

HIDDEN TREASURES

A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE GREEK LANGUAGE

By J. A. Huffman, D.D.

No, we are not going to attempt to make Greeks of Englishmen, nor compel our readers to learn the Greek tongue. A few facts, however, may help to orient some of us into a larger appreciation of this wonderful language, and relieve the sense of strangeness when we speak of it, before we proceed further with this series.

First, it is the consensus of good scholarship that Jesus spoke the Greek, and delivered His addresses and carried on His conversations in the koine, by which is meant the spoken Greek of Jesus' day. The Aramaic, a dialect of the Hebrew, was His mother tongue. At times of great stress and crisis Jesus recurred to the use of His childhood Aramaic when, as recorded in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34, He uttered from the cross these words: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which is the Aramaic for "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There are parallel incidents of this nature on record where men whose native tongues were German, French or Italian, but who had adopted the English for general use, were heard to speak in their native tongues spontaneously when they were faced with stress or crisis.

But many people speak more Greek than they are aware of. These are English words which are formed by the compounding of Greek words and spelling them out into the English. Next to the Latin, more English words are formed from the Greek than any other tongue.

In the field of theology, as well as that of science, there is one series of English words familiar to most people. The one Greek word compounded with various others which is used so very frequently is the word logos, which is the Greek for the English word word. When it is combined with another word, it means the word about, or science of, as follows:

In the word "theology" the compounds are the Greek word Theos, which means God, and logos, which is "word," and compounded means the word about or science of God.

Christology is compounded of the Greek word Christos, which means Christ, and logos—meaning words about Christ.

Anthropology is compounded of the Greek words anthropos and logos—and means words about man.

Psychology is compounded of the Greek words Pseuchos and logos, which means the words about the soul.

All words ending in "ology" are Greek compounds, and every one of us uses them freely.

There are some other miscellaneous Greek compounds, familiar to all and very interesting, as follows:

Hydrophobia, the disease of a mad dog, is compounded of the Greek words Hydor, which means water, and phobeo, which is the word for fear, meaning water-fear, a symptom of hydrophobia.

Hippopotamus is compounded of Hippos, the Greek word for horse, and potamos, which is river, meaning river horse—what a hippopotamus really is.

The word lithography is compounded of one Greek word for stone, lithos, and another

grapho, which is the verb "to write," meaning stone-writing, which characterized the process of lithography.

The word phonograph is formed by the Greek words phona, a voice, and grapho, to write, meaning voice-writing.

These few words, and many familiar ones which might be listed, prove the writer's thesis, that English-speaking people talk more Greek than most of them are aware of.

I SHALL NOT WANT

J. B. Chapman, D.D.

The word want has a variable meaning covering a scope beginning with mere weak wishing and extending to the most extreme need—as when we speak of a family as being "in want." It would be ruinous to us for God to meet our passing whims and unsifted wishes. For this very reason we should inject "according to Thy will" into every petition. But God does propose to meet those wants that are real.

Sometimes people say, "We are bound to live." But that is not quite true. As Christians we are bound to do right, even if doing right means that we must die untimely. We cannot, therefore, claim that our mortal life is unconditionally assured, but we can claim that grace is vouched unto us to enable us to live the days of our mortal life in righteousness and true holiness.

"The Christian's secret of a happy life" involves and demands the elimination of weak and passing wishes, or at least the submerging of them in the will of God, and the exchanging of them for things that really matter. One description of a good man is that "He is a man of simple tastes and few wants." One of the early Methodist poets sang, "Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long." All this explains why a devout Christian can still say, "I shall not want," when at the moment he is poor, sick, and friendless; for every desire and thought of his is made captive to the will of Christ.

But there are wants that are real, and their character is such that none but God can supply them. Every sinner wants (in the full sense of dire need) pardon for his guilt. Every believer wants purity of heart and life. Every Christian of whatever rank wants strength to sustain him in the hour of temptation and trial and to uphold him in his daily task, and God will supply all these needs for those who trust Him. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

Eternal life is both a state and a duration. That is why we may sing of "Eternal life begun below." In such lines we are describing the state. Such a state, as suggested by Professor Henry Drummond, involves the removing of spiritual friction; for friction causes wear, and wear means ultimate collapse. And then eternal life has respect to duration—to live without friction forever. It is said of the people of heaven that they "shall never hunger." By this we do not understand that they will be without cravings, but rather that the means for satisfying these cravings will be immediate and abundant. They will always be close to the tree of life from which they may eat; they will always be near the river of life from which they may drink; they will be monumental pillars in the house of God, and hence shall have a home forever more. They shall behold the fact of God. That is, they shall be in His full favor, and beyond this they ask no favor at all.

CONSECRATED TIME

Sleep, company, idle visiting, foolish talking and jesting, idle reading, unprofitable occupations, engross time that might have been redeemed for prayer.

Why is there little forethought in the laying out of time and employments so as to secure a large portion of each day for prayer? Why is there so much running to and fro, yet so little prayer? Why so much bustle and business, yet so little prayer? Why so many meetings with our fellowmen, yet so few meetings with God? Why so little being alone, so little thirsting of soul for the calm sweet hours of unbroken solitude when God and His child hold fellowship together as if they could never part.

It is want of these solitary hours that not only injures our own growth in grace, but makes us such unprofitable members of the Church of Christ, and renders our lives useless. In order to grow in grace we must be much alone. It is not in society—even Christian society—that the soul grows most rapidly and vigorously. In one single hour of prayer it will often make more progress than in days of company with others.

It is in the desert that the dew falls freshest. So with the soul. It is when none but Christ is nigh, when His presence alone, like the desert air in which there is mingled no noxious breath of man, surrounds and pervades the soul, it is then that the eye gets the clearest, simplest view of eternal certainties; it is then that the soul gathers in wondrous refreshments and power and energy. And so it is also in this way that we become truly useful to others. It is when coming out fresh from communion with God that we go forth to do His work successfully. It is in the closet that we get our vessels so filled with blessing that when we come forth we cannot contain it to ourselves, but must, as by a blessed necessity, pour out whithersoever we go.

Our vacant hours are generally the most pleasing and useful to ourselves; we can scarcely employ them better than by consecrating them to the renewing of our strength by a sweet and intimate communion with God.

—Unknown.

"REDEEM THE TIME"

The time is short;
If thou would'st work for God, it must be now;
If thou would'st win the garlands for thy brow,
Redeem the time.

—H. Bonar

The reality and not the appearance of virtue is to be followed above all things, as well in public as in private life.—Socrates.

WEDDINGS

Clark—Wilson

At the United Baptist Church, Sanford, Maine, December 6th, 1947, Marguerite Wilson, daughter of Rev. H. S. Wilson, was united in marriage to Dr. W. G. Clark. Rev. J. L. Quigg performed the ceremony.

Bagley-Laffoley

At the Reformed Baptist parsonage in Seal Cove, N. B., on December 27th, Muriel Bernice Laffoley and Austin Craig Bagley, both of Seal Cove, were united in marriage by Rev. Ronald T. Sabine.