

Abide With Me.

Abide with me, O Lord!
Mayhap 'in youth's glad time
While listening to the chime
Of all the witchery
Of love's sweet minstrelsy,
I may not think of thee—
But, oh, abide with me.

Abide with me, oh Lord!
If, flushed with earth's success,
I may not thee confess,
Neglectful if I be
When fortune favors me,
These blessings come from thee—
O Lord, abide with me!

Abide with me, O Lord,
E'en if, amidst the strife
Of this engrossing life,
The tempter moveth me
To sin—forgetting thee,
O Lord, abide with me!

Abide with me, O Lord
When sorrow broods around,
And 'neath the cold, dark ground,
Dear eyes close-lidded be,
And I moan helplessly—
O Lord, abide with me!

Abide with me, O Lord,
When life's short span is run,
And woe sinks the sun,
And I at last tread
Alone the Valley Dread—
Alone, if not for thee—
O Father, walk with me!

Abide to-day with me!
I know, for once I gain
The land where thou dost reign
I shall forever be
To all eternity
With thee. But Lord to-day
I may go far astray
If thy dear hand in mine
I feel not—Lord Divine,
I plead to-day with me!
Abide to-day with me!

—Zion's Herald.

Through the Wrong End of the Telescope.

BY ELIJAH F. BROWN.

The Christian who thinks that his or her work is small or unimportant is looking through the wrong end of the telescope. In the twelfth of Romans Paul has endeavored to set such people right by showing that the different members of the body of Christ are of equal importance. He has shown very clearly that no member has a small office, but that all are essential to the perfect man. The conclusion is therefore evident that all members of the body of Christ, if equally faithful, are the same in rank, no matter whether they preach, farm, blacksmith or do housework.

The man who properly fills his providential place, and by so doing comes into harmony with the divine plan, glorifies God, and no matter how humble his sphere or meager his talents he is as great in the sight of heaven as those who have seemed to be giants to the eyes of men. There is no greater career possible than to do well whatever God has given us to do, and whether our calling is high or low, as men judge, we may do our part so well that the Master will say, "Well done." To be a house-keeper or a shoemaker or a teacher or a preacher on Hardscrabble Circuit may be as great, from where angels see, as to be a Moses or a Daniel or a Saul of Tarsus, and it will help us much in guarding against discouragement to look through the glass of faith in a proper way to see that this is true.

There are no bigger places in this world than those filled by those who closely touch the young. Being a king or an emperor may be small business in comparison with being a mother or a teacher or a preacher. Such as these fill places so big that angels would give bushels of diamonds for a chance to swap work with them. Commanding an army may often be nothing more than sweeping and dusting, as compared with holding the hand of a child. The mother of Moses did more for the world than the kings who built the pyramids, and the mother of the Wesleys accomplished a work greater than that of Joan of Arc. Character building is bigger work than building railroads.

It was a greater thing to have had the training of a Bunyan or a Luther or a Simpson than to have been a Caesar or a Napoleon, and to teach a child to hate to lie and love the truth is a greater thing to do than to make a flying machine that could go to the moon. The acorn is greater than the saw log. The man can never do what the boy might have done. There were giants in past time, but there will be greater giants in the time to come. God still has plenty of surprises for us in that line; never fear about that. A button was touched in New York that fired guns all around the world, and yet the man who touched the button never heard one of them; and how much is the work of many an obscure man or woman like this. Unconsciously they set powers in motion that will never stop, and exert a silent influence for good that brings a new world out of chaos, and yet they live on as unconscious of what they are doing as Moses was that his face was shining.

The Christian is looking through the wrong end of the telescope when he does not see that Christ is with him in every good work he undertakes. Moses endured as seeing Him who is invisible, and the only way we can have victory all the way through life is to do the same. Elijah got under the juniper tree because he reversed the field glass of faith, and began looking at things in the wrong way. We do not conclude that the sun has gone out of existence whenever the sky grows dark, and we should not conclude that Christ has forsaken us because success fails to come just as we may have expected. When we have done our prayerful best, and nothing seems to happen, we should cry out to our weak faith, "Go again; look toward the sea."

We must refuse to let doubt plant its feet upon our threshold. "Though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea"—the most unlikely thing that could happen—we must go straight on, trusting God for ground to step on. Instead of looking to see whether the walls of Jericho have been cracked by our marching around them, we must shout with full confidence that God will throw them down when the proper time comes.

Daniel had no fear of the lions' den because he was looking through the right end of the telescope, and could see that the lions' mouths were bound. Paul and Silas looked at the Philippian jail through the right end of the telescope, and what they saw made them almost shout the prison down. It was by looking through the right end of the glass of faith that Abel could see how properly to worship God, and it was by doing the same thing that the vision of Enoch became so clear that he could step over the grave without falling into it.

By looking through the right end of the telescope in his distant home in Ur of the Chaldees, Abram could see that the best thing for him to do would be to strike his tent and start for the rising sun, without knowing whither he went; and with this same telescope closely pressed to his eye he was afterward able to discover a city which had foundations, and whose maker and builder was God. Looking through the same glass of faith, his heart laughed on receiving God's promise that a son should be born to him in his old age; and it was by looking again, and seeing no frown on the face of his Lord, that he was able to offer up Isaac, knowing that He in whom he trusted could raise him from the dead. He staggered not at the promises, because he looked in the proper way, and was made so strong by what he saw that he could always give glory to God for what he knew was going to happen in the distance, no matter what was going on close by. This made it an easy matter for him to be fully persuaded that what the Lord had promised He would perform, and in doing this he kept the recording angel busy in giving him credit for righteousness.

It was looking through the right end of the telescope that Moses could see in the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. By doing the same thing others in later times subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched fire, and escaped the edge of the sword by putting to flight the armies that threatened them. Others who also looked through the glass in the right way saw such heavenly rewards awaiting them that mockings and scourings, imprisonment and martyrdom were gladly welcomed for the sake of Christ.

By looking through the wrong end of the telescope Zacharias was stricken dumb, while Mary, by looking in the right way, was able to say, "Be it unto me according to Thy word," and for saying it became the most blessed of women. By looking in the wrong way Judas betrayed his Master and Peter denied him; but by looking in the right way the woman who broke the alabaster box could see that she was not wasting her precious ointment. It was by looking aright that Stephen could look into heaven and pray for those who stoned him, and by doing the same Paul could say, "To die is gain; to live is Christ."

Thank God, the same great glass of faith may still be used in the right way by us, and whenever it is the Delectable Mountains may still be seen! It has not been damaged or impaired in the slightest, but seems to grow better with age and use. What it has done for those who have gone before it will still do, if we will but turn it toward the heavens when we find ourselves in a tight place. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Let us believe it, and then live that way.—Chris. Advocate.

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The Fear of God.

It has been suggested that men do not fear God now as they did in former times. Some prominent facts appear to confirm this suggestion. The law of the Sabbath is ignored and trampled under foot in these days not only by worldly men and women, but also by many professing Christians. The corruption of municipal government in every city and town in the United States is notorious. The prevalence of a spirit of greed is manifest. This spirit overrides every restraint of conscience and law, and every rule of virtue and honesty. These things indicate that men do not fear God very much. This principle is less pronounced and less active than it was in former times. In the daily newspapers, in popular works of fiction, in the amusements which are tolerated and encouraged by public sentiment and patronized by men and women who claim to represent the best circles of society, there are signs of the decay of the fear of God.

It may be that modern biblical criticism has contributed something to this state of the public mind. Biblical criticism should not be disparaged. Eminent scholars who spend their lives in the study of the Bible are honest and sincere men. Their labor will, in the end, prove advantageous to the cause of the Gospel. But they are often misrepresented and misinterpreted. The newspapers often tell us that eminent scholars have said certain things about the Bible or some part of the Bible, when they have said no such thing. But the false interpretation of their views will take a deeper hold on the public mind for the time being than the correct report. It should also be remembered that the most recent utterances of an eminent scholar concerning the Bible are not always the most mature conclusions of scholarship. They are to be tried by further investigation. They may be modified, corrected, or set aside by the inquiries of scholars still more eminent and capable. But in the meantime multitudes are unfavorably affected toward the Bible by reports of what great scholars have concluded. Men are now saying, "Since scholarly teachers hold such loose views concerning God and His word, it surely matters little what we believe and what we reject."

Perhaps the pulpit must share the blame for the decline of the fear of God. It is the business of the preacher to declare what God has said, not what he thinks. He is not a philosopher setting forth his own speculations, but a herald proclaiming the message of the King. The word of God does not always come from the pulpit with authority. It is to be feared that the love and mercy of God have been emphasized, in the preaching of our times, to the disparagement of His justice and wrath. God is love, and His mercy is everlasting; but if we dwell on His love and mercy altogether, and neglect to declare His justice and wrath, we misrepresent His character and weaken the force of His truth.

Jesus emphasized the love of God, but He spoke quite as distinctly of His wrath and indignation against sin. It was Jesus who said: "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." Strenuous efforts have been made to break the force of these words, but they shall stand until heaven and earth shall pass away. They teach us that fear, in the sense of dread of punishment, is a legitimate feeling. It is a religious principle, a Christian virtue. This is the principle which seems to be fading out. It is fading out because the doctrine on which it rests is fading out. We are told that the doctrine of future punishment for sin is a pagan doctrine, and that it has no place in modern theology. Many preachers who profess to believe that it is a true and essential doctrine never say anything about it in the pulpit.

No one imagines that sinners can be frightened into religion. It is not the object of the Gospel to frighten men into the kingdom of God, but to set forth the truth. One cannot be carried up the river to its source by the current which flows downward. Still the current does flow downward. No one thinks of sending boats upward on that current. But no wise man will ignore the current. In his effort to send vessels to the mouth of the river he will recognize the current and provide for it. Men cannot be brought to God by the fear of hell. Still hell is to be dreaded, and the current which sweeps men downward must be overcome. Fear which has torment carries men away from God, but filial reverence, which is a fruit of the Spirit, carries them toward Him and causes them to seek His face and rejoice in His fellowship. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Prayer And Revivals.

One hundred thousand persons were reported as having connected themselves with churches as the result of the revival which broke out at Rochester, N. Y., in 1830, under the labors of Charles G. Finney, and spread throughout that region of the State. Mr. Finney attributed his success to the spirit of prayer which prevailed, as the following from his autobiography will show. Is this not now the great need of the church?

"When I was on my way to Rochester as we passed through a village, some thirty miles east of Rochester, a brother minister whom I knew seeing me on the canal-boat, jumped aboard to have a little conversation with me, intending to ride but a little way and return. He, however, became interested in conversation, and upon finding where I was going, he made up his mind to keep on and go with me to Rochester. We had been there but a few days when this minister became so convicted that he could not help weeping aloud, at one time, as he passed along the street. The Lord gave him a powerful spirit of prayer, and his heart was broken. As he and I prayed together, I was struck with his faith in regard to what the Lord was going to do there. I recollect he would say, 'Lord, I do not know how it is; but I seem to know that thou art going to do a great work in this city.' The spirit of prayer was poured out powerfully, so much so, that some persons stayed away from the public services to pray, being unable to restrain their feelings under preaching."

Hints From Pew to Pulpit.

Preaching should vary in character to suit occasions and classes, but with milk, meat or medicine, the bread of life and the water of salvation should always be offered.

Practical applications of truth and command are what people need and what will fill the pews. The evangelists understand this but others should take advantage of the fact. (Abusive language and slang phrases are not recommended.)

Exposures are all received, the history of a sermon's evolution is recalled for, special attention called to a forthcoming illustration takes off its edge and a David working in a Saul's armor is a painful spectacle.

Denominational interests regularly and rightly advocated from the pulpit will not weaken a pastor's local influence and support, and in choosing candidates for pastorates, if nothing else is known of them, it is safest to choose those who are known to systematically work for missions, education and denominational literature.

Ministerial dignity may be more marked in the pulpit than elsewhere but the people always expect it to be a part of a pastor's character. Dignity does not necessarily or desirably make an unbridled chasm between pew and pulpit or pastor and people. Mutual sympathy solves the question of successful preaching and pastorates.

The most nearly perfect pastor will keep in close contact with the Holy Spirit, cultivate acquaintance with his people, study human nature and needs, and be humble, courteous, studious, loyal and faithful.—Free Baptist.

Weeping And Praying.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman concludes a sermon from the text, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes," beautifully, impressively, as follows: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. That mother who is praying every day at four o'clock in the afternoon for her boy, let her not be discouraged; her tears are not in vain; it is one of the promises of the Book of God, that she shall reap in the greatest joy. 'He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing the sheaves with him.' Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. And there is still another promise, and that the most precious. If after all our longing for souls, our friends should still be unsaved, if when we reach that beautiful city there should be tears in our eyes, we are told that God himself shall wipe them all away. Just a word in closing to those who are not yet saved. Matthew tells us that all shall be cast into outer darkness who know not the Lord. 'And there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' In the Revelation, we are told that when he cometh, 'every eye shall see him and they also which pierced him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.' And Matthew tells us again, 'These shall go away into everlasting darkness, and there shall be weeping and wailing.' I think I hear that great procession moving now. Trump! tramp! tramp! And that is why I cry out with David, 'Rivers of waters run down mine eyes.'"

Origin of Church Pews.

The congregation in the little village of H— was in a strange commotion. They were a help but prove interesting. In the early days of the Anglo-Saxon and some of the Norman churches, a stone bench afforded the only sitting accommodations for members or visitors. In the year 1319 the people are spoken of as sitting on the ground or in a standing posture. At a later period the people introduced low, three-legged stools, and they were placed in no order in the church. Directly after the Norman conquest seats came in fashion. In 1387 a decree was issued that none should call any seat his own except noblemen and patrons, each entering and holding the first one he found. From 1530 to 1630 seats were more appropriated, a crowsbar guarded the entrance, bearing the initial of the owner. It was in 1508 that galleries were thought of. And as early as 1614 pews were arranged to afford comfort by being raised or cushioned, while the sides around were so high as to hide the occupants—a device of the Puritans to avoid being seen by the officer, who reported those who did not bow when the name of Jesus was announced.—Selected.

Saved His Life.

In a certain battle a soldier was seen to fall, and, on being picked up, it was found that he was simply stunned. There was a bullet-hole through his clothing but no blood could be found. Upon examination, it was found that the bullet had lodged in a Bible which was in his inside pocket, and which had therefore saved his life. This is not the first time the Bible has saved a person's life. Many are being saved by it every day. The Bible is the text-book of the Sunday-school, and about thirty millions of people throughout the world are engaged in the study of the word. Thousands and thousands are being saved every year through the study of the Book. The Sunday-school has done more to popularize the Bible and to increase its circulation than any other agency in the world. The Bible is printed in more sizes and languages and more copies are sold than any other book published.

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