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Elements of Truth

ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT
Synod's Training School
JUNE 16 to 26, 1914

AT
Belhaven College
JACKSON, MISS.

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BY EMINENT LEADERS AND WORKERS OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CHRISTIAN WORKERS SCHOOL, JUNE 16-26, 1914.

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THE PURPOSE of this Volume is to put in permanent form the Addresses given at Synod's Training School for Christian Workers, June 16-26, 1914.

We desire the instruction and inspiration, which came to those who attended this School, to be extended to that larger circle in our Synod and in the Church, who came not up to this Mount of Privilege.

The high merit, superior worth, and deep spirituality of those addresses preclude the necessity for any apology for their publication, while the wide-spread distribution of the literature of false teachers filled with vicious doctrines makes an imperative call to the Church to send forth a literature filled with those truths which make for the redemption and uplift of man, and the glory of God.

Sincerely yours,
COMMITTEE OF SYNOD.

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1. *The Meaning of the Sabbath*
2. *Keeping the Sabbath*
3. *Religious Home*

ADDRESSES

BY

REV. C. W. GRAFTON

UNION CHURCH, MISSISSIPPI

MEANING OF THE SABBATH.

I.

Suppose that on some Sunday morning you were on the 180th meridian of longitude where the day begins. And suppose you could be absolutely stationary and let the earth roll round beneath your feet. You would see many strange sights and hear many strange sounds. But nothing you would hear would be so impressive as the ringing of the church bells. As the shores of Asia came under your feet, the bells of India, China and Japan would all begin to ring. As the heart of Asia passed by, lo! the bells of Persia and Constantinople.

The deep-mouthed bells of Moscow and of St. Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin and Rome, Paris and London would all fall upon your ear. And when the waves of the Atlantic pass by, the first sounds of the new world would be the bells of Boston, New York and Charleston and then Chicago and St. Louis. The Rocky Mountains go by and you enter upon the wide stretches of the Pacific Ocean, and the last sounds that you hear from the receding shores would be the bells of Los Angeles and San Francisco. How impressive is all this!

These bells proclaim the Sabbath day and they are a call to the worship of God. You would hear many sounds and see many sights out of harmony with Sabbath devotion. You would see the smoke of the great battleships and the great armies of Europe drilling for war. You would see the blood-stained battle-fields and hear the wails of orphans and widows from the women of the Balkans. You would note the warring passions of our Mexican neighbors. But in spite of all this, nothing would impress you more than the ringing of the church bells. They would be sufficient to enlist the interest and challenge the attention of angels from distant stars.

What does the Sabbath mean? What is its design? Our great interest is in keeping the Sabbath day; but before we can properly keep this day we must understand its design. It is difficult to give a short definition of the design of the Sabbath. Let us put it this



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Union Church
Lectures on the Sabbath and the Home

way: It was designed to be a picture of what man lost by sin and what he regains in heaven. The change from the seventh to the first day of the week begins in the resurrection of Jesus; so that the Sabbath stretches in a long line and binds Eden to Calvary and Calvary to Mount Zion. Let us see into these things:

When man was created he came forth in the image and likeness of God and was the divinely appointed mediator between God and all his creatures. He was to be God's representative in the presence of all earthly things. In other words, he was to be the prophet, priest and king for this lower world. As prophet he was to make known the will of God. As Priest he was to gather up the prayers and praises of the whole creation and lay them down as a tribute before God's throne. As king he was to subdue the earth and make it like unto the garden of God. He was to rule over all things, exercising everywhere kingly authority. He was not indeed to wear a priestly robe or have on his head a kingly crown but there was something in him that stirred within every creature the spirit of instinctive reverence. The birds of the air and the beasts of the field and the fishes of the sea were all obedient unto him as their lawful sovereign.

This doctrine of man's original condition is proved as follows: In the 8th Psalm we read, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visiteth him, for Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." The Apostle to the Hebrews applies it as follows: "We see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels crowned with glory and honor." In the parable of the pounds the two servants that had turned over their shillings and pence received a kingly reward, "Be thou ruler over ten cities,

and be thou ruler over five cities." Here were servants with no money, but promoted to kingly dignity. The parable teaches the great truth that man lost and ruined in a state of servitude and bondage is promoted to the honor of kingship. John speaks as follows: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." **KINGS AND PRIESTS.** These offices represent the dignity which the second Adam gained for us. They are precisely what the first Adam lost. All of God's elect in union with the second Adam regained the office of kings and priests. All that were represented by the first Adam, made in the image and likeness of God, were originally kings and priests. The whole idea may be illustrated by the bud and the blossom. All that is in the bud appears in the blossom. Conversely all that is in the blossom was originally in the bud. The first Adam and the second Adam are related to each other as bud and blossom. In using this language we must not be misunderstood, the second Adam was God the Son. He was a divine person, possessing all the divine attributes, and as such He could never be developed. And then as God the Son incarnate.

He made the sacrifice which the first Adam was never called on to make, but leaving out the elements of His divinity and sacrifice all that was in the first Adam appears in the second Adam, and all that is in the second Adam is in the first, although to a smaller degree. The innocence of the second Adam was in the first. The language which was later applied to the second Adam, "Pure, holy, harmless and undefiled," was applicable to the first, and the relation of these two Adams to one another as set forth by bud and blossom refers to their mediatorial work and labors. The second Adam is our Prophet, Priest and King forever, in his humiliation and exaltation. The first Adam was likewise to be the prophet, priest and king of the world. All the elect of God share with the second Adam, in the honors and glories of His media-

torial offices, all that are in the first Adam were likewise to share with him through the likeness of God as mediators between God and this lower world, as prophets, priest and kings. It is impossible for us adequately to imagine the glory and dignity of man as he came from the hand of God, innocent and pure, He was God's representative to the world. But all of this was lost by the fall.

Instead of being a prophet he himself needs to be taught. Paul says we are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us. Instead of filling the sacred office of priest for the world he needs now somebody to be a priest for him. Instead of being a king he is now a slave. Lo, King Adam, now dis-crowned! Everything he had by the virtue of the likeness of God is now lost. Through sin all is gone. Under the wrath and curse of God he is now in a state of hopeless bondage. The beasts of the fields are his enemies; the serpent is his deadly foe; the horse and the ox dispute his dominion and are brought into subjection by force. He is the victim of disease; he earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. All his faculties are in a state of schism. Alas! Alas! for the world's former king. Shame and degradation instead of glory. Rebellion and hatred instead of loving obedience. He carries the spade, the mattock, the plow and the hoe instead of the crown and the scepter, and the life once projected upon long lines is now bounded by three-score and ten. And the fiat of God is fulfilled, "Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

How great the misery now in contrast with the former glory. From the beginning of man's life he goes forth to be a monument of the curse and wrath of God. The tender boy leaves his mother and goes out to spend his young life at toil. His lips quiver as you ask him of the old home and of his father and mother.

Will all this last forever? Is there no relief from all this heritage of the curse of God? In mercy the redemptive work began at once. In due time Jesus Christ came and made the atonement, and the word of God was

given to the world. This Word tells the whole story of man's first state, of his fall into sin, of the loss of all his glory, of his expulsion from paradise, of his degradation as the poorest slave. It abounds in promises of grace and points man to something better beyond.

And then here are the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. These tell of the sufferings of Jesus for sin and the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost and they are constant memorials of the evils of sin and the hope which is yet to come.

And now, finally, here comes the Sabbath day. It was stamped upon the moral nature of man in the beginning when he was in a state of innocence. In that state of innocence man was in communion with God and he was to fulfill all the holy offices of a mediator and in communion with God he enjoyed the rest of God and the Sabbath day permeated with the odors of paradise is designed to commemorate for all ages what man has lost. And moreover it is to be a picture of what he is to regain. It connects Eden with heaven and there is no memorial known to man that is more ancient than this or tells its story more fluently. It tells of the past and points to the future, a picture of what man has lost and what is to be his again by and by. And in order that man should never forget, one day out of every seven is set apart for man to contemplate the wonders of the past and the hopes of the future. One day out of every week by divine command, man is to lay down the badge of his slavery and enter into kingly rest. He is to put away the spade, the hoe, the ax and the plow, the hammer and the chisel. He must not touch them during all this day. These are the implements of a slave. Through grace of course there is dignity in labor but after all it is a degradation to a king to lay aside his crown and dig in the dirt, be covered with the soil and suffer the sweat of exhaustion and get nothing out of the earth but his bread. And this day of rest is designed of God to keep before his mind the memory of his loss and the hope of his restoration.

And somehow or other this idea has come down through all the ages and impressed itself upon every nation. Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans all have their traditions of a sacred seventh day. Sure enough it carries along with it the blessings of physical rest. It is necessary for strength of man and beast, and very largely some people use it for this purpose. But I want you to consider its monumental significance as a religious ordinance. I say again, on one day out of every seven man must lay aside the garb of the slave. He must dress himself like a free man. He must take up the old office of prophet and teach and learn to teach the will of God. He must take up the office of a priest and learn to intercede. And he must take up the office of king and enjoy the dignity and rest of a king that's crowned.

Taking this view of it we can never estimate fully the value of the Sabbath day in the great plan of redemption. All nations have their monuments and without these monuments their history would die and without the Sabbath day religion would be extinct.

Yonder is a son of Judah 30 years of age. He has a wife and children. He has received a fine inheritance of house and lands and flocks and herds and gardens and orchards and springs of water. Through negligence he has lost it all. Moreover he is heavily in debt and himself and his wife and children go into slavery. But 20 years off is the year of Jubilee. At this time all that was his must be returned to him. Now to keep alive his hopes suppose one day out of every week he is to act the part of a free man, to be a reminder of his loss and the hope of the future. On this day his master, under the law of God, cannot exact from him the labor of a slave. On this day he can sit with his family and indulge in sad meditations over his frightful loss and then look forward with buoyant hope to the year of Jubilee. Is not this day a blessing almost priceless to the son of Judah? Without this day he would be in despair. By unmitigated and incessant toil, without any cessation from labor, he might forget and his children

might forget that he ever was a free man. He might forget and his children might forget that the year of Jubilee was coming when he could go back and claim his garden and fig-trees and all that he had lost.

And then too, one year out of every seven years was the Sabbatic year and during this whole year he is to be almost a free man. His master cannot lawfully exact of him any labor in the cornfields and the olive-yards and thus again we see God's wonderful grace in keeping alive the prisoner's hope. As you see this man of Judah with his wife and children filled with joyous anticipation, boys and girls asking their parents of the things behind, of the spring and the well, and see father and mother answering with tears of joy, as on the Sabbath day they look forward to the year of Jubilee, don't you feel like raising a shout of gratitude to God who has made such provision for the prisoner in his chains!

Well, now, down through all the ages of time since the curse of God took effect on our first parents, through God's grace one day out of every seven is given to man and dedicated to the great purpose of commemorating the Eden that was lost and the heaven that is to be regained.

"Oh, day most calm, most bright.
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,
Th' indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a friend and with his blood;
The couch of time; care's balm and bay;
The week were dark but for thy light:
Thy torch doth show the way."

KEEPING OF THE SABBATH.

II.

"Holy-Day, Holiday, Work-day, Devil's-day, Despot's day." This chain of words, whose author I do not know, shows a descending grade as to the Lord's day, which is suggestive, truthful and alarming. The Sabbath, as God ordained it, is a holy day. The first

downward step is to make it a holiday. Easy then it becomes a **work** day, for the millions who use it as a mere **holiday**, it becomes a source of crime. On this day the devil gets in his most effective work, while those who are compelled by their environments to use it as a day of work, lose their liberty, and become the slaves of their fellow-men. We do not, indeed, hear the clanking of their chains, but the despotism, which lords it over them, is just as real as in the day when the Tyrant of Syracuse wore the iron crown. Violate the Lord's day or starve. Huge corporations of godless wealth say, "Work on this day or give up your job." In the beginning God ordained the Sabbath day to be **holy** unto the Lord. The body and soul of man need this day, and God stamped in man's moral nature the obligation to honor it. He put it in the shape of a positive statute, amid the thunders of Sinai, saying "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." He surrounded it with the strongest sanctions. In the preceding lecture the design of the Sabbath was brought to view. The design there emphasized was, that the Sabbath was to be a picture of the state and the dignity that man had lost and then again a picture of what man is to regain by and by. The Sabbath is thus a connecting link between Eden and heaven. On the long stretch of time between these two great terminals the resurrection looms up as a mighty peak. The change from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week emphasizes and commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But we must keep in mind steadily the idea of the Sabbath in its monumental significance. With this view in our minds the method of observing the Sabbath day is perfectly clear.

Man in his state of innocence had entered into the rest of God. This, man lost; and we must now keep the Sabbath day so as to conform as nearly as possible to the design of the Sabbath. In other words we must rest on the Sabbath day. We must rest in the whole being of man. Our children, servants, animals must all rest. The Westminster men put it thus: "The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day from our

worldly employments and recreations even from such as are lawful on other days."

In the days of Jesus of Nazareth the Pharisees had destroyed the very spirit of the Sabbath by their formalism. God in heaven never meant that a man should be relieved from the works of necessity and mercy on this day and Jesus incurred the wrath of the Pharisees by rebuking their formalistic spirit. But leaving out such works as those our Savior excepted we must do no work on the Sabbath day. The true spirit of the Sabbath stops the wheels of commerce and pleasure. It puts away the hammer and the saw, the plane and the chisel, the hoe and the ax, the plow and the mattock. Man must rest and his beast must rest.

A convict is dressed in the garb of the penitentiary. Through grace the warden may say: "Put off the garb of the convict today and put on the dress of the citizen, and put away the implements of your toil." How eagerly he would obey! To refuse would be folly inexpressible. God the Almighty in a similar way says to all his people. "Lay down all the tools of labor on the Sabbath day, for these things are the emblems of the curse." Sure enough we must put in a caveat here. Does one contend that labor is a blessing? Sure enough it is, under one aspect. It is a blessed thing for the convict to be compelled to labor. In his case surely it is a blessing. In his case leisure would ruin him and ruin the social life around him. But while we recognize it as a blessing we know that hard labor is the sentence which the judge has passed upon him. Then again, sickness and sorrow and pain are all blessings and death too, does it not open the gate and admit the weary pilgrim to heaven? But all of these are elements of the curse of God upon sin. I am asking you to consider labor, hard labor, as the penal sentence against sin. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat all thy days, etc., etc.

On the Sabbath day, therefore through God's rich grace, we are called on to lay aside every vestige of the curse as far as possible.

Now there are certain advantages which accompany this feature of Sabbath observance which we cannot fail to notice.

Sabbath rest for brain and muscle promotes long life. It favors health and strength. And it is applicable to men and beasts and machines. Incessant friction never fails to wear out. Nature itself therefore, sanctions the voice of grace when it commands every body to rest on the Sabbath day. Mr. Gladstone declared that the secret of his long life was that amid all the pressure of public cares he never forgot the Sabbath day with its rest for body and soul.

Sabbath work never did pay a man. An expert said to a Sunday fisherman, "Why do you fish on Sunday?" As you catch more fish the price will be lowered and you gain nothing by it. A six days' catch is worth just as much in the long run as a seven days' catch." What was true of the fisherman's calling is true of every product of human labor. Run through all the lines of industry. Apply it to the shoemaker, the weaver, the car-
 nenter and the principle holds true. The rest of the Sabbath day gives to the head and heart of the laboring man energy and encouragement for new labors. No man of all England was superior to Sir Matthew Hale in general integrity and conscientious devotion to duty. He testifies as follows: "Whenever I have undertaken any secular business on the Lord's day, that business has never prospered or succeeded well. If I did but forecast or design any temporal business on that day to be performed afterwards I was always disappointed in it. The more closely I have applied myself to the duties of the Lord's day, the more happy and successful has been the business of the week following, and though for thirty years my hands and mind have been full of secular business, I have never wanted time in the six days of the week to ripen and fit myself for the business I had to do, though I borrowed not one minute of the Lord's day to prepare for it, by study or otherwise." The testimony of these noble Englishmen ought to carry great weight. With our eye therefore on the rest of Eden which we lost,

with all our heart we should give honor to the Lord's day. Every consideration of nature calls for Sabbath rest, above all God's grace has given it unto us, and we are bound to Sabbath rest by divine command.

We note some signal facts, which we may interpret as bearing on the Sabbath day. In the first battle of Manassas the Federal army was defeated and driven back in perfect panic. The Federal army brought on the battle on the Lord's day. The attacking party was defeated. On the other hand, the Confederate army brought on the battle on the field of Shiloh. The issue of this battle was a check to the Confederate arms. The battle was fought on the Sabbath day. Napoleon Bonaparte drew up his mighty army, confronting Lord Wellington on the field of Waterloo. It was upon a Sabbath morning. Under the leadership of his brave Marshals he attacked the British army that stood like trees growing out of the ground mid the roaring of cannon. The sun of Napoleon set that day in blood. It was the Sabbath day. Now, we do not wish you to draw any hasty conclusion from these facts. We have not, indeed, facts enough of this sort to draw any conclusion about this matter. I simply wish to associate these facts, and connect them with the great Sabbath question. The truth is God always honors the men that honor his ordinance, and we should be exceedingly careful never to lay the hand of defilement on the Sabbath rest.

But man lost not only his innocence and his share in the rest of God, but he lost all the dignity of being God's representative. On this day, therefore, that God in His grace has given to us, we must take up the duties of the offices which we have lost, and perform them to the best of our ability. We must, every one of us, occupy the attitude of teachers and learners. We must take up again the emblems of our lost dignity, and man must teach his fellow-man. Jesus Christ says, "Let your light shine." Of course, this applies to every day of our lives, but on the Sabbath day we must specially act the part of teachers and learners. This view of the Sabbath day will drive every one of us to the house of God on

the Sabbath day, it will send every one of us to the Word of God with the spirit of the deepest devotion, it will bring us to the ordinances of the church of God, it will listen to no trifling excuse for absence from the sanctuary, animated by this spirit the father will gather his children around him on the Sabbath day, and teach them God's word. In the next place, man must put on the robes of the priestly office on the Sabbath day, and he must pray and listen to prayer. Of course, the Christian must do this day after day, but in the hard lot of life and the daily toil for bread, man has not time to indulge fully this spirit of devotion. But the Sabbath day is of all days the day that God has appointed for the exercise of this office, and the proper performance of it is followed by incalculable blessing. And then, finally, man in his own home must exercise the authority that God gave him, and bring all in tender subjection to the parental will and the law of God. We see, therefore, the divinely appointed principles which we are to recognize in the observance of the Lord's day. Let us recite again from the Westminster men. "The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending the whole day in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is taken up in the works of necessity and mercy."

Take note that the Sabbath command lies in the heart of the Decalogue. It is impossible to magnify the obligations of this day. God has made the most blessed promises to those who observe it. "For thus saith the Lord, unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of my covenant, even unto them, will I give in mine house, and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant even them will I bring to my holy

mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar, for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing my pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

On the other hand, we see the most alarming results attending the violation of the Lord's day. A noted philanthropist studied the convicts of the Auburn State Penitentiary. There were 1222 in number, all but eleven of these were found to be Sabbath breakers. Of 350 criminals that went to the scaffold, nine out of every ten were Sabbath breakers. We see, therefore, that the violation of the Sabbath day is intimately associated with the public crimes of the world. Yonder criminal has killed his neighbor. If he had been indoctrinated in the knowledge of God he would not have done it. If he had kept the Sabbath day he would have received this knowledge, so that we see the violation of the Sabbath day stands at the head of the lane, leading down to the awful crime of murder, and we might observe that every other violation of the decalogue follows the violation of the Sabbath day. The truth is, if a man trample upon his obligation to the Sabbath precept he is likely to disregard every obligation to his neighbor.

It is distressing to note that the Sabbath has been trampled on during our generation as never before in the history of the republic. The wheels of commerce and pleasure roll right through the heart of the day, the auto men and the aviation men, the base ball clubs, and the devotees of social life, utterly disregard this holy day. And this wholesale desecration has made a fearful inroad upon the church of God. If we could keep the enemy out of our own citadel we would be safe, but alas,

the powers of evil are striking at the heart of the church as they strike the Sabbath day. Now what relief is there for all this dread evil? It is cheering to note that the National Lord's Day Alliance is putting forth all its energy to save the day. Nearly every state in the union has its Sabbath law, Canada and the countries of Europe, all have their Sunday rest days. These laws are not based on religious motives, but they are civil laws, designed for the general good of the working people. Even China, with all its pathos, in the depths of heathenism and darkness, has its Sabbath laws.

There is another point to which we must attend. We have in the Synod of Mississippi 106 ministers, 813 ruling elders, 719 deacons, 8331 Sunday School teachers and officers, to say nothing of 17,398 church members. Is it too much to ask of this large army of office bearers and church members to halt and consider the dangers that hang over the Sabbath day? In the earlier days of Presbyterian Church history our fathers shed their blood for the doctrines and the practice of God's word. May we not ask all our Presbyterian hosts to stop the wheels of pleasure on the Lord's day, to quit riding on Sunday trains, to keep the Sunday newspaper out of their homes, to keep their cars and horses stabled on the Lord's day? Is it too much to ask these same Presbyterian people to honor the Sabbath day by resting, by going to church, by trying to train their children, by setting before men the example that God would approve?

Here is the statement of a railroad employee. It is quoted as absolutely authentic. He says: "There are over one million slaves in the United States. They may be found on the railroads, street cars, and with other corporations. We are slaves through the desecration of the Sabbath. 'It has come to be violate the fourth commandment or starve.' I charge a Christian people to be indirectly the cause of the beginning and the continuation of this state of affairs. How is the Christian responsible? By using and countenancing the practice of Sunday desecration. But a short time ago a minister gave over the evening service into the hands of the

young people's society that he might start on Sunday evening for Chicago. In order for that train to arrive at the place where this servant of God resides on Sunday evening it must necessarily leave its terminus on Sunday morning. Several entire crews are ordered into service, telegraph operators must be at their key to keep the track clear, and trains apart, ticket agents must be on duty to sell tickets, and throughout the entire system of that road hundreds of men worked on Sunday as on any other day to carry that Christian to his destination. If professing Christians did not patronize Sunday trains they would never be run. Again, I reiterate, the church of today is partly responsible for myself, and a million of my brothers laboring on Sunday, at the risk of our soul's salvation."

Are we able to parry the force of this charge? Is it true? Does the daughter of Zion hear, and will she hearken? Do not such facts as these bring the blush of shame to our cheeks, and should we not bow in humiliation, and turn our faces as never before to honor the Sabbath day?

High on some mountain peak of Zion we hear the voice of one crying aloud, "Watchman what of the night?" Out in the far east, the watchman sees the glimpse of the coming dawn. The blessed sun of Christian light and truth will ere long scatter away the darkness which envelops the heathen world. Our great Sovereign, Lord Jesus Christ will some day come back again to this world. The day and the hour of His coming no man can tell, but when He comes He will call the children of His love to everlasting rest.

Oh, may we in this Western land be ready to meet Him when He comes. We are living today in the glory of a mid-day sun; but if we allow our Sabbath to die, and the sacred fire on our family altars to go out that sun that shines upon us will be veiled in darkness. God forbid! God forbid!

THE RELIGIOUS HOME.

III.

In the last chapter of Revelation we have a description of the heavenly home. We behold the city of God, its golden streets, its green fields, its river of water of life, with the tree of life and its blessed fruits. "On all those wide extended plains shines one eternal day, there God the Son forever reigns, and scatters night away." We can almost see the spires of Heaven, and hear the sounds of gladness and joy. Can this picture be reproduced on earth? It has pleased God to make the earthly home a type of the heavenly home. Side by side with the Sabbath day we trace the home back to Eden, and like twin sisters, these two institutes of God pass on through all time.

What are the essential elements of a religious home? Take notice that brown stone fronts do not make the home. These rich abodes sometimes hide a skeleton from public view. Gold and silver, again, never yet made a happy home, for the elements of a religious home are unpurchasable, neither do kingly crowns and purple robes make the home of God's people. Let Franz Joseph, the Emperor of Austria, speak, and as he gazes mournfully on the grave of the crown prince, his own son, who committed suicide to escape the miseries of life, he says, "The true home is not found in my palace walls." Many a nobleman, perhaps, and queen with jewel crown would give all the wealth they had, and turn away from their palatial buildings and repair to some humble cottage if it contained a home.

One essential of the true home is monogamy. The woman of the home must be as a fruitful vine, and the children as olive plants must sit around the table. Without these there may be happiness, but the home on earth that is the type of the heavenly one must be blessed with the natural joys of fatherhood and motherhood. We must hear the laugh and shouts and the pattering of children's feet, for heaven is the home where parents and their children dwell forever. In the home of Obede-

dom, the ancient Levite, there were 62 children and grandchildren that made up the membership of that happy home.

I invite you to look upon the home of Obededom as the ideal home. There is on record no account of jars and thorns in the flesh, and where there is no record of such things, we will assume that there are none. The Anglo-Saxon principle of law is that until a man is proved guilty we must hold him innocent. Let us look at this ancient home, and the first thing you note is that God was enthroned there. When David was smitten with fear by the death of Uzza he turned over the ark of God to Obededom, and the ark stood in his house enriched by the presence of God. There were in it the two tables of the Decalogue, and the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and there was the golden lid of the ark, which had been stained with blood many times, and above the ark were the golden cherubim.

Now it is true, the Israelites once used the ark as a fetish. It was so used in the latter days of Eli, the Prophet, but the result was disastrous. Many today make the Bible a fetish, also baptism and the Lord's supper, the house of God and every other sacred thing, when the spirit of formalism prevails and the spirit of worship departs. But this was not the case in the home of Obed. With the ark of God there was the presence of God, and the presence of the ark in the home speaks to us and tells us of a God enthroned in the home. God was there in His power, in His majesty and glory. Sure enough that glory was veiled, else Obed would have died, but God was there. In many homes on earth we see Venus enthroned, sometimes Bacchus holds sway, and then again stern and selfish Juno claims the homage of every heart, but in the home of Obed God abode. Now it is wonderful to think of Almighty God being in the home of a man, and in the sacred furniture of the ark there were symbolized those attributes which made provision for all the needs of man.

He was there, too, as a God of love, and coming from Heaven He brought the odors and the atmosphere of Heaven. In the spirit of love He welded together the whole house, husband and wife, and father and mother and children. He came with authority to command, for there within the ark were the tables of the law, which were to be the rule of man's life. God was present as the mediator divine, for the mercy seat was a most impressive symbol of Jesus Christ, and the spirit of God was present as the eternal associate of father and son, so that we see in Obed's home the Triune God. Remember that He was not there simply as the God of nature, but as the God of grace, that had come to dwell with Obed as a loving father. Think of that great God, who thundereth in the heavens, veiling His glory and coming down to dwell in the house of His servant. We rejoice in the exalted dignity of this man of God.

But see on the other hand Obed's attitude. He willingly received the ark of God in his house. When King David distressed applies to Obed, saying, "Will you take the ark of God into your house?" We can hear him reply, "Bring it in my lord." He was not afraid of the ark, for he loved the God of the ark. It is not stated in the record, but we are sure that Obed gave the ark the best room, and the best place in that room. He did not have to consult wife and children about it, for they were all sure that husband and father would do the right thing. David and the hosts go back to Jerusalem, and the ark of God was left behind. We do not know what kind of a house Obed had, whether it was large or small, well furnished or otherwise. It may have been a low humble dwelling, with vines clambering all around it, but this we do know, it was the most honored house in all the world. It surpassed the palaces of Egypt and Babylon. No house of kings or Pharaohs could compare with Obed's house, because the ark of God was in it.

We note a feeling of delicate and tender reverence filling the entire home, for the ark of God was in the house. The evening comes and Obed and his family gather. They bow tenderly and worship the God that was

enthroned between the cherubim. 'Tis a scene that the angels love. Obed prays for wife and children. He asks God to blot their sins all away; to give them new hearts and clean hands, and watch over them during the shadows of the night. Morning dawns, and again this father in Israel gathers the same little group around the ark of God, and thanking God for the rest of the night, he prays for the guiding hand upon all the steps of the day, to preserve them from the evil of the day, to give them wisdom and discretion about their daily work. And when father and mother are both out of the house, we can see a timid boy or girl of Obed's name silently drawing near, he bows where his father bows and prays to the same God of the ark. Now and then the children laugh, but this is natural. God sanctifies their young voices, for Jesus, the great Mediator, said by and by, "Suffer them to come unto Me," and He put His arms upon them and blessed them. Fear and love for God the Sovereign pervade the whole house.

The Sabbath dawns, and Obed knows that the Sabbath peace is in the very heart of the Decalogue. On Friday evening Obed has commanded that all the farming tools be brought into the shed house, and now again this religious home gathers in the house where the ark of God presides. They may do all the works of necessity and mercy, but no other work on this day do they perform. On the other hand Obed tells his children of the history of the ark, of the giving of the law, of God's dealings with His people, of the creation of the world, and all the wonders of God's grace to Israel. And when the sun has set, gentle sleep from God pervades the whole house, and so on from week to week. Pure, sweet, blessed home how precious the help that leads us on to the heavenly land.

It is written, "The Lord blessed the house of Obededom." During that blessed period Obed was afraid of no burglar, no thunderings or lightnings caused him to fear; he could fear no sickness, for the God of the ark was there to sanctify. His lands were blessed, his flocks and herds were blessed, and in body and soul his whole house received God's blessing.

Now the ark of God has been withdrawn, and we may not have in our homes any more that symbol of God's presence, but we can have the God of the ark himself. Do you wish Him to dwell with you as He did in the house of Obed? Do you wish to have a home like that? Then ask Him to come and dwell with you. He says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." He knocks at the door of heart and home. If any man hear and open, He says, "I will come in and sup with him and he with Me."

The blessings of a home like this can never be estimated in this world. From the Christian home there go forth streams of blessing. In the happy days of young boyhood and girlhood the teachings of God's word of truth are impressed upon young hearts and never die out. These truths of God sanctified by the voice of prayer and praise, and impressed by the godly example of father and mother, mold the characters of the strong men and women that bless the world. On the other hand, there is no vice so dreadful as that which comes from the ungodly home. From the godless home there go forth the Catalines and Borgeas that curse the world. With the picture of the bright stream flowing from one, and the black current of home bred vice pouring forth from the other, are you not stirred from your hearts with a longing for the Christian home? The home like that here described coupled with the blessed institution of the Sabbath day is the greatest which God has used in the plan of redemption. The church of God was organized in the home, and draws its vital power from our hearth-stones.

Afflictions, indeed, come to the religious home but God sanctifies them all. After awhile the light goes out from the home. The wife of Obed lies down gently to sleep; she has passed on to the hills beyond. Strong, tender hands carry her to her resting place. Obed and his sons and daughters gather around, with hearts all grieved, they think of their fearful loss, but the eye of faith points them on to the better land. They hear the voice of the coming Mediator, as He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, in my Father's house are many mansions." One by one when the work of life is done, the

members of that happy home pass on to God. We think with tears of the broken home, but God holds in His hand all the links of the chain, and when by and by the last member of Obed's house lays down his pilgrim's staff in the banks of the river, God the Almighty puts all the links together. The chain is reformed, not a link is lost, not a vacant place. The home on earth is merged into the heavenly home.