

THE WEALTH OF THE TRUE BELIEVER

By Dr. Asa Mahan.

"Thou art rich."—Rev. 2:9.

These words constitute a part of Christ's message to the Church in Smyrna, a church whose members were very poor, so far as worldly possessions were concerned, and were also subject to great tribulations through dire persecutions from the civil authorities and their enemies around them, tribulations which were to be endured for an indefinite period in the future.

In view of all these impressive facts, Christ tells them "they are rich," and exhorts them to "fear none of the things which they should suffer." They had only, through grace, to continue steadfast until the close of this short life, and they would receive at His hands a crown of glory, on the one hand, and to all eternity they should not be "hurt of the second death" on the other.

Christ had taken a careful inventory of the estate of these believers. He had taken into full and exact account all the tribulations and trials of faith which they had endured, were then enduring, and would endure in the future of their lives, on the one hand; and on the other, the ever enduring consolation and good hopes which they had in present possession, and the infinite and eternal weight of glory in reserve for them in the endless future which awaited them in the kingdom of glory above. The result of the unerring inventory under consideration was an infinite balance in their favor. They were rich—every believer among them who was holding fast his integrity. "I know thy works and tribulations and poverty; but thou art rich."

Dear Christian, for I speak now only to such as have not "cast away their confidence," who are walking with God, and whose fellowship is (now) with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, have you taken, and are you accustomed to take, a careful inventory of your estate as a believer in Jesus? Take into full account all the deprivations, calamities, pains, sicknesses, and fiery trials which have befallen you in the past, what you may now be called to suffer, and the worst that can await you in the future of life. Then set over against all these, the everlasting consolations, good hopes, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, which has kept your heart and mind by Christ Jesus in the past, which you enjoy in present fruition, and which awaits your future in life, on the one hand; and on the other, "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" kept in reserve for you, when Christ shall come to you, and receive you unto Himself that where He is you may be also. Nor should you leave out of the account the immortal virtues which "the sufferings of this present time," as they are patiently endured, are continuously generating, developing, strengthening, and perfecting in your character. In view of such facts and considerations, we cease to wonder that Paul, after taking a similar inventory of his estate in Christ, assures us that he "gloried in tribulation," and "took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake."

This, Christian, is the hidden secret of perfect content under all allotments of Providence, of being "kept in perfect peace," and "always rejoicing," even when "as sorrowful." And this is the Divine lesson which every Person of the Sacred Trinity is ever present to teach you.—Selected.

A BOY BROKE IT.

One always feels badly to see a beautiful thing broken, like a lovely vase that stood on the mantel in the parlor. I have known a child to have a good cry over a broken toy that didn't cost much. And it is all the worse when the broken thing can not be mended. Something was broken one day which was very beautiful and precious, and it can never be mended. It was a mother's heart.

"And who broke it?" It was her own son, a boy of about fifteen. "Did he mean to do it?" Oh, I think not. "Then, how did it happen?" I must tell you the story, though it is very sad. I am sure he loved his mother, for one evening I saw him kiss her good-night. But he broke her heart after all.

He began by going with bad boys who taught him evil things. Then he commenced to deceive his mother, because he didn't want her to know. After a while he began taking things that did not belong to him—just little things at first.

One evening his mother sent him to her room on an errand, and there he saw some money which she had saved by hard work. It was all she had. Yet he took it and ran away with some of his bad companions. She never heard of him again until a newspaper man came one day to tell her that her boy was dead in a far-away city. As I tried to comfort her, she said, "Oh, I don't want to be comforted." Her heart was broken.

Every boy is in trust with his mother's heart. He can make it glad or he can break it. And a mother's heart is the most precious thing in all the world. When it is broken the angels weep.—Selected.

JOY AND REJOICING.

One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is joy, and rejoicing is the overflow of Joy. It is right to rejoice. The joy of the Lord is the Christian's strength. In his "presence is fullness of joy;" at His "right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Joy is heavenly. There is rejoicing in heaven. There is joy in the presence of the angels of heaven. When a sinner repents the angels rejoice, so do the saints on earth, and when one turns to God in humble repentance, it brings joy to his own heart as well.

There are seasons of rejoicing from the presence of the Lord. The righteous have a right to rejoice. "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them; let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous: with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield." David testified: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." The old prophet

Habakkuk testified: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The joy that wells up in the heart is not affected by transitory things. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The joy that the Lord gives, the joy of the Holy Ghost, no man can take away. Those who live close to the Lord and walk in communion with Him are able to "rejoice ever more," and to give thanks in everything, and even to count it all joy when they fall into divers temptations." Finally, there will be great joy and rejoicing when the Lord comes; for then it will be said, "Let us be glad and rejoice for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

L. B. W.

We had an item in our last issue under the caption "What Next?" Here is the answer sent us from Vancouver, B. C.:

CHURCH DECIDES TO HOLD SERVICE AT 10 O'CLOCK.

Desires to Accommodate Members Who Want to Play Golf or Go to Beaches or Parks.

Chicago, June 7—St. George's Episcopal church in Stuyvesant Square, New York, this week, changed the 11 o'clock hour for Sunday morning services, despite the precedent of its hundred years, and will assemble the congregation at 10 a.m. "The thought back of the change," said Myron Chandler, executive secretary of the church, "is to permit our congregation to get off earlier for the day. Many of them want to play golf or go motoring or, perhaps, take a run down to one of the beaches."

The New York view found instant acceptance from Bishop Samuel Fallows, Dr. John Thompson, and other clerical leaders in Chicago.

It was pointed out that the present hour of the morning service cuts into the Sabbath so as to make it very inconvenient for the members of the congregations to get away from their homes before afternoon.

If the services were an hour earlier, it was said, it would not only permit churchgoers to get away from their homes, but would cause many who now omit divine service from their Sunday programme to include it without spoiling the rest of their plans.

Jesus said: "And the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Others "eat and rise up to play."

"Those who disregard the Sabbath of God, will soon disregard the God of the Sabbath."

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

What about an old man? Many of them seem to be neglecting this very vital question.