

THE WEEDS AND THE HARVEST

Farmers have the problem of weeds ever with them. Weed seed is sometimes found with the wheat or other grain. If not, perhaps in unaccountable ways the weeds are seeded and grow. The battle never ends.

It is just so in the realm of moral and religious things. The parents use all caution to protect the children. But by and by a bad word, strange remarks, or evil acts show someone has sowed bad seed in this field. We should do what we can to protect those of the household. Nevertheless, they cannot grow up as hothouse plants. They must have their contacts with the world. Their greatest defense must be from within.

Also the church is receptive soil. Good is continually sown here. But envy, jealousy, or evil surmising can come in, broadcast by the devil and his friends. How much trouble is caused! And what poor harvests sometimes result where the weeds are allowed to grow!

There does come a harvest time. What is good grain remains will be treasured. The rest—bad seed, chaff, and all associated with these—must be destroyed. To those who sow good grain there is the encouragement and the promise that in spite of every competitive and soil-sapping, foreign growth the good seed will, some of it, bring forth thirty, sixty or a hundredfold.

Plow, plant, husband and harvest. That is our part. God gives the increase.—Free Methodist.

THE SPIRIT OF HOME MISSIONS

I am the Spirit of Home Missions.
I was born in the heart of the lowly.
My ancestors were pioneers.
My mother is the Church.
My father is the spirit of righteous adventure.
In my early life I fought against ease and stagnation.
I blazed the trails in thought and endeavor.
I slept in the great forests of the West.
I drank from her running brooks.
My footprints are seen everywhere.
I searched for stout hearts and found them:
John Stewart, Jason Lee, McKendree, Brother Van, Forsyth.
I have increased courage in the hearts of men who dare.
I always keep "on the line of discovery."
I have welcomed the new-born babe in the frontier cabin.
I walk the crowded city streets.
I visit the sick.
I preach the Gospel to the poor.
I gave the negro my right hand and helped him up.
I welcome the immigrant
And show kindness to the stranger in our land.
I help build your churches,
Your schools, colleges, hospitals, homes.
I help educate your youth and train your ministers.
I live because I serve.
I am not a formal organization:
Departments, bureaus, secretaries, treasurers.
These are only my framework.
I am a spirit,
Commissioned of God and blest by the lowly Nazarene;
I must help men in heroic tasks—
For humanity gnaws at my heart.
Therefore let me go to the needy places.
My spirit must live!
—The Christian Advocate

TITHING

By Rev. C. E. Rose

1. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine". (Prov. 3:9, 10).

A great blessing awaits all those who give to God what belongs to Him.

2. A tenth belongs to God, and when we withhold the tenth from Him, and our offerings, we are robbing God. Robbers we put in jail. But God lets them go free, and we have these robbers all over the country running free.

In Malachi 3:8, 9 we are told we have robbed God. A Negro woman in the south, collecting for the church, came to Rastus and said, "Rastus, we have come to collect some money for the church." Rastus says, "I ain't got no money for the church. I owes everybody in dis here country." "But, Rastus, don't yo' owe de Lord something?" "Oh, yes, I knows I owes de Lord, but He don't bother me like dese other folks do."

No, God lets these robbers go free. We are not only robbing God but we are robbing ourselves. And thousands in this country and other countries are without food and shelter today because they have robbed God.

In Malachi 3:10-12 God gives us a remedy. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:11: "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sake, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." Verse 12: "And a nation shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

Do we believe God? Can we trust Him?

David says in Psa. 37:25: "I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." David here is telling his own experience, and I believe he told the truth.

In Prov. 11:24 we read: "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meat (or more than belongs to us), but it tendeth to poverty." Verse 25: "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete, withal, it shall be measured to you again."

I am not writing of random, for I know whereof I speak. I have tried this for forty years, and I know this is true. So if you would like these blessings, swing in line and give God a chance to do His best for you. When we do our part God will never fail to do His part. Amen.—Free Methodist.

CHRISTIAN IMPERFECTION

Perfection is always greatly advantageous over imperfection. In accord with truth let us confess that there is much—more—imperfection in Christendom than the former. That there are degrees in excellence Mr. Wesley admits. There are "first-fruits" in grace before the full harvest. There are infancy, childhood, "young men," before there are "fathers." Discovering the facts of imperfection as

contrasted with Christian perfection, multitudes are willing—more than willing—to live (?) in the primary stages. These facts are patent to all. Wailings and complaints from pulpit and pews about defalcations, infidelities (small and large) among the brethren.

Machinery works best when perfect—mechanically. Imperfect it works faultily—if at all. With shame we observe and reflect on the delay and dilatory fulfilling of the Command Commission to evangelize the world—to "preach the gospel to every creature." The church as a whole is verily dilatory—remiss—in her task, and that we know right well. In the local fields there is great wheat going to waste, because the harvest is great and the laborers few. But in personal and individual experience and conduct we see so much of imperfection, and here is the lament. The defective "sample copies" of the "living (?) epistles" being "read and known of all men" contradict (often) the written Word, and mightily hinder the propagation of religion pure and undefiled. If "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," what of the man Christians living faultily who in the hours of death tremblingly approach the threshold of eternity? A preacher of note and large harvests of souls was, the last two weeks of life, repenting and seeking recovery of the witness. And how many cases does every aged pastor remember where much adjustment had to be made on dying beds and much of the "first works" of salvation to be done over and over ere some saints were prepared for the judgment. The alibis for these shortcomings are defective nerves, the altitude, heredity, environment, bad neighbors, and so forth.

These statements are not debatable—the exhibit is open to all—"admission free."—Wesleyan Methodist.

PROCRASTINATION

A man called his sons around his dying bed and gave them the following narrative:

"When I was a youth, the Spirit strove with me and seemed to say, 'Seek salvation now,' but Satan suggested the necessity of waiting until I grew up, as it would be incompatible with youthful amusement. So I resolved I would wait until I grew to be a man. I did so, and was then reminded of my promise to seek salvation. But Satan again advised me to wait until middle age, for business and a growing family demanded all my attention. And so I agreed to do so. My serious impressions left me for several years. But finally they were again renewed, and conscience reminded me of my promises. The Holy Spirit said, 'Seek salvation now.' Then I had less time than ever, but Satan advised me to wait until I was old; then my children would be settled in business, and I would have nothing else to do,—I could then give my undivided attention to it. I listened to his suggestion, and the Spirit ceased to strive with me.

"I have lived to be an old man, but now I have no desire, as formerly, to attend to the welfare of my soul,—my heart is hardened. I have resisted and quenched the Spirit, and there is no hope. Already I feel hell within my breast,—the beginning of my eternal misery. I feel the gnawings of that worm that never dies. Take warning from my miserable end; seek salvation NOW,—let nothing tempt you to put off this important concern."

Then, in the greatest agonies, he expired. It is dreadful to trifle with the Holy Spirit of God!
—Author Unknown.