to My control, that I may work in it to will and to do of My good pleasure." It is not the feelings of a man that God wants, but his will (1 Peter iii, 3, 4).

Our will is a piece of splendid machinery, a sort of "governor," such as they have in steam engines to regulate the working of the steam; and everything depends upon the intelligence that guides its action, whether it is our ignorance or God's wisdom. As long as our ignorance is the guide, the whole machinery is sure to go wrong, and it is dangerous for us to say "I will" or "I will not." But when we have surrendered the working of our wills to God, and are letting Him "work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure," we are then called upon to "set our faces like a flint" to carry out His will, and to respond with an emphatic "I will" to every "Thou shalt" of His (Heb. xiii 20, 21).

I will take a familiar case as an illustration. A great trial falls upon a Christian. He knows he ought to say, "Thy will be done," in regard to it, and his will is to say it, but his feelings are all in rebellion, and it seems to him, when he tries to say it, as if he were a hypocrite, and would be telling an untruth should he persist. Now the real truth is that all this rebellion, being only in the emotions, is not worth the slightest attention. If in his will the sufferer really chooses the will of God, then he himself really chooses it, and he is no hypocrite when he says, "Thy will be done." The real thing in your experience is not the verdict of your emotions, but the verdict of your will; and you are far more in danger of hypocrisy and untruth in yielding to the assertions of your feelings, than in holding fast to the decision of your will. If your will, then, at bottom is on God's side you are no hypocrite at this moment in claiming your position as belonging altogether to Him, and as being entirely submitted to His control, ever though your feelings may all declare the contrary.

A Christian lady of my acquaintance was at one time in her life an apparently hopeless victim of doubts and fears. She knew she ought to trust the Lord, and longed to do it, but she seemed utterly unable. After a long period of suffering from this cause, she finally confided her difficulties to a friend, who, as it mercifully happened, understood this secret concerning the will, and who told her that if in her will she would decide to trust, and, putting all her will power into trusting, would utterly ignore her feelings, she would sooner or later get the victory over all her doubts. The poor doubter listened in silence for a few minutes, and then, drawing a long breath, said with emphasis, "Yes, I see it. If I choose in my will to trust, I really am trusting, even though all my feelings say the contrary. I do choose to trust now. I will trust, and I will not be afraid again." As she came to this decision, and thus deliberately put her will on the side of God's will, all the darkness vanished, and her soul was brought out into the glorious light of the Gospel, a light which was never dimmed again until her eyes were opened in the presence of the King (Josh. xxiv, 15). — Hannah Whitehall Smith.

The Spirit of Self-Surrender.

A Christian who will surrender everything else, often stops short of surrendering himself. He can give up the appendages of life, but he cannot give up personality. Very likely he may say, and say repeatedly, "I am Christ's," but he doesn't mean it—not in the thorough and uncompromising sense in which a Christian should mean everything he says.

Let us see what self-surrender really means. It means, in the first place, the entire extinction of the egotistic spirit. In the place of that pronoun which is so persistently prominent in most human minds, that clear-cut, up-and-down "I," the self-surrender Christian will put "the kingdom of Christ." That kingdom will henceforth be the primary, the initial, thing in his thought. He will minister to it as he has heretofore ministered to his own personality. Frederick W. Robertson puts this thought in a very clear light, when, using a clock as an illustration, he says: "If each man had the spirit of self-surrender, the spirit of the cross, it would not matter to him whether he were doing the work of the mainspring or of one of the inferior parts." So long as Christ's kingdom is carried forward, the place and function of personality in it should be of no account whatever.

Of course, this view of the meaning of self-surrender would entirely do away with every disagreement or unpleasantness in the church which arises from questions of individual

preference. No one would envy a church officer, or wish to be in his place, so long as the work of the church, under its present administration, went smoothly and prosperously on.

But self-surrender means something more than the extinction of egoism. It means, in the second place, utter devotion. Partial devotion may be quite consistent with partial surrender; but when a man surrenders himself, the whole current of his life goes into that to which he has surrendered. Unless a man has this feeling, he has not attained to the true spirit of self-surrender. The paramount interest in such a Christian's life must be, and will be, Christ's kingdom. Other things are worthy of attention in so far as they are parts of that kingdom. Business, profession, need not be abandoned, because all the world's commercial activity and commercial resources, all the world's knowledge and equipment and facility, may be made tributary to the cause of Christ. Family, friendships, social intercourse, wholesome recreations, need not be abandoned, for these things, too, minister, directly or indirectly, to the progress of the kingdom. But the self-surrendering Christian must see to it that all these things are tributary, and keep them so. He must turn the goodness and the joyfulness and the powers of them all into the ministry of Christian service.

All this does not mean, in any sense, a revolution or an overturning of the natural human life. It simply means that the natural life shall have a new and more direct and loftier trend. The man himself shall be a better man, the life shall be a better life. The constituents of neither are changed, but all are made to minister to the highest ends. — T. Herald.

Testimony.

When a witness is called at court it is his testimony that is wanted. Neither judge nor jury would be moved by his rhetoric or his opinion. They want to hear what he knows about the case; what he has seen with his own eyes and heard with his own ears; and whatever of this sort he can tell with clearness and positiveness has great weight with the people who hear him, unless, indeed, he is one of the unreliable kind who cannot be believed even under oath.

If a man knows very little about the case except what he has heard from others or has read in the newspapers, he is of little consequence as a witness. Christian testimony, clear, emphatic, straightforward, is what the world wants to hear, or needs to hear, today. Argument and rhetoric have no more weight with unbelievers than second-hand facts have with a court of justice. But they will listen to a man when he says, "I know," or "I feel," or "I have seen" these spiritual verities, especially if his conduct is consistent with his word. There is no service more spiritually helpful than a genuine testimony meeting. "Experience meeting" is the good old-fashioned name for it. There can be no valuable testimony without experience. Sometimes it seems as if the old-fashioned "experience" were dying out, and with it the simple, emphatic testimony, and we get only dissertations on what Paul wrote, or Moses said, or what the speaker himself thinks, until the prayer meeting becomes rather heavy and we are glad when a devotional hymn is announced. Nobody ever found a real testimony meeting dull. Even those who cannot enter into it personally are interested, and often deeply moved.

"Ye are my witness, saith the Lord." He expects us to do for Him what a witness does in court—tell what we know in a straightforward, honest way which will carry the force of proof with it. If we do not know, of course we cannot tell. Can it be that the reason so few give testimony, in word, to the power and grace of the Lord Jesus is because they do not know it really? A Chinese girl who came "out of darkness into marvelous light" said, "I cannot help telling it; my heart pushes it out of my mouth."

There are a few from whom we always expect testimony upon every opportunity; we believe in them, and their experience does us good. But think what it would be in the weekly prayer meeting to have a business man whose voice had never before been heard in such a place, or a woman, a social leader, give a clear, tender testimony to a personal experience with Jesus. How that would thrill hearts! How it would awaken conviction and longing for a like experience! But lips are silent because the song is not in the soul. Timidity sometimes hinders expression, but when the heart is full it does "push" the words out when opportunity is given.

Let us get the experience, the rich, deep, sweet love in our hearts; then

let us tell it; as the Holy Spirit shall direct, for He knoweth the mind of God and will instruct us when and how to speak. — Chris. Advocate.

"I Am Ready."

An honest man pays his debts. Jesus worked a miracle to pay His taxes. The citizen of the new Jerusalem must be honest. There is no bankrupt shield to moral delinquents. "I am a debtor" is quickly followed by "I am ready." The word is taken from the race course. It describes contestants standing with bodies forward, muscles tense, nerves quivering, eyes on the goal, waiting for the signal. When God would draw out the fathomless love of a woman's heart, He lays a helpless babe upon her bosom. When He would call forth the energies of the Church, He lays the helpless world on her heart. He who has not been overwhelmedly felt his obligation to the lost world, can as little understand Paul's spirit as the foam on the river or the surge on the shore can know nothing of the seething white and green beneath the sweep of Niagara. Paul intensified his declaration. "As much as in me is" speaks of a readiness that has back of it the consecration of every power. From the Damascus road to the Ostian Way he had but one thought by day, one dream by night—"that Christ might be glorified in my body, whether by life or by death." His first question was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Twenty-five years have passed. He is an old man, battered and scarred by persecution. He is on his way to Jerusalem. In every city inspired prophets testify that imprisonment awaits him.

With tears his friends beseech him to go no farther. Listen to his answer. It thrills me when I read it: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." The same obligation rests upon us, and should receive a like response. "So, therefore, whosoever there be of you that forsake not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." "We are bought with a price." The redeemed is the property of the Redeemer and is subject to His will. We must covenant with God and with each other for tireless service. The overwhelming passion must be to do God's will. As the organ answers the touch of the player and the ship the land of the pilot, so must our souls respond to Christ. "Go ye into all the world" is to be answered by, "I delight to do Thy will, O God." — Missionary Review.

Riches of the Bible.

Some writer gives the following analysis of the "book of books" the Bible:—It is a book of Laws, to show the right and wrong. It is a book of Wisdom, that makes the foolish wise. It is a book of Truth, which detects all human errors. It is a book of Life, which shows how to avoid everlasting death. It contains the most authentic and entertaining histories ever published. It is a perfect book of divinity. It is a book of Biography. It is a book of Travels. It is a book of Vagaries. It is the best covenant ever made: the best deed ever written. It is the young man's best companion. It is the echo of the boy's best instructor. It is the learned man's masterpiece. It is the ignorant man's dictionary, and every man's directory. It promises an eternal reward to the faithful and believing.—Extract.

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