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Sermon.

For the Lutheran Visitor.
The Sphere and Mission of Woman.

BY REV. JACOB HAWKINS.

[Published by request of his congregation.]

"Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, who had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. There he made him a supper, and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment."

In this lovely picture of home life, we discover the true ideal of the sphere and mission of woman. That sphere is the home circle, and that mission is the ministration of love and affection to all within the circle of home influence. After all that has been said in praise of modern civilization and the improvements and refinements of modern society and their contributions to domestic happiness, yet we must go back eighteen hundred years to the home scenes recorded in the Bible to find the original of the home where the lovely graces of unaffected piety and the unadorned simplicity of nature blend in beautiful harmony, forming the only foundation upon which pure domestic bliss can rest. The historian has happily adorned his pages with the heroic and the devotion of woman; the artist has represented her charms and graces in the delicate touches of his magic pencil; the poet has sung her just praises in the flowing strains of his verse; but in nothing do we behold her beauty, her loveliness, her worth, and her piety shine forth with more original simplicity and loveliness, than in this unadorned narrative of St. John. It is remarkable that in these apparently incidental sketches of home life recorded in the New Testament, woman is prominently represented, and in every instance she is seen occupying her true position in society. She is represented, not as the servant of man, as too many are disposed to regard her, nor as occupying man's position. It is here shown how she can be man's equal, and yet not take his place. In this home scene in Bethany, she is represented as man's companion and friend. While serving and ministering to the wants of the opposite sex, her mission is honored by the divine Saviour. Martha serving and Mary ministering, are recognized and owned by the Saviour as part of the household, equally worthy of his attention and of his smiles of approbation with Lazarus their brother.

Where the light of christianity, with all its attendant blessings, has not penetrated, woman is adjudged inferior to man, and, consequently, fit only to serve the lords of creation. Equally as unchristian and unphilosophic is the move of our modern reformers, who are attempting to transfer woman from her legitimate sphere to that of man's, in order that she shall equal man.

The radical error of these pretended defenders of woman lies in the mistake of supposing that equality necessarily involves the idea of similarity or identity; that for woman to equal man she must step out of that sphere which nature, and the united experience of six thousand years has assigned her, and enter into that of man. These mere glimpses of female character scattered

through the Bible, stamp with the judicial sentence of condemnation both these false ideas of woman, and represent her in her true character and position. And in doing this christianity is simply recognizing and honoring that sphere which the very constitution of her nature, and the arrangements of the divine economy mark out for her.

That woman has a different sphere from that of man is too obvious to every one to need an argument; and it is plain that each sphere has its own peculiar duties, equally important, equally responsible, and equally honorable; that these spheres cannot be exchanged one for the other. No man can forsake his and enter that of woman, without compromising his dignity as a lord of creation and head of the house; and no woman can unsex herself and enter the sphere of man without surrendering the chief characteristics of her sex, exercising authority God never gave her, and becoming a curse to man instead of the blessing she was designed to be. The two spheres are as unlike as are the peculiarities of the two sexes. "The distinguishing faculty of man is mental concentration; that of woman is moral influence. Woman is the representative of affection, man of thought. Woman carries her strength in her heart, man in his head." Not that woman has no mental power, no strength of head, but her sphere calls for the exercise of the affections and moral influence, while that of man demands intellectual vigor and concentration of thought.

"For contemplation he, and valour, formed,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him."

"Born to dignify retreat,
Unknown to flourish, and unseen to great,
To give domestic life its sweetest charm,
With sadness polish and with virtue warm.
Fearful of fame, unwilling to be known,
Should seek but Heaven's applause and her own."

The woman then, young or old, who discharges with fidelity and intelligence the various duties of the home circle, exhibits the very highest type of female greatness; and in the discharge of these duties and offices of love she equals in greatness, and in moral worth the Statesman, the hero, and the philanthropist. The natural delicacy of her physical organizations, the peculiar tenderness of her sensibilities, the gentleness of her disposition, and the undying devotion of her attachments; all fit her for pre-eminent greatness in her sphere. This fitness is not to be found in the opposite sex, however educated, and it fits woman to be, as she is, man's companion, friend, and equal. Any attempt, such as of late made, to change this sphere interferes with a fundamental law of our nature, disorganizes society, and robs woman of her peculiar glory and her brightest charms.

And may we not confidently hope, for the sake of posterity, for the sake of all that constitutes the charms of the fireside and the home circle, that woman herself, always true to the intuitions of her better nature, will, with that proud disdain which insulted dignity inspires, repudiate any and every measure which tends to unsex her, whether it be the heathen idea of inferiority and consequent servitude, or the no less unchristian desire of our would-be reformers to bring her to the often undignified and puerile wrangles of the forum and the bar, the corrupting associations of the ballot-box, the exciting and demoralizing contests for office, and the intoxicating race for political fame? O! if she is to enter the list and become man's competitor in these things—if she is to go out into the busy thoroughfares of life and be tossed and torn in body and mind, in head and heart by attrition with this rough world, then we may bid farewell to that sweet solace of life, domestic happiness. What will be left to make bright and inviting the fireside? Who will then take charge of the infant and train it for usefulness and for eternity? Who is then to relieve with smiles of love and benedictions of comfort, the husband and brother when they lift the latch of their doors to avoid the cares and conflicts of a thoughtless, inconsiderate world, and find rest in the sweet society of home? Who is to keep vigil by the bedside of the sick and the dying? Who relieve the wants of the suffering and bind up the broken heart? Who will then go forth, like angels of mercy, on missions of love and kindness to the poor and the destitute? Upon whom, then, shall fall

the blessing of those ready to perish? In what house, then, shall the blessed Jesus find a Martha to serve and a Mary to anoint his feet?

Proud are we to be able to say that the female virtues are too well known and too universally acknowledged, and the whole Christian world is too well acquainted with the divine arrangement in assigning them their sphere, not to know that woman is "an help-meet" for man, and as such she has walked hand in hand and side by side with him ever since he took up his march from the gates of Eden.

But it has been said, by way of reproach on woman's character, that she is the cause of all our woe and misery, and as such she has been assigned an inferior place among men, and to wipe out that reproach she should become man's rival in the honors and emoluments of the world. To this we answer, notwithstanding she was the first to yield to the tempter, she has been made the medium of the greatest blessings man enjoys. On her breast was nourished the world's Redeemer, and her own offspring has atoned for the sins of the world.

It is a very remarkable fact, and one that does much honor to the female character, that in all the domestic scenes, and in many of the more public events of our Saviour's life, woman is represented, and in all her sphere and mission recognized and honored.

Her dignity and worth of character are acknowledged by the Saviour, not in his transferring her to the sphere of man, but in the distinguished honors which he has conferred upon her in her own legitimate sphere. And he has anticipated man in his attempts to wipe out forever what reproach might attach to her in consequence of the crime of her mother, by intimately associating her with himself in many of the most important events that ever transpired. Both the visions of angels announcing his birth, both the first announcements of his resurrection, and both his first appearances after his resurrection, were made to woman. Why not to Peter, and John, and others who were to be witnesses for him "both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and to the uttermost parts of the earth"? "Perhaps," says an able writer, "for the same reason which placed three women to one man at the Cross, and now places three women to one man at the communion table." Was it not for the reason that he found for his religion a greater sympathy and a heartier welcome in woman's heart than in man's? Her heart, naturally more tender and susceptible than man's, had not been seared and withered by attrition with the rougher elements of practical life and the deadening effects of unbelief, and was therefore more favorably disposed towards the Saviour, and more ready to accept the truths of the gospel. When all men, and even the disciples, had forsaken the Saviour, when they had abandoned all hope and gave themselves up to doubt and despondency, when those to whom the Saviour had announced the fact that he should rise from the dead, refused to give credence to the report of his resurrection, the confiding, trusting heart of woman still clung to him. She was the last to leave the spot where her dear Saviour hung, the last at the sepulchre where his body lay, the first to return in the morning, the first to receive the announcement of his resurrection, and the first to proclaim to the world that its Saviour was alive forever more. Such honor, conferred on woman, has a significance the whole female world should highly appreciate.

But really this distinguished honor forms no exception to the rule adopted by the Saviour for propagating his gospel, but the same he has always chosen, and has continued ever since the Marys announced his resurrection. We still hear for the first time the pleasing story of the Cross and of a risen Saviour from the lips, not of the public teachers of religion, not from the heralds of the Cross, but those of woman. Long before we come in contact with the world and the means of public instruction, we learn the story of the "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," in those sweet nursery hymns we learn from our mothers and sisters. Ministers of the gospel go forth to the church and the world only to repeat what they were taught in their infancy from the lips of woman.

Doubtless another reason why the Saviour made these communications first to woman, is found in the beautiful fact that woman is essential to the household, to her is committed the training of the infant mind, and this household is the elementary department of the church. In this we readily discover the wisdom of the Saviour; the household is intertwined with and into the church, and the tender and susceptible hearts of children are interwoven with the loving, confiding hearts of mothers and sisters, and thus the hearthstone is, in the beautiful and wise arrangements of God's wonderful providence, made the pillar of the church. That mother or sister then who trains the other members of the family for the church is performing a noble work, for which Christ shall say: "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, my disciples, ye did it unto me;" and he will love such as he "loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus."

Is not then the mission of woman of the very highest importance? Can she not find work sufficient in the circle of home influence? Let her conclude otherwise; let her neglect home duties for the purpose of mingling in the public duties and pleasures of the world; let her neglect the training of the infant mind, and the ministrations of love and affection to those within her reach, and seek her happiness in the hollow, trifling pleasures of earth, leaving those within the circle of her influence to neglect and despise religion and virtue, and "it were better for her had she never been born."

But time will not allow us to pursue this subject further. Let us close these remarks with an inference. If this home in Bethany furnishes us an ideal of a christian family, does it not at the same time give us the scriptural idea of female education? The Saviour was often at the house of Mary and Martha. He must have found something in that house and in those maidens which was agreeable to him. They were fit companions for the man Christ Jesus. There were doubtless many families in Bethany more wealthy, more refined, in the modern sense of the term, and surrounded by many more of the conveniences of life than this family, but the Saviour preferred the domestic arrangements, the quiet retirement, and the native simplicity of this to anything he could find in other homes; and by his visits he honored the domestic service of Martha and the ministrations of Mary more than those things which we are accustomed to call accomplishments. These are, of late years, the principal aim in the education of our daughters. How often do we see parents expending all their time and means on their fond daughters, in order that they may secure the ornamental, to the utter neglect of the practical and the useful! We too often teach our children to believe that a smattering of the modern languages, a few negro melodies, a few balls, and a little loquacity, are all that is necessary to introduce them into society; and so vitiated has our modern tastes become, that these are sufficient to introduce a young lady, and obtain for her a crowd of admirers. Thus she is "accomplished," and is flattered and courted. I visited the home of such a lady, she had one of her own, only to find the languages fallen into disuse, the piano neglected, and with it most of the duties of the wife, all owing to the fact that she had never been taught the practical part of life, and those useful accomplishments in domestic economy which are in daily requisition, and without which no home can be happy.

Let me inform all who despise the education embraced in domestic economy, that no lady has any use for a name of her own until she learns to serve as Martha, and minister as Mary did. You should be able to make your home, however humble, to your husband the most attractive, and the dearest place on earth. It is well if you are educated in all the departments of learning, the more thorough your education the better. The ornamental is not to be despised, but is admired and appreciated by all intelligent persons; but this should never be secured at the expense of the useful, which is absolutely essential to domestic happiness. Happy indeed is she, who has the two properly combined, and the ambition to use them aright; and happy will be who is so fortunate as to find such a companion.

There are perhaps more domestic broils arising daily from the improper

training of daughters than from any other source, and ten-fold more in the higher circles of society than among the uneducated. These are sad and unpleasant truths, but they are mentioned, only that they may be remedied.

Remember, young ladies, that the characters introduced into the scriptures are generally representative. Mary and Martha represent the domestic virtues, and their home represents domestic happiness.—Salome, the daughter of Herodias, who danced before Herod, is the representative of that large class of young ladies who find all their happiness in the gay pleasures of an idle life. The domestic service, and the ministrations of love in that house of Bethany, caused such virtue and piety to dwell there, that it became the quiet resort of the Saviour, and secured to the inmates of that house his presence and his blessings; and the fragrance of their influence was shed on all within their reach.—Salome's pleasure cost the head of one of the best men on earth, made the king, and her mother, and herself unhappy; and caused sorrow to pierce the hearts of John's disciples, away beyond the immediate influence of Herod's court. So it may be with you. I beseech you then to let the great aim of your life be to do good. Go out as far as your influence extends; relieve the distressed; visit the sick; reclaim the wandering; let the fragrance of your influence, and your deeds of kindness, and the benedictions of your loving hearts, fill the whole circumference of the home circle, as did the odor of Mary's ointment.

But above all things else make your homes such as the Saviour will visit. Let the pure teachings of the gospel sway and influence your hearts, and your lives; and that kind and compassionate Saviour who loved to visit the quiet home of Mary and Martha, will be pleased to visit you, and will make his abode with you. Just as these sisters were never more happy than when the Saviour was present, so it will be with you. Keep this dear object always in your families, in your hearts, and you will always be happy.

Communications.

For the Lutheran Visitor.
A German Mecca.

Strangers, who have been led to entertain high ideas of the power and influence of the clergy in Old Bavaria, are struck with astonishment when they discover by actual observation that the church is less cared for in Munich than in most of the other German cities, and that the worshippers in that city do not crowd each other. The same state of indifference is also met with in the Bavarian Highlands. If the traveller is anxious to see Ultramontanism in all its vigor, an excursion must be made to the low country between Donau and the spurs of the Alps. We invite our readers to follow us to a region where faith, blind and devout, in the Romish Church reigns supreme, and make use for that purpose of a sketch by Dr. Heigel.

In a lovely and fruitful region, the peasantry of which rejoice in their easily obtained prosperity, lies near the river Inn Altoetting, a small city, with few houses, but many church steeples. Historic memorials abound. The Romans had once a colony here, and the main road from Salzburg to Augustenborg passed already then by the bridge across the Inn. Old legends tell of a great victory which Theodor, the first Duke of Bavaria, gained over the Romans at Oetting. He pursued them as far as Botzen, where he struck his spear into the ground, and exclaimed: "Here is the boundary of Bavaria."

The history of the circular and gloomy chapel dates back to remote historic days. The saying is: Altoetting is the oldest, Einsiedeln is the holiest, and Mariatzell is the richest place of pilgrimage. The present chapel of Mary was, according to Romish geographers, who, however, are not very reliable, at the time of Antoninus, a heathen temple dedicated to the Seven Planets. In this gloomy building stands the far-famed wonder-working image, made of wood, and about two feet high. It represents the Virgin with the Holy Child. Both the mother and the child are loaded down with costly, bright-colored dresses, golden crowns, and other ornaments. The faces and hands, of a brownish color,

can hardly be seen. Balde, the well known Jesuit poet, who has sung almost everything in the place, explains poetically the brownness of the faces and the hands, which he says is caused by the celestial fervor and the burning desire of the Virgin and her Son for the redemption and sanctification of men. Others ascribe it to the smoke of the lamps which always are kept lighted in the small chamber. Before the altar burn day and night, without diminishing the obscurity, five lamps; the middle one, beautifully wrought of silver, gold and precious stones, is a present from Pope Pius the Ninth. The ornaments covering the walls increase the gloominess of the chapel. On shelves are deposited in urns of silver the hearts of the former princes of Bavaria. The urn which holds the heart of Maximilian the Second is still encircled by the wreath the deputation from Berchtesgaden brought, as their last gift, to the prince they loved so well. Votive tablets are hung on the walls, both inside and outside, in acknowledgment of prayers answered. It is best to say nothing about the artistic value of their paintings, in compliance with the request of one of the pseudo-Raphaelis, who has written under his picture, that it is to be looked at with kindly eyes, but not with sneering nose. The inscriptions tell of the donors' deliverance from danger, by fire, or water, or sickness, or of their conversion from a life of sin, etc., through believing prayer to the mother of God at Altoetting. The victory won on the White Mountain is also, according to an inscription, to be ascribed to her miraculous assistance.

This holy place is filled from early dawn till sundown with supplicants. The number of pilgrims is, especially during Whitsuntide, immense. Long processions of devotees arrive hourly on foot, uttering prayers and carrying burning candles in their hands. The impression these caravans of pilgrims produce is far from being favorable. Not only do nearly all the pilgrims belong to the lowest class of society, but it is also perfectly apparent that pilgrimages are not promotive of godliness. Fanaticism and brutality are not unfrequently united together, as was lately shown in Munich, where one of the pilgrims nearly beat a cab driver, who passed the procession returning from Altoetting without uncovering, to death with the heavy wooden cross he carried.

The processions come from all the cities and villages of Old Bavaria and Austria. Least liked, by the inhabitants of the place, are the pious adorers from Bohemia. Dearly bought experience has taught the necessity of keeping a watchful eye on all movable kinds of property when they are about. The charge that many of the young of either sex take the pilgrim's staff in order to have a free license to indulge their passions, does especially apply to the warm-blooded Czechs.

All the pilgrims bring gifts, and it follows necessarily that the Cathedral in which Tilly's remains are deposited must be enormously rich. Most deserving of notice among the valuables is the, so called, Golden Rose, a kind of table service of gold and precious stones, once the wedding gift of the Bavarian princess Isabene, and presented to the Church in the 16th Century, by Duke Albert. A ruby on the Madonna's breast is worth 14,000 Thalers. There are also candlesticks, crucifixes, shrines for relics, altars, and lamps of gold and silver innumerable. The Church's invested capital is counted by millions. All the inhabitants both of the city and the surrounding country, are its pensioners. The chapter is really a kind of feudal lordship of the middle ages; and its influence is by no means inconsiderable.

The appropriation by the State of this useless wealth could not be justified, and yet it is impossible to pass from the treasure chamber out among the numerous devotees who, groaning beneath the heavy weight of their large wooden crosses, crawl on their knees, like Indian Fakirs, around the church walls, without wishing that the immense wealth, which is here heaped up, could be employed for the good of the commonwealth, and its institutions of education.

If we scrutinize the lives of men of genius, we shall find that activity and persistence are their leading peculiarities. Obstacles can not intimidate, nor labor weary, nor drudgery disgust them.

Practical.

Piety and Cheerfulness.

We all love the cheerful and seek to experience it. The mistake is made by some that to find it they must avoid piety, and range freely in irreligion. We would disabuse the mind of such a thought. It is a deception calculated to do much harm.

The desire for cheerfulness and the constant striving after it are evidences that something deprives us of it. A cloud casts its shadow in the soul from which we would escape. An unpleasant gloom is around us which we would dispel. It is the cloud of moral evil, the gloom of a sinful world. In their midst we vainly seek the truly cheerful. Fancied enjoyments escape us, prove themselves empty, or, like the apples of Sodom, turn to bitterness and ashes. The shadow and gloom still envelop us. All the world is the counterpart of ourselves. Its promises of gaiety only allure, its pleasures only disappoint. Its cheer-inspiring objects fascinate only the more effectually to doom body and soul.

At every step we are exposed to disappointment. Adversity may at any time overtake us. Sorrows may suddenly cross our pathway. Health may leave us and pain seize our bodies. Death and the grave stand waiting to receive us. In our unaided selves there is nothing to resist or overcome these saddening realities of life. They pour upon us their full measure of depression. Even when we are surrounded with natural fortitude and feigned cheerfulness, despair must come at last. Beholding "the wrath of the Lamb," the unredeemed cry to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne." There can be no genuine cheerfulness when the guilt of sin is upon the soul, and the sentence of judgment upon the head. To bar out of mind the sense of sin and the apprehension of coming evil can only add to wretchedness and deepen degradation.

Piety, indeed, does not exempt us from the chances and mishaps of the present life. We are "in the world," and must encounter its storms. As Christians we are even more exposed to its inflictions of evil and suffering. Jesus tells us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." But we encounter these things not on the world's level and in our own strength. We meet them on the vantage ground of grace and in the strength of an all-conquering Redeemer. When Jesus tells us that in the world we shall have tribulation, he also adds, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." He did not evade suffering, conquer armies, subdue nations, or banish evil in an external, form. He overcame the world in the suffering of obedience, in the power of a holy life, and in the doing of his Father's will. The world's opposition to him was vain, whether in the form of temptation or infliction of evil. We live in him by faith, and stand in the same attitude with him towards the world and its evils. As he overcame so do we. The victory is sure, and this gives us courage.

Without evading we pass through life's trials, not with harm but with actual benefit. They "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." That which seemeth to be evil proves in the end to be a blessing. There is no prize without the exertion of the race, no reward without the fatigue of labor, no victory without the conflict of battle—so there is no heaven without the tribulation of the world. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" * * * These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Heaven is sure, and this gives us patience.

Whatever the world can contribute to true cheerfulness we are not deprived of with piety. From all that it offers, its pleasures as well as its pains, we extract the honey and leave the poison. No enjoyment that is innocent or harmless is forbidden us, but is greatly enhanced by the exercise of piety. With it there are open to us avenues of cheerfulness beyond all these, in the assurance of faith, the apprehension of truth, the realization of divine love in Christ, and in the exercise of the heart's love for him. These never close, but pour the oil of gladness upon us amidst all the ills of life. Be not deprived of that cheerfulness which true piety offers; by reason of the sham cheerfulness of unbelief.

"I will be glad in the Lord."