

THE UNCHANGED AND UNCHANGING
COMMAND.

The supreme command of the Bible is: "Be ye holy." We like the translation of Martin Luther: "It stands written, be ye holy." (I Peters 1:16). It stands written. It is there to stay. Men may compromise, modify, or emasculate ecclesiastical laws from time to time to suit the carnal mind of majorities, but God never. How much it means to have an unchanging standard that is the same in all ages and generations! God never tones down to suit a backslidden age or times. He never accommodates himself to any claims of "advanced thought" or "new theology." When men modify a clear cut, definite command, they do it to cater to a lowered estimate of moral and spiritual things. Modification and compromise are the demands of a carnal mind. They not only tone down, but the commands come to mean little or nothing.

When the Methodist church took out of its Discipline the specific warning against the "dance and theater," and substituted "special advices" against the "taking of such diversions as can not be used in the name of the Lord Jesus," many felt that it was a letting down. It satisfied those who had been clamoring for the removal of the obnoxious clause by making it mean little or nothing. The Church thereby lost its high privilege of witnessing against the two chief recruiting agencies of the devil and made it easier for man to enlist under his banner. It was considered a great victory for those who wished to indulge in these two amusements that are sending many young people to hell.

Compromise means surrender. We like the command: "Be ye holy," for it stands for something definite. It does not mean, "Be as good as you can," or "Be better than you are," or "Get more religion," or "Nearer, my God, to thee."

Holiness teaching and living may rise or fall, be popular or unpopular; all may forsake it; indifference may bury it under waves of contempt, but "it stands written, be ye holy." It is a great headland against which the waves of ridicule, indifference and persecution beat, but when they recede there it stands in God's word, and will remain forever.

CONNECT WITH THE MAIN.

The first thing to be done with the hose of a fire engine is to connect it with the main, and when you have done that you can direct the nozzle of the pipe to selected spots and play upon them. Get into living touch with Jesus Christ, and you will grow.

Exercise is essential for growth. Unused muscles atrophy, like the fakir's arm that has been held up for twenty years in one position, and now is stiff and rigid as a bar of iron. Use the grace that you have, and practice the truth that you are sure of, and the grace will grow, and other truths will be made clear.—Alexander MacLaren.

The problem of life is not to make life easier, but to make men stronger.

BARREN PLAINS OF SODOM

Recently while descending the rugged mountains from Jerusamel toward the Jordan Valley on the fine military road, we passed the place called the tomb of "Moses the Prophet" by the Mohammedans who make there a great annual pilgrimage. While every Bible reader will know that Moses never passed over Jordan, yet these deluded people believe that this is the site of the prophet's burial.

But once past this place and down to the old historic plain, a scene of desolation confronts the eye in what was once tation confronts the eye in what was once the famous valley which attracted the selfish eye of Lot in the Plains of Sodom. For miles we pass over this place now under the curse, until we reach the shores of the sea of death (Dead Sea) with its death-dealing waters. It is said that a bird never flies across it and fish floating into it from the Jordan are slain by its briny waters and are soon washed upon the shores.

Only a few miles away is the point on the Jordan where the Israelites crossed into Canaan. As we sped along across the plain we could see clearly the mount where Moses viewed the promised land and Mt. Nebo where God buried him. We were struck with the great change which had taken place in this once fruitful land which had resembled Paradise in the days of Abraham. We remembered the poet's vision expressed in the song,

"A land of corn and wine and oil,
Favored with God's peculiar smile,
With every blessing blest.
Rivers of milk and honey flow,
And all the fruits of Paradise
In endless plenty grow."

As our little company sang this hymn we looked by faith to its spiritual fulfillment, and the blessing of God came down, and the hymn of praise was mingled with shouts of victory.

Also there by the sacred river a new beauty was felt in that old familiar song:

"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wistful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land
Where my possessions lie.
Could we but stand where Moses stood
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's waves, nor death's cold
flood

Could keep us from the shore."

It is now expected that under the control of the returning Jews, through their irrigation schemes and industry, this barren "wilderness shall blossom as the rose" and "break forth into joy and singing." The morning of fair Zion breaks and her glory-crowned King is at our doors.—L. E. Glenn.

LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of times can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with, year by year; you will never be forgotten—your name, your deeds, will be legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of Heaven.—Chalmers.

A DAY AT A TIME

Some of us may be facing a year that will be full of bitter trials. It will be a hard and sorrowful new year for some; indeed for many. Let all such remember that they have to live only a day at a time. When you look ahead for three hundred and sixty-five days, the burden seems more than can be borne; but any one can bear any burden for a day, and that is all we have to do—just at a time. Tomorrow the burden may be lifted—who knows? And anyway, if it is not lifted, then it has to be carried still only one day at a time.

New year's resolutions are broken so often that they are much ridiculed but that is foolish, for even if they are kept but a day, that day is so much clear gain. Let us not hesitate to make good resolutions because we are afraid that we shall break them. Let us add to our good resolutions this one, that we shall not break any of our resolutions, but if we do, that we shall take them up again right away, and go on with them as if they had never been broken. A broken resolution can be mended, and mended perfectly if we persevere. It is hard work, to be sure, but with Christ's help it can be done.

I am not careful for what may be a hundred years hence. He who governed the world before I was, will take care of it when I am dead. My part is to improve the present.—J. Wesley.

A MAGNATE OF GOD.

Whene'er I am in God's employ
I am a millionaire of joy,
A millionaire of song and love,
When weak in hatred like a dove —
A magnate am I of delight
Whenever God is in my sight.
A sun is setting in my heart
When with the ways of heaven I part;
A sun is rising in my soul
When, God, with Thee I dare enroll;
All heaven descends to me with song
When, God, Thy love in me grows strong.
The earth to me's more fair and sure
The more my life is white and pure.
Oh, let me not forget one sin,
However, Thy harrows hurt within;
Whene'er I am in God's employ
I am a Croesus of song and joy;
Whene'er I lift my eyes above
I am a millionaire of love.
Whene'er with love my feet are shod
I am a millionaire of God.

—By Alter Abelson.

A HOLY LIFE

A holy life is made up of a number of small things. Little words, not eloquent speeches or sermons; little deeds, not miracles, nor battles, nor one great heroic act, nor martyrdom, make up the true Christian life. The little constant sunbeam, not the lightning; the waters of Siloam "that go softly" in their meek mission of refreshment, not the waters of the river, great and many, rushing down in torrent noise and force, are the true symbols of a holy life. The avoidance of little evils, little sins, little inconsistencies, little weaknesses, little foibles, little indulgences of self and of the flesh—the avoidance of such little things as these goes far to make up, at least, the negative beauty of a holy life.—Selected.