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## Communications.

For the Lutheran Visitor.

Greater Church Love—How to Awaken it.

NUMBER SIX.

### UNIFORMITY OF WORSHIP.

Another means, less important but by no means to be overlooked, is a distinctive worship. We have distinctive doctrines, and our cultus should be equally so. Our manner of worship, our rites and ceremonies should be symbols and badges of these greater and higher differences. It is only in this view that they become important. Aside from their significance of this fact reflecting men would not feel a very deep interest in the modes of service, not directly ordained of God Himself. Just so they did not contradict reason, propriety or the Scriptures they would never make them the subject of very special attention, and would use a liturgy or not, wear a gown or not, or conform to any practices that would secure uniformity and be most conducive to harmony. But when these weightier matters are associated with them they should be scrupulously observed, and will become objects of enlightened affections.

There are many, however, who are unable to appreciate, or, on account of their want of acquaintance with the doctrines, fail to observe the nobler and worthier features of the church, and we can attach them to her only by the outside forms. By these only the attention of strangers will be attracted, and be induced to search for the true dividing lines. Indeed all will become more or less bound by them. Habit and association, were they rules without significance, would give us all a decided preference, and to some a strong prejudice, for them. While we worship just like any other denomination it will be impossible to impress upon some minds the difference between us and them, and our children by fortuitous circumstances may be easily stolen from us. Let there be a different worship; our children and our uneducated or less informed brethren will see more clearly and, indeed, all of us will be reminded each time we enter the house of God of the distinct character of our church.

This distinctive worship, if general, must be uniform. The worship, if possible, should in its outlines be one, in all the congregations. We would have it so, not alone for the ease and convenience of visiting ministers, but that the layman whenever he strays into one of our assemblies may recognize the place and feel himself at home. And that same service wherever he goes, so often relieving him of embarrassment and enabling him to join without restraint in the praises and devotions of the sanctuary, must have his love: Our church has already suffered many losses from the want of it. Our members changing homes have at first sought out their own church, but finding everything so unlike that to which they were accustomed, they felt like "strangers in a strange land," and were repelled rather than attracted. They go to another church, and finding there something "more like that at home," they return because of the associations again and again, until at length,

## Ministerial.

From the A. R. Presbyterian.  
Full Proof of the Ministry.

It was commanded of Paul to Timothy, that he should make full proof of his ministry. Whether or not, Timothy was troubled with that gloomy discouragement which we often find in ministers of ardent temperament, I don't know. But if he was the above command just suited his case. It suits admirably the case of all those of the present age, who mourn over the apprehension that their ministry is a barren one, and distress, and discourage, and actually enfeeble themselves by such mourning. I do not reprobate a due measure of solicitude about ministerial success, and a prayerful anxiety for the proper fruits of the christian ministry. Indeed, I cannot but fear, that the minister who has no such solicitude, no such anxiety, is not in loving sympathy with Him who wept over his failure to gather the Jews unto Him as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. But at the same time, it does not seem to me, that a failure to realise, or, perhaps, over sanguine anticipations in this department, should discourage, and entice us, as it does some. At all events, before we give up, we should make full proof of our ministry. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Ec. xi: 6.

The simple idea of making full proof of the ministry, is giving it a full and fair trial. Pursuing this idea let us see what we must do before we may give up.

1. We must preach the gospel fully and fairly. By this I do not mean simply that we are to set forth, with great clearness and precision, the incarnation, the substitution, the atonement and perfect obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and pardon and peace through him. These glorious doctrines are gospel, but they are not all that is meant by "gospel," in our commission. If it be allowed that Paul knew what was meant by the gospel, we must conclude that it comprehends far more than the above doctrines—that it reaches far back and covers all those doctrines concerning the nature of God, the fall of man, the penal results of sin and the total depravity of man, the dominion of sin over him, and his entire inability to extricate himself from the curse of the law—all those doctrines which set forth the necessity for the incarnation and vicarious death of Christ. Paul was preaching the gospel, according to the great commission, when, before Felix, "he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment," and when he said, that "what the law saith, it saith unto them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God," when he said, "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Also when he said, "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." By preaching the gospel then fully and fairly, I mean preaching all the doctrines of divine revelation in their due order and proper connection.

2. We must urge these doctrines as the doctrines of divine revelation. Sometimes doctrines are preached as the doctrines of Calvin, of Luther, of Arminius, of our church, or of our Confession. Great and, often we think, undue prominence is given to these high authorities, whilst the authority of God in the doctrine is kept somewhat in the back ground. This kind of preaching may make speculative Calvinists, or Lutherans, or Arminians—may gain speculative adherents to our church, or our Confession; but it does not succeed so well in making true believers. Faith that saves, rests upon the authority of God in his word, and not upon the authority of any man, or any church. Before the doctrines preached can take effect, we must ply men's minds and consciences with the authority of God. To make full proof of our ministry, therefore, we must give an assailing prominence to the authority of God in what we say; being very careful to show what the doctrine is, and that it is unmistakably in the Bible. I once heard a politician in this State, rather complaining that a certain community

would not believe a single assertion he made, without a "thus saith the Lord" for it, and assigned their religious training as an explanation of the fact. There must be a "thus saith the Lord," where there is full proof of the ministry. And wherever that is the distinctive feature of preaching, you will soon find a people rooted, and grounded in the faith; and not easily "carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ."

3. It will contribute greatly to the success of the ministry to preach, not only the ideas and doctrines of the Bible, but the very words, as near as we can get them. Paul gives us a very good hint on this subject in 1st Cor. ii: 1, 5. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with exclamation of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man; but of God." Be it superstition, or due reverence for God, or some other undefined reason, certain it is, the words of inspiration have a weight, and authority with the human mind, that the utmost excellence, and flourish of mere human oratory never does have. This fact Paul understood. Hence he did not aim to throw around his sermons, the rhetorical embellishments of human wisdom; but employed those "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth comparing spiritual things with spiritual." 1st Cor. ii: 13. No doubt he thought that the Holy Ghost was more likely to honor his own words, and use them as the vehicles of divine and saving impressions, than the finest "words which man's wisdom teacheth." There was much truth in the pious old Scotch lady's remark that "the felder was put out of reach of the lambs." This is often done by a style of preaching which panders to the improved taste of mere worldly wisdom. Some of the most popular preaching of this age, starves out vital piety, not that it is doctrinally heterodox; but because it is literally incomprehensible, to the masses. It is "the entrance of God's word that giveth light, and makes the simple wise."

4. We can not be said to have given our ministry a fair trial until we have devoted it fully to the glory of God in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of the saints. At first this may seem rather a queer idea. Some one may say: what, are there any ministers who have not religiously devoted their ministry to the service of God? Does not every minister of the Presbyterian order, at least, declare, when he takes up the holy office, that "zeal for the glory of God and a desire for being instrumental in edifying his church" are the motives which govern him in the premises? and do they not solemnly promise not "to give themselves up to a detestable neutrality in the cause of God?" All that is very true. And this promise should bind every member to be "instant in season and out of season" in the whole work of his ministry—should bind him to a singleness of aim at the higher end of the ministry. But it is to be feared that such is not always the case. Indeed, it is with some, I know, the hardest thing in the world to discriminate between the ministry as a mere livelihood and as a devoted service of God. A large class of men look upon ministerial labor just as they do upon agricultural or mechanical, or any other kind of mere secular labor, as a means of a livelihood. Hence that odious idea, so rife in these days, that the minister of the gospel is a mere hireling, and that the amount and prompt payment of his pecuniary life is the great desideratum in his calling. Even with ministers themselves, often and grievously it is true, that the question, how shall I make my ministry feed me and clothe me? is the great question—the question which, above all others, does influence and determine their spirit and aims and the character of their labors. How far this may be the result of an invincible necessity, in any given case, we need not now stop to inquire. But the fact is, beyond all controversy, one of the great reasons why so much ministerial work has so little spiritual fruit. As a general rule,

men only accomplish what they chiefly aim at. We ought not to complain of a want of success until we are perfectly sure that our aims and our efforts, as ministers, both are coincident with the will of God. When we have had all the aims, all the zeal, and all the prudence and diligence and devotion to the cause of God that a minister ought to have, and still fail, then we may begin to despond—but not till then.

5. Lastly, we can not be said to have made full proof of our ministry until we have submitted it to Christ in good faith. In natural husbandry, men oftentimes forget that natural means have no independent efficiency to gain the great ends aimed at, and look more to scientific agriculture, to good plowing and hoeing, than to God. So it is possible for the spiritual husbandman to forget that the increase of all his husbandry must come from God, and to attach an undue importance to his zeal and diligence and logic. In such case we may expect failure. When we have done the very best we could in every respect, and, in fact, committed the question of success to Christ, and said to him, glorify thyself by my humble labors, if there is no fruit then, we may give up. But Christ will not fail us. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." R. A. ROSS.

## Practical.

### What Will You Say Then?

While Hope, a young Sandwich Islander, was in America, he spent an evening in a company where an infidel lawyer tried to puzzle him with difficult questions. At length the native said: "I am a poor heathen boy. It is not strange that my blunders in English should amuse you. But soon there will be a larger meeting than this. We shall all be there. They will ask us all one question, namely: Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? Now, sir, I think I can say, Yes. What will you say, sir?" "When he had stopped, all present were silent. At length the lawyer said that, as the evening was far gone, they had better conclude it with prayer, and proposed that the native should pray. He did so; and as he poured out his heart to God, the lawyer could not conceal his feelings. Tears started from his eyes, and he sobbed aloud. All present wept, too; and when they separated, the words, "What will you say, sir?" followed the lawyer home, and did not leave him till it brought him to the Savior.

### The Miracles of the Apostles.

Jesus had said that his disciples should do his works, and even greater than his, when he had ascended. We see that his servants' miracles proclaimed his power more loudly than his own works. When he was on earth in bodily presence, virtue went out direct from his adorable person. He was proved by act to be the possessor of power. But when Peter and the rest, through invocation of his name brought healing and life, then was Jesus shown to be not only the possessor, but the inexhaustible spring of health and life. It is certain that the apostles could not exert miraculous power of their own will, or apply it to whomsoever they would. The mention of the existence of human ills continuing in the apostolic times; the fact that Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus, and also the frail health of Timothy; all these seem to show that, through the Spirit, there was always an intimation from Christ whom he would have miracles worked on, and by this intimation alone the apostles exerted their marvellous gift. This fact has been forgotten in the case of supposed modern miracles, wherein daring and unauthorised hands have laid hold on the glory of God.—London S. S. Teacher.

Christian Courtesy.—Every man has his faults, his peculiarities. Every one of us finds himself crossed by such failings of others from hour to hour, and if he were to resent them all, or even notice all, life would be intolerable. If for every burst of hasty temper and for every rudeness that wounds us in our daily path, we were to demand an apology, require an explanation, daily intercourse would be impossible. The very science of social life consists in that gliding tact which avoids contact with the sharp angularities of character which does not argue about

such things, which does not seek to adjust or cure them all, but covers them as if it did not see. So a christian spirit throws a cloak of love over these things. It knows when it is wise not to see. That microscopic distinction in which all faults appear to captious men, who are ever blaming, dissenting, complaining, disappears in the calm gaze of love. And oh, it is this spirit which our christian society lacks and which we will never get till each one begins with his own heart.

## Selections.

### Luther at Rome.

In the close of the reign of Julius, Luther visited Rome. The poor monk worn with penances and hard toil, was sent upon some business connected with his convent to the Papal Court. He crossed the Alps full of faith, and stirred by a strong excitement. He was about to enter the classic land, with whose poets and historians he had long been familiar; he was to tread the sacred soil of Virgil, Cicero and Livy. But, more than this, he saw before him, rising in dim majesty, the Holy City of that Church from whose faith he had never yet ventured to depart, whose supreme head was still to him almost the representative of Deity, and whose princes and dignitaries he had ever invested with an apostolic purity and grace. Rome, hallowed by the sufferings of the martyrs, filled with relics, and redolent with the piety of ages, the untutored monk still supposed a scene of heavenly rest. "Hail, holy Rome!" he exclaimed, as his distant towers first met his eyes. His poetic dream was soon dispelled. Scarcely had he entered Italy when he was shocked and terrified by the luxury and the license of the convents, and the open depravity of the priesthood. He fell sick with sorrow and shame. He complained that the very air of Italy seemed deadly and pestiferous. But he wandered on, feeble and sad, until he reached the Holy City, and there, amid the mockery of his fellow monks, and the blasphemies of the impious clergy, performed with honest superstition the minute ceremonial of the Church. Of all pilgrims to that desecrated shrine none was so devout as Luther. He was determined, he said, to escape the pains of purgatory, and win a plenary indulgence; he dragged his frail form on his knees up the painful ascent of the Holy Stairs, while ever in his ears resounded the cry, "The just shall live by faith." He heard with horror that the head of the Church was a monster stained with vice; that the cardinals were worse than their master; the priests, mocking unbelievers; and fled, heart-broken, back to his German cell.

### "After Many Days."

There is one prayer which we do not greatly like. Men frequently ask, at the close of a sermon, that the word preached may be "as bread cast upon the waters, the fruit of which shall be seen after many days." We doubt whether this use of the language which the sacred writer employs with regard to almsgiving, is, when standing by itself, appropriate. It, at least, seems to surrender all hope of immediate results from the proclamation of divine truth. Why should we not expect and seek fruit to-day from the preaching of to-day? Why should we plead with God, as if "many days" must necessarily run by, before His word takes effect? The prayer is fit and right only as an alternative prayer. Let us first ask that the saving and sanctifying power of the truth may be straightway manifested—that, at once, and without delay, it may bring souls to Christ, or strengthen them in His services. And then, let us ask, that, even in the cases where this legitimate result does not follow, there may still be fruit, though long postponed by that unbelief of sinners which "puts far away the good 'day'" of return to the Lord, or that unbelief of Christians which neither looks nor pleads for an earlier blessing. We should begin by wrestling for "the grace of God and the gift by grace" now, as accompanying, without interval, the utterances of His own word. Only in subordination to that entreaty, is there any meanness in the petition for fruits to appear "after many days."—Index.

Human nature is a bad clock. It may go right now and then, or be made to strike the hour, but its inward frame is to go wrong.

## Prejudices Against the Bible.

We reprint, says the Bible Society Record, some eloquent passages from a volume of sermons, lately issued, by the Rev. Charles Wadsworth, D.D., of San Francisco, California, from the press of A. Roman & Co. Seldom do we find more glowing and powerful presentations of truth, and in a style so attractive to all classes of readers. The extracts which follow are from a sermon on "Prejudices against Christianity," from John i, 46: "And Nathaniel said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see."

IS THE BIBLE AN INSPIRED BOOK? Is the Bible an inspired book? Is christianity a divine revelation? This is the question. And hark! how the universe lifts all voices in attention. "Yes," cry all material things. For so wonderfully are nature and revelation in analogy, so manifestly counterparts in one great system, counterparts of the same Divine hand, that a child's wisdom accords them the same common Author! "Yes," cries prophecy, pointing to manifold ever fulfilling and fulfilled predictions! "Yes," cries the yearning soul of man, "for its blessed truths justly best my wants; it instructs my ignorance, it reveals my immortality, it purifies my nature, it dries my tears, it wings me for the trifes of time, and woos me for the grandeur of eternity!" "Yes," cry supernatural voices. And behold! stilled seas, and healed diseases, and the risen dead, and revealed angels, appear as its witnesses. "Yes," cry the living nations of the earth, quickened by its divine power into life and liberty and joy, advantaged every way by the possession of these "oracles of God!" "Yes," cry all higher orders of immortal life—angel and archangel, principality and power, singing morning star and shouting Son of God! "Yes," God the Father, so guarding it by providence. "Yes," cries God the Holy Ghost, attending it ever in omnipotence from conquering to conquer, until verily there is no true voice in God's universe that gives not glad testimony in behalf of our faith.

And unto all this what says the infidel? Alas, like Nathaniel by the Jordan, he sets it all aside with a pitiful cavil! He gets a glass and looks heavenward, and finding that the sun and stars do not actually revolve around the earth, looks wise, and says, "Aha, Moses does not say anything about this law of gravitation; surely he was not an inspired man!" He explores the strata of the earth, and finding a fish's tail in the rock, or monster's vertebra in sandstone, lays his hand solemnly on his heart, saying, Moses speaks not of these old fossils. Really this is a tremendous fact against revelation."

He draws a line from ear to nostril on an Ethiopian's skull, or pulls a lock of hair from an Ethiopian's skull, and, with all its ethnologic gifts and grace, cries "Aha, me, how many facts there are against revelation!" He runs the line of his reason into the sphere of immensity and eternity; or flings himself from the rocks of faith into the infinite ocean of God-head, and finding himself slightly beyond his depth, struggles back, half drowned, but still buoyant in his self-conceit; and because the revelations of God are too large for his logic, would settle the question with pretentious deliverance: "Verily I can not comprehend all this, and my arithmetic and logic are both against revelation!"

Now, before God, this is not caricature. It is a fair representation of infidel objections to Christianity. And I ask if Nathaniel's against Christ had a greater seeming of prejudice? "Can the Christ come out of Nazareth? Cometh he not of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem?" Alas, foolish Israelite! Why, there is not a matronly mother in all the coasts of Bethlehem, that can not lead you to the grave of her slaughtered babe, and prove to you by death's dread testimony, that your objection is a poor cavil—that this very Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem.

And we say as well: Alas, foolish sceptic! Why there is no tone of your sophisms against Christianity which has not been answered so often, that a Sabbath-school child can meet you for our God; and shame you, if you have shame, of this pitiful dishonesty.—National Christian Advocate.

To suffer from having acted well is itself a species of recompense.