

FOUR LECTURES

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Religious Use of Property,

BY THE

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OF NEW YORK.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The following lectures were originally delivered in 1877, under the auspices of the Rochester (Baptist) Theological Seminary. By kind permission of the author, they are now republished, without expense to the church at large, for circulation among Presbyterians, by the General Assembly's Committee on Systematic Beneficence.

The hope is entertained that these words, from a well-known pastor,—scattered among our candidates, ministers, elders, deacons, communicants,—may become largely useful in the furtherance of intelligent, proportionate, methodical giving.

It has been deemed best to reproduce the lectures precisely in their original form. In this fact will be found explanation of certain special and local allusions noticeable.

THE RELIGIOUS USE OF PROPERTY.

LECTURE I.

Some difficulty might be anticipated in the discussion of this topic before an audience of students and of the general public. For students a certain academic style may be deemed requisite; and precisely that style may be unsuited to the friends from without who show their interest in the Seminary, and in the theme, by their presence. I venture, however, to speak to the Christian judgment of average religious people; and if that form of address is not intelligible to the academic mind, so much the worse for its training. But Academic and Seminary training is not meant to suppress, but to train and develop native common sense; and I have not the least doubt that candidates for the ministry who have to deal with ordinary men and women all their lives, will receive without offence what is spoken in the fashion in which—if they are to be useful—they must speak in their future professional duties.

The subject of these addresses is the religious use of property. The President and Trustees of the Seminary will bear me witness that when they honored me with an overture on this subject, I stated frankly that I had no special aptitude for its discussion, and that all I knew on it could be put in a very few Lectures. They took the responsibility of arranging for them; and I have only to express the hearty satisfaction I feel in co-operating in this service with a branch of the Church of Christ outside my own, and with the generous founder of the lectureship, and to hope and expect that the blessing of God Almighty will render this effort useful to the glory of our common Lord.

If this were an abstract, or speculative matter, if as with some historical themes, its interest lay in the past, or like some prophetic, only in the future, it would hardly be worth our while to employ special agencies for drawing to it public attention.

But if the Divine word enjoins anything on this matter, we have daily opportunity to obey or to disobey, and it is a theme for the discussion of which there is present, urgent need, as will appear from the following considerations:

(a.) The present opportunities for employing Christian agencies are unexampled. All over the world, doors are open that were formerly closed. Freedom, which owes so much to Christianity, is repaying the favors by giving opportunity for Christian teaching. All North America is open and inviting. All Europe is open. South America is, for the most part, accessible as never before. Of India, China, Japan, we need not tell the familiar tale. For the "barbarous Turk" it is claimed that he is the friend of missions within his territory, though it is probably only of missions to other than Mohammedans.

But we must admit that the field is open as never before; and facilities, other than money, are abundant. An enterprising and ubiquitous Commerce pushes its way in an unprecedented degree. The traveller dares to explore whatever is most hazardous and least known. Our English tongue is spreading with extraordinary rapidity. Our Saxon pride keeps us from learning others' languages, and we feel a kind of commiseration for any who cannot understand us. But we are a good people to deal with. It is worth the while of Continental hotel-keepers and shop-keepers to know English, and it is worth the while of Japanese, Chinese and Indian young men to learn it for the sake of trade and employment, and I am of those who hope and believe that it is to be the medium by which many tribes and nations are to learn of the wonderful works of God.

But confining our attention to our own land, we have the loudest call to the practical study of this subject. Here is a young nation, in its formative state, with a broad Continent for its home, and with enormous material advantages. Our religious institutions have to be set up, extended and maintained. We have, so far as all Church expense is concerned, declined any aid from the State, and assumed the burden as Christians. The voluntary principle is on its trial among us. In every discussion on the subject of Establishments, in Europe, the standing reply to voluntary logic is the production of some American document. Some clerical Jeremiah is weeping over the sons of the prophets, and their sufferings, and it is so easy to say, "There is the way you find things in one of the richest and most prosperous countries in the world."* There is present need to discuss this question.

(*b.*) For it must be admitted that the supply of means is deficient even in our present standard of working. How many societies are crippled, no matter how cautiously the advances are made. If there is one class of Christian men that is required to see how the wind blows with a view to their sowing, it is the Secretaries of Boards and Committees; and with all their caution, how often is there a discouraging debt! Nor is this for foreign fields only; for at home at our own doors, too often labor is restricted by the limited means to sustain it. Take our church edifices. I do not know how it is here in Western New York, which I have long held to be one of the most prosperous, comfortable and presentable sections of this continent, and in which I presume, in all things, and especially ecclesiastical things, you "pay as you go," but in the region from which I come, we have plenty of debt on our church edifices. He will be a courageous man who will lend money on churches, as things threaten to go. Nor is it only for the cost of erecting buildings—but even for the cost of sustaining them, I hear of difficulty where one would least expect it. Cries of distress go up from "feeble churches" in "financial troubles," and while stores

* Of course we do not admit the sufficiency of the rejoinder. A principle may be, like the doctrines of Christianity, of undoubted goodness, and yet fail to be adequately lived out by its acceptors. Considering the brief history of the American nation, and the disadvantages under which the Christian people have had to prosecute their work, the results reached have been encouraging in the extreme, and the fair argument would be—if a young nation engaged in "subduing the earth" has done so much without State aid, how much easier it ought to be to dispense with it in old, rich, and long-settled communities? But the fact that we are unconsciously contributing toward the settlement of one of the most stirring and most momentous questions in the churches of Europe, is to be considered as a stimulus to fidelity, and enlightened public spirit.

and companies thrive and prosper, churches, as they say, "cannot pay their running expenses."

(c) And this leads to another evil—deeper far than any hardship to an individual, or to a class. The church is the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the best conservator of truth, morality and purity on earth. (As a minister in succession of three large congregations, for a quarter of a century, I never had a parishioner in a prison!) Now it is a real calamity to the community if the salt lose its savor, if the light be dimmed. But this deficiency of means tends in that direction. For example, churches are led to unworthy, unfitting, undignified devices for raising money. I will not specify, for I might seem to reflect on individuals who are to be pitied rather than blamed, who are suffering from the vices of a system they cannot amend; but I will say I have known things done in this connection by churches, which I think hardly honest; and woe be to us, and to the country when the Church goes down to the employment and the sanction of the tricks and devices of small and unprincipled traffic.

In the same way the reversal of the Apostolic rule is brought about. The poor come to be of small account, and the rich an acquisition, because they can pay. This is pre-eminently bad for the rich. Their follies are condoned; court paid to their wealth they take as due to their worth; prominence, or pre-eminence, is gained by other than moral and spiritual qualities; and I should not wonder if rich men are so soon met at the door of the house of God with the subscription-list, before grace has renewed their hearts and reversed their money-loving habits of mind, that they are deterred and thrown back under the impression that the Church wants not them, but theirs. A false standard of judging is introduced. "My son," wrote an old clergyman to a son, also a minister, "take care of the poor and God will take care of you." But the poor become a burden to churches that are living on the very edge of their income, and they are tempted to think the minister successful in the degree in which he can draw in contributors. A friend of mine described to me an incident in a church-meeting where it was decided to be for the divine glory that a most valuable and faithful minister should be invited to resign. He was in middle life, had served them many years, and was blameless in every way. With a magnificent sweep of his arm one of the members said, "Brethren, them galleries has got to be filled." The grammar, in my mind, was not the worst part of that speech; the evil lay in the depraved idea of ministerial usefulness. By pyrotechnics, by tricks of trade, by standing on his head (figuratively, of course,) a man may fill the galleries and the floor too, without making any solid contribution to the real strength of a church, or to the numbers in the Jerusalem above.

By the operation of the same causes ministers are made to suffer. I forewarn you, gentlemen of this Seminary, that some of the hardest trials in your future life and work will come to you on the side of deficient sense of duty, in money matters, among your people. I do not tell you this to discourage you, for the work is worth enduring for, but to impress you with the importance of this theme, and of thorough instruction upon it. Changes in the field of labor become far too frequent. The fifth year of a true man's labor in a place ought to be

worth more than the first and the second together. He knows the people and the people know him, and the tenth year ought to be twice as good as the fifth. But on this system—which yet is no system, for it is not regulated and provided for, as among our Methodist brethren—into which we are drifting, a minister has hardly had time to take the measure of his people and learn their wants, and come into personal sympathy with them—until from “prudential” reasons on his side or on theirs, a change is desirable. It is not meant that this is the only occasion of change, but it is so frequent, irritating, discouraging and mischievous, as to entitle it to account.* In part through failure in this department of duty, the ministry as a class is depreciated. Instead of pastoral settlements, we come to a too large proportion of stated supplies, and the stated supply is in danger of being regarded too much as “a man hired to preach for a year,” and too little as a minister of Jesus Christ, placed by Him who holds the stars in His right hand. If this is bad for the ministry as a class, it is perilous to the people. You cannot degrade the teacher in the eyes of the pupils, the parents in the eyes of the children, the rulers in the eyes of the governed, the ministry in the eyes of the laity, without pupils, children, people and the church being injured. To lessen the number of those objects to which to look up is an injury to us; and there have been many who were helped along by having faithful, consistent ministers watch over them from childhood, who formed to their minds a standing argument for religion, when they were plied with considerations on the other side.

In the same connection it may be proper to say that in an age of great commercial activity like ours, there is need to discuss this question for the spiritual welfare of individual Christians. It is a dreadful thing for the mind to be for long, indifferent to one great class of duties, to be allowed to take its set, and form its habits in disregard of them. One sometimes meets with men converted late in life, and from whom you do not expect such victories over self and such expansive benevolence, as from those who grew up under gracious influences. Even so with men—even Christian men—who began with perhaps little means, whose success is the result of innumerable small economies and trifling gains, whose practical creed in money matters was in three words, get—keep—increase—it is only by patient painstaking, practical instruction, that a habit of mind, old and consolidated, is broken through, and giving five hundred dollars can be reconciled with the life-long rule of saving or making five cents, where it is honestly practicable. And how much men miss—good men who will praise God for their salvation in heaven—how much they lose here and there, from not having learned the blessed art of laying up treasure in heaven and making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness!

*The settlement of a minister is usually by and through an association of ministers, elders or deacons, called by the name of Presbytery, Association, or Council. The details and condition of settlement pass, with more or less form or significance, under the eye of this body. Two anomalies seem to attend the current administration. (1) The sufficiency of the means provided for the minister appears to be affirmed, on what ground it would often be difficult to say, and (2) the bond so solemnly formed is too often dissolved in such a way as to render the Presbytery or corresponding body only a cumbrous Bureau of registration, at least in appearance.

One other consideration may fitly close this part of our statement. The age magnifies material success. All the activities of multitudes are embarked in the effort to make money. The church is to bear her testimony on this point, and to interpose with divinely-appointed checks on this tendency. But her testimony against the love of money, the greed of gain, the excessive pursuit of riches, the over-valuing of wealth, the undue reliance on possessions for happiness, and the corrupting tendencies of large means, is sadly weakened if she herself does not understand and act upon right principles in regard to "this world's goods." Here her testimony ought to be strongest. It will be a real calamity if it be weak and inadequate. And just here the world's eye may be expected to be on the Church, as on the disciples who were watched when they plucked the ears of corn and rubbed them in their hands and did eat, and duly reported. So the world which can judge of liberality, or of parsimony, of generosity or of selfishness, better than of principles and of orthodoxy, will be sure to justify its attitude by the course of professing Christians. We must beware lest we be weak when we should be strong, and weak where our weakness can be most readily detected and exposed.

Now, if the point has been made out that this question of the consecration of property is practical and urgent at this moment, we proceed to say that if it is to be discussed, ministers must undertake the task. Not they only indeed, for we look for the time when Christian merchants, lawyers and physicians, will take their share in this practical reform; but for the steady, patient, continuous, consecutive teaching of the Church, the reliance must be on the minister. If the holy oracles have anything to say on the subject, are we not bound to declare the whole counsel of God? Is not the Bible a book of truth, and of truth with a view to duty? Are we not after the example of Peter, Paul, and John, to tell men not only what God is, and what man is, but what duties God requires of man? Is not property one of the talents? Are we to be silent anywhere if the Lord speaks? Is not the messenger to deliver his message, as the printer reproduces his manuscript, and the telegraph operator gives out in San Francisco what he gets in Rochester? Are we the judge of what it is wise to tell the people, or is the Lord? We are bound to explain, enforce and apply this truth in the place and in the proportion it has in the divine revelation. Nay, more, it may happen that a particular tendency may have such strength, the mind of a Christian community may be so far perverted on a particular point, that it may be proper to emphasize the correcting truths, until the evil is modified.*

And if ministers are to instruct on this subject, they ought to understand it. Two difficulties have to be overcome in the effort. Business

* If the Sabbath is threatened with desecration, we preach the Sabbath law and privilege with special emphasis. If intemperance becomes a national sin and disgrace, we teach, preach, speak, organize against it. If doctrinal error creep in, we enforce the revealed truth. If the Galatians misplace circumcision, how energetically Paul sets their error forth, and throws on it the light of free justification by grace through faith! So there is a "present truth," and the attention now turned to business affairs, the pressing needs of the Church, and the special danger to her members from the growth and diffusion of wealth, make this a fitting theme for special enforcement. It may be said indeed that the "bad times" are unsuitable for the discussion of such a theme. What if the "bad times" be God's retributive dealing with us, and a call to repentance in the matter of property?

men have always nursed a pleasant belief that ministers do not know much of monetary affairs, and would not know what to do with the money if they had it. And under the impression that devoutness and capacity to manage money matters do not go together, ministers have sometimes acquiesced in the idea. But I see no presumption in favor of it. Ministers may be supposed to have had fair common sense to start with, and many of them have learnt the value and use of money through as sharp a life-battle as have business men. And in point of fact I do not see that ministers are conspicuously more foolish in money matters than their lay friends of the same opportunities.* It does not at all follow that because a man is religious and spiritual, he is weak minded or a simpleton. One would not like to give the world any countenance in a superstition it is anxious to cherish.

It is common to be witty, in a weak, antiquated way, over ministers winding up earnest spiritual appeals with a call for money; but the objection lies against the Apostle of the Gentiles as strongly as it can do against any gospel minister. Was there ever a more animated, inspiring and elevated piece of eloquence than that with which the Apostle Paul closes the fifteenth of first Corinthians? He did not break his epistle into chapters. That was the work of a later and a feebler hand, and in immediate sequence to that swelling climax of sacred and exultant triumph, he proceeds with the words, "Now as concerning the collection." (1 Cor. xvi: 1.) Let us only have his cause, his zeal, his objects at heart, and we need not fear criticism any more than he did.

* It has been my privilege to be in the homes both in Europe and in America, of many ministers of all the leading Protestant denominations, many of them with exceedingly slender incomes, and the comfort, and thrift without meanness, and elegance without show, there observed, do not suggest incapacity to manage money, but the contrary, and rather call for the liveliest admiration of them, and of the sharers of their life. They more rarely fail, miscalculate, compound, and break down, than the same number of men in any other condition of life. The idea of their childlike ignorance of common things is a mischievous illusion.

LECTURE II.

We saw that the unprecedented calls upon the Church for effort, the embarrassments produced by insufficient resources, the injury accruing to the ministry and to the Christian community, and other similar considerations give to the subject of the religious use of property a present and profound interest. We now address ourselves to the question, Are there materials for forming fixed and definite convictions on the subject, or must it remain in the region of sentimental impulse, and occasional good feeling?

The question must, in the main, be determined by an appeal to the Scripture. "In the main," for there are certain general considerations that bear upon the duty of the Church, and of the individual, in the very nature of the case. A Christian man has a business side to his life, like any other man, and he is specially bound to be "blameless and harmless" on that side. A good man should "guide his affairs with discretion," if for no other reason than to show that good sense and true religion go hand in hand. The impression that religious persons are usually weak-minded, is noxious in the extreme, and everything calculated to make it, is bad. There are multitudes of persons who think "God's silly people" fair game for their selfish purposes, and who believe that only their silliness explains their piety. "If they knew as much as we do, they would not be carried away with religion." A pious man on that side of his life in which he stands along with his fellow men is bound to be high-minded, generous, just, capable, and efficient. The Church also has her business side, and the same principles apply to her as to the man. On the human side moreover, the Church is the Christian party, and like any other party must be expected to give effect to her convictions. Their strength and depth will be gauged by men, by the efforts she puts forth to maintain and diffuse them. There have been, and are now, persons who have a kind of belief that the lower creatures are immortal; but they do nothing in consequence in this land, and the inference is a fair one, that the conviction is not very strong or practical. But the Church believes that men are immortal; that they are in danger of being sufferers; that there is a way of escape; and moreover that it is best for them, and for the world, that they should enjoy the hope of safety now, and feel its moral power. Now the world will estimate the strength of these convictions by the efforts put forth to give them effect, to diffuse and perpetuate them. We are not fatalists. We believe that God's work proceeds through appropriate instrumentalities. We are a great party. We have party duties, so to speak. No sane person blames honest Democrats or honest Republicans for pushing their views and plans, so long as the means used are honest. We should doubt their sincerity if they were inactive, and so precisely the Christian party may be expected to exert itself in all fitting ways to carry its convictions, and advance its objects. But this effort implies,

and involves the use of property. I should not wonder if many adherents of one or other political party spend a larger proportion of their means on party objects than Christians are expected to do for Christian purposes. There are, accordingly, auxiliary antecedent considerations, which go a certain length to show the duty of the Christian people in the matter of money. For the Church to be apathetic in this would—on the common principles by which men are influenced—nullify her own testimony.

But the authoritative decision must turn on the Divine word, and in proceeding to examine its teaching, there is a historic fact on which it is proper to dwell for a moment. All men know to what an enormous extent the organizations of the Christian religion had possessed themselves of property before the Reformation. A great proportion of the money, the precious metals, the buildings and the land of the Christian countries had come into their hand. The truth had been perverted. Men were led to believe that they could be “redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold.” The coarse and licentious freebooter set over against a life of lawlessness the surrender of his plunder from a dying hand to the Church. Devout men were led to believe that exemptions, and spiritual gains for themselves, or for those whom they loved, could be “purchased with money.” Hence, as it has been said, “Multitudes found themselves beggars because their fathers had been saints.” Now errors commonly spring up in the neighborhood of great truths, get sheltered under truths, and hang on to them, and like the ivy on a tree, suppress and kill that on which they depended. Hence, when the errors have to be swept away, the truths they concealed, often get swept away along with them.* Error is bad all around. It conceals truth; it traverses it; it perverts it; it raises prejudice against it; and it often drags it down in its own fall.

It was eminently so in the Reformation. Salvation had come to be “by works.” Protestants were inclined to make little of “works,” in consequence. Giving money or other form of property made a great element in “the works,” and hence Protestant teachers, thinking of the error “farthest from it is best,” said little on this subject. Duties and privileges of which our Lord speaks unhesitatingly were slurred over, lest there should be any of the sordid scheming of a corrupt corporation. Any child can find either end of a line: it takes a process of measurement to determine the exact middle. A truth is not always the diametrical opposite of an error. Protestantism has suffered in many things, and among others in this, from the bad odor in which Romish caricature and perversion placed many doctrines and duties of the inspired word. It is for us to disregard the extremes into which the human mind swung in violent and passionate reaction against the grasping ambition of a great corporation, and to endeavor to learn and do the will of our Father, in the more free and felicitous circumstances, in which through His blessing on the courage of our fathers, we stand.

* This idea is presented and illustrated with his usual copious eloquence, by T. Biney, in his work on “Money,” pp. 10, 11. Any student of the times before the Reformation will recall the extent to which church-building, the endowment of religious houses and the like, became a *quid pro quo*—a present investment for gains in the unseen world, and what an important part the erection of St. Peter’s, Rome, played in bringing about the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century.

In a very good collection of Essays entitled "Gold and the Gospel," the writer of one of them begins his collation of Scripture texts on the consecration of property, with Abraham's gift of the tenth to Melchizedeck. But surely we may begin further back, if we desire to know the divine estimate of property as a means of glorifying God. But we are met with a protest on the part of some against any employment of Old Testament authority in the matter. They object to all that is "Mosaic": they want to go by the new law. But let us consider dispassionately how the Old Testament stands to us—a point on which I humbly think, there is need for revision of many public utterances. The Revelation given to men in the earlier periods of human history is not necessarily superseded by the lesson that came later, any more than the teaching at a Seminary contradicts and supersedes the teaching of godly parents, or the training of a college sets aside the spelling and the grammar taught at school. The Old Testament gives us the language and figures of the New. In some books of early date like Shakespeare, or abundant provincialism like Burns, we find a glossary in foot-notes at the end, to render the language intelligible. Now, with the Bible, the glossary comes at the beginning, and the language we use freely and familiarly in the New Testament, has its meaning fixed by the Old. Why, the very word "consecration" we apply to property, comes to us from the Old Testament. The "priest," "altar," "sacrifice," "atonement," "reconciliation," "intercession," "the Sabbath," the "holy convocation," the "psalm of praise," the cry of "supplication," all come to us from the Old Testament. For good and sufficient reasons the forms of the Levitical economy having done their work are withdrawn, not because destroyed, but because fulfilled. As for our Christian Churches, the more scriptural they are, the nearer they come to the Jewish Synagogue, in which Jesus Christ worshipped and taught, "as his custom was on the Sabbath," and into the forms and usages of which the Apostles introduced the warmth and power of evangelical truth, which was not the denial, but the development and expansion of the Gospel offered in type and symbol to the earlier race. The light at noon to-day was not the antithesis of the light at six in the morning. It was the same light, only more of it. And the light of the New Testament is not opposed to that of the Old, but only an addition to it. Nay more, many things are not enjoined in the New Testament, because their knowledge is assumed from the instruction of the Old. The erection of places of worship, for example, is nowhere enjoined in the New Testament, for the sufficient reason that out of the religious life of the Old Testament Church the custom had naturally grown, and was an accepted and established arrangement in New Testament times.*

With these suggestions, rather than formal arguments, to break the force of the current unreasoning disregard of the Old Testament, let us look into the Paradise in which God put man in the beginning. All

*Is it not on the same principle that it is to those who go to found churches among Gentile peoples, that directions are given as to the choice of elders? The order was already known and defined among Jews, and passed over naturally into the churches of which the earlier elements were Jewish converts. For the extent to which the Christian congregation is the lineal descendant of the synagogue, Vitringa may be consulted with advantage.

will agree that it gives the ideal of a perfectly happy people; the conception up to which we should strive to rise, to make earth approximately happy again. But man did not there possess everything. He was under a fixed series of limitations; not every day his, but a seventh for the Lord; not everything his, but his life sustained by the labor of dressing and keeping the garden; not every tree in it his, but a reserved and forbidden tree in the midst of it. He has a Sabbath for his soul; holy marriage for his social affections; honest labor for his bodily sustenance, and divine restrictive law for his conscience. It sometimes happens that owners of land, meaning to give the use of it to others, without alienating it, impose a nominal rent—a quit rent, the passing of which acknowledges the recipient as owner, and the occupier as tenant. This is understood in all lands. In many an old English “deed,” “three barley-corns,” “a fat capon” or a “shilling,” is the consideration which permanently recognizes the rights of lordship. God taught man by the forbidden tree that He was the owner, that man was occupier. He selected a matter of property to be the test of man’s obedience, the outward and sensible sign of a right state of heart to God; and when man put forth his hand and did eat, he denied God’s ownership, and asserted his own. Nothing remained but to eject him. Now we argue for the perpetuity of the Sabbath from its appointment in Eden. It was “made for man.” Why should there be reserved rights for God in the matter of time, and his rights in the matter of property be ignored? Is he not still testing and educating men in the matter of possessions?

Then in the next generation of our race we come to Cain and Abel, (Gen. iv : 3, 4,) offering of what they had to God. You look into the commentaries and you find that two questions occupy them, on this part of their history. One is the origin of sacrifice. How did men learn to sacrifice? Some will recollect the old idea to which Dr. Trench has given recent currency, that the skins of which Adam’s first clothing was made were of beasts slain in sacrifice, and that he was thus taught that he was to be protected, through a sacrifice that would give him righteousness. One might use it as an interesting speculative illustration; it hardly amounts to an established truth. The other question respects the difference between Cain’s offering and Abel’s. But surely a great question lies behind these. How did the sons of Adam come to know that a gift of property to Him would be acceptable to God, the absolute owner of all? Is it not as fair an inference that God must have taught them this, as that He taught them how to sacrifice? They must have learnt somehow that God had rights; that His claims should be acknowledged; that such acknowledgement would be well-pleasing in his sight. Let us make the same acknowledgement, and in Abel’s spirit, bearing in mind that it is the blood that secures for us acceptance in the Divine presence, that “to us and our offering”—our persons first, and then our gifts—the Lord will have respect.

When Noah, (Gen. viii : 20,) came out of the Ark, with a small stock of living creatures for the re-population, so far as he knew, of the world, he offered a sacrifice of living, clean beasts, and of every clean fowl. It must have seemed imprudent to sense, but it was no

loss to the eye of faith. God blessed the remainder, and the sacrifice was followed by the purpose not to renew the curse on the ground for man's sake; by the promise of seed time and harvest; by the formal gift of animals for food to man; and by renewed blessing on Noah and on his sons. How many times curses would be averted and blessings brought down by consecration of what we have, however little it may seem, to him!

Now we come to Melchizedeck—the providentially prepared type, not of the Levitical priesthood, but of Jesus Christ. He did not get his office from his father, *so far as the history goes*, like the Levite, nor transmit it to his son, so far as the history goes: hence he is said to be without father, or descent. So far he resembles and foreshadows that greater King of righteousness, whose priesthood, underived from man, is incapable of transmission, who by one offering perfected forever all them that are sanctified. To this Melchizedeck, in recognition of his priestly character, and we may be sure from the use made of it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, under divine guidance, the patriarch gave a tenth. Everything about it—the mystery of the man—the chivalry of Abraham in battle—and his magnanimity in victory—gives interest to this transaction. Our Roman Catholic friends have pushed the type a little too far in alleging that the bread and wine brought forth stand for the Lord's Supper. If so, it is a Protestant Communion with the cup for the laity that is pre-figured; but the main point is that the tithe of the spoils is given to the recognized representative of God. The principle of this gift was embodied in the later Levitical law, as you will see by the examination of Lev. xxvii: 30; Numb. xxxi: 28; and 2 Sam., viii: 11.

There is a strong prejudice against Jacob, who never forgot his "duty to himself;" and that prejudice extends to his vow at Luz, as if he made a sordid bargain with the Lord, conditioning his giving by the Lord's. A study of the passage, however, shows that this is unjust to Jacob—God first spoke—made the overtures and promise, and his "if" in reply is not of doubt, but of certainty. If—"seeing that God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give I will surely give the tenth unto thee." He proceeds on the usual way of grace. God has promised and performed, therefore we serve him. It is the same principle as the Lord's word to Israel, "I brought thee out of Egypt, therefore love me." Man would reverse this, and love God on condition of being delivered. Jacob's tenth was not only in devout imitation of good precedent; it was in the spirit of all true giving to the Lord.

For, passing on to the Mosaic economy, it is well known that tenths or tithes were enjoined upon the Hebrews. The Levites received a tenth of the produce of the land; and of this, (for clergymen are not exempt from the duty of systematic giving,) they again in turn gave a tenth for the purpose of the high priesthood. (Numb. xviii: 21-28.) One other tenth was paid by the Hebrews for the purpose of the festivals, and the great educational and moral influences connected with

the mingling of all the people in the metropolis well repaid the outlay. The testimony of Josephus, and of the apocryphal book of Tobit, i: 7, 8, is conclusive on this point. Besides this fifth, every third year another tithe was paid, regarding the uses of which some uncertainty exists, the balance of opinion being in favor of it as a provision for the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless. (See Deut. xiv: 22-27.)

Now, I confess, I do not feel much interest in determining the amount and designation of these contributions. The main thing for us to consider is that in this early time, when God was organizing a church on the earth, as a great visible community, and impressing upon it the characteristics which He intended to mark His people in all time to come, the regular, systematic, proportionate giving of property to Him was enjoined and enforced compliance with this rule was followed with blessing; and on the other hand, disregard or evasion of it, was attended by conspicuous tokens of the divine displeasure.

There is one aspect however of *the amount* well worth considering. On all hands it is admitted that the christian dispensation has enlarged our privileges and added to our obligations to gratitude. Now, are we to believe that while it has lifted the believer to a higher level in all other things, it has lowered the rule in the matter of property? The infant church was taught by definite rules, and habituated by them to the working out of great principles; are we to believe that the dropping of the rules, when the period of pupilage has passed is the abandonment of the principles? Assuredly not. We are to give, to give systematically, to give on principle, to give proportionately, and to give under the impulse of a great fact that has colored and glorified all our lives. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might become rich." (2 Cor., viii: 9.)

Rules and fixed proportions, it is sometimes thought, must check liberality. Let the only other portion of the Old Testament to which I shall in this connection ask your attention, be the rejoinder to this assumption. The Temple is to be built. David's own eyes are not to see it, but on it his heart is set. He can at least provide for it. He was a capable administrator. Various ways were open to him to raise the needed money. He could, if it had been in our time, have issued bonds, or mortgaged the revenues for a few years, but he adopted a better plan. His impelling motive is "because I have set my affection to the house of my God." His contribution is on this wise "of my own proper good," and this over and above what he had "prepared with all his might" "for the house of his God." See 1 Chron., xxix: 1-3.

We reserve for another lecture the New Testament references to this subject, and now we plead without fixing *the* proportion, for regular and proportionate giving.

To estimate your means, so as to know what you have and can give, would itself be a great gain in multitudes of cases. To have a Benevolent Fund would amazingly simplify and sweeten the process of collecting and bestowing. Who has not seen the embarrassment of a christian man, with a cause before him, of which he owns the good-

ness, while he is fighting the battle with his own selfishness, talking, perhaps, for talk's sake, but really with his mind running in other directions, till at length the decision is reached, the victory is won, and he becomes frank, at his ease, affable and happy.

Do not say you do not like arithmetical proportions. Alas! you cannot escape arithmetical proportions, while in the world. You may reduce the fraction, and give a fifteenth or a twentieth, but it is still arithmetical. We want it to be in some fair proportion to what you ought to give. Do not say you are "always being asked." That is not the point. In the present loose method, or no method, one is apt to put together the cases of refusal, and of giving, and the refusal is the more likely of the two to remain in one's mind because it sometimes troubles conscience. Remember you are always receiving from goodness, from mercy, from grace.

Do not say that you have had losses, and can give nothing. The proportion may be altered by this, but until you have lost all and have nothing, the claim remains. Why should we charge the losses wholly to the benevolent fund? Is there not a comfort fund, a luxury fund, a saving fund? We smile at the little English boy who devoted one of the two sixpences given him on a holiday to the heathen, and on losing one of them congratulated himself on the fact that it was the one he had devoted to the heathen. But do we not charge losses in precisely the same way to the Lord? "Time is money," say business men. Well, in the matter of time, you give a seventh to the Lord, and as much more as you can in the closet, family, prayer meeting, and christian service, and you find it better to have six-sevenths for yourself and one-seventh for God, than the whole for yourself. Why not do so with money—one-tenth at least to Him, and as much more as you can, and you will find the nine-tenths for yourself better than the whole for self, for God's blessing hallows and conserves the remainder.

LECTURE III.

In the opening lecture it was shown, we trust, that there was need—present and urgent—to discuss among Christian people the subject of Christian stewardship; and secondly, that for thorough and systematic teaching on the subject, the ministry must be largely responsible.

In the second lecture, attention was called to the general and mischievous tendency to displace the Old Testament; to its teaching on this subject among the rudimentary and fundamental religious ideas; ideas which the New Testament no more sets aside in their obligations than the higher mathematics may be thought to set aside the multiplication table. The law of Eden, the course of Abel and of Cain, the sacrifice of Noah, and the tithe-giving of Abraham were passed in review, and we saw how they showed that while men were learning the first principles of the knowledge and service of God Almighty, and the church was receiving, through manifold and necessary arrangements, a language in which to express religious truth, in the very heart of all her vows, services, and worship is the consecration of means upon a definite and calculated plan, unto Jehovah. Jacob was vindicated from the charge of a mercenary and sharp bargain-maker with the Lord, and it was held that he did precisely as we do. Because the Lord promises so much, he in his turn gives gratefully to the Lord. The Mosaic tithe system was vindicated against the charge of fettering spontaneous giving, by the splendid liberality of David in giving beforehand for the Lord's house. We now proceed to consider New Testament principles, and the lessons they teach us.

For it would carry us far beyond the necessary limits of this course to enter upon multitudinous references in the later Old Testament Scriptures to the honoring of God by property. How fondly the Psalms dwell on the sacrifices to be given to the Lord, and the joy of coming into his courts and bringing an offering! Yet how clearly they discriminate between God as a receiver, and man as a beneficiary. Does He need our gifts, to whom belong the cattle on a thousand hills? If he were hungry would he tell us? How entirely it is of His grace and for the showing forth of His glory that we offer to Him thanksgivings and pay our vows! With what scathing directness do the prophets rebuke the sordid shifts of Israel to keep the letter and evade the spirit of the law! How fearful are the judgments denounced against the favored nation that treated its Jehovah with contempt of which the blind devotion of the heathen was a rebuke! and how explicit and precious are the promises of God's blessings poured out like the rain-floods, where all the tithes are brought into the store-house, and his ordinances are duly and amply provided for! On these we may not dwell, except to emphasize one point. We are too apt to think of the prophets of the Old Testament as only the predictors of future events, and their value in the economy of grace mainly to lie in providing beforehand for one department of evidence in favor of the

Divine origin of Revelation. But surely we must not overlook the fact that they were the teachers of their time, doing the work of public instructors, reproving sin and calling to repentance.* What they did by direct divine guidance, we ministers have to do on the authority of the word. The theme which so frequently engaged them we may not overlook. It should have in our preaching, to say the least, a place proportionally as large as it has in the holy oracles. By the laws and customary arrangements of churches in America, ministers have little to do with the finances of the churches—as far as erecting and sustaining churches is concerned. But with the whole business of benevolence they have the closest connection, and here they have opportunity, and are under obligation, “to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.” In addition to giving for themselves, as they can, they can set forth the divine testimony on this great theme: and as a general rule the people will be as they are taught. If a minister holds his peace as to foreign and home missions, lest the demands so made on the people should cripple the immediate church finances, lest the people, urged to generosity, should not be just, he will find them in time indifferent to foreign and to congregational objects also. He will be punished in the way of his sin, for church members that err in one direction will be ready to err in another. To train a narrow-hearted, selfish people, who will calculate to a nicety on just how much a minister can exist among them—how many children he has—and such other nice points as only come into reckoning with the clerical profession—you have only to keep them in ignorance of truth and duty regarding the claims of missions. But on the other hand teach men to feel that “Jesus is worthy to receive riches,” and interest them in the field which is the world, and they will be all the more ready to “provide for their own,” and to secure the maintenance of divine ordinances among themselves: and if any one demand authority for doing such work, let him turn to the pastoral epistles. Paul enjoins upon Timothy,* “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

Nor is it only in the abstract enforcement of privilege and duty a minister is to lead a people to liberality. The collection for home or Indian missions is to be taken on a given Sabbath. The pastor reads his sermon through to the end, without one scrap of information, one statement of the need, one glimpse of the work, and then adds at its

* We ought not to disregard the suggestive fact that as we advance in the Old Testament, the priest, in the usual sense, loses his importance, and the prophet, as the preacher, comes into prominence, so preparing the world for the dispensation where God's ministers should be emphatically preachers, and in no sense sacerdotal officers. Even so the “synagogues in the land,” prepared for the christian congregations scattered over all lands and without any such visible centre as the temple at Jerusalem afforded. To the Temple, from the division of the kingdom, the captivity, and the frequent disturbances, the habit of repairing must have been sadly interrupted for long periods. Then the synagogues rendered good service in keeping alive the knowledge of the statutes of the Lord.

*1 Tim. vi: 17, 18, 19. At that time not many christians were “rich” in the American sense of that word. But “rich” is a relative term, and a proportion can be taken from a thousand dollars as truly as from a million.

close, "the collection will now be made." Surely the incongruity and inconsecutiveness must be felt. Collection for what? But suppose he had made his sermon like the epistle to the Ephesians—one-half of it full of sublime doctrine, and then proceeded with a vivid, earnest, intelligible statement of that which was being attempted and effected, so that the field should be before the people, as in some sense theirs, their brethren on it in their name and in Christ's, sowing the seed with tears, and the sheaves to be, in some sense, theirs also, and the loving, pitying eye of Jesus over all, and then closed with "now, brethren, we are to give our portion to carry on this work," in what a different attitude the whole case stands! I know a church where members often put in their cards, and the amount marked on them is called for during the week. A gentleman had filled up his card beforehand for \$500. In the course of the sermon he was observed to get it out, and after some fumbling for a pencil, and some use of it, it was found that the card was put in with the "5" scored out and a "10" in its place. He saw the nature and magnitude of the work and the motive to give was evoked. Why should we insult our people by supposing that they are to do their christian work on our dictation? It is no adequate reason for a man's denying himself to give that the pastor and deacons resolve on a "collection." Christian men are entitled to be told why and wherefore they give their money, and to get information as to the use made of it. Thus giving is to be intelligent, that it may be a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God.

If it be said that ministers would find it hard to prepare and preach such sermons, I had almost said, more shame for them! Why should they find it hard? Is there want of information? Is the subject without interest to them? If I had met a United States officer at any time between 1860 and 1864 who did not know how the war was going, I should have wondered what right he had to his uniform: and ministers are officers in the great christian host, and may be expected by furnishing of suitable intelligence to the people in the church, and to the young in the Sabbath School, to stimulate, educate and direct, so that sympathy shall flow, prayer be offered, and money be given, as all true praise is given, with the understanding and with the heart.

But without dwelling on a thing so obvious, when fairly considered, let us turn to the New Testament and see in what aspect our topic is there presented. Our Redeemer opens his commission in the sermon on the mount, in which he clears the original law from the glosses and misinterpretations in which the Rabbinical casuists had concealed its true spirit, and sets it forth in connection with that gospel of grace and holiness of life, of which He, in His person and work, is the means and the foundation; and a section of this discourse goes to almsgiving—which He found among the people—which He endorses and clears from the ostentation and pride of a corrupt and formal church. Give, He says, as to God, for His sake, and not for man's, nor your own.*

*"Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth" (Matt. vi: 1-4,) is commonly regarded as simply meaning "do not blazon abroad your gifts; do not talk about them to others." But the left hand and right hand both belong to the man himself. The meaning is—do not indulge self-complacency, do not applaud yourself; do not commune with your own heart about what you have done. A man may be too proud to speak of his givings to his neighbors, while nursing a most offensive self-satisfaction before the eye that searcheth the heart.

It is not needful to theological students to enter in detail into the words of our Lord, and the incidents of His life that bear on this subject. You will recall the widow who attracted His notice and commendation, with her two mites—her all. You will find many a man doing shameful violence to her memory as he offers his “mite,” and quietly appropriates to himself her place, when he has not the least right to it. You will remember how He taught by the forethought of the unjust steward the lesson to saints “make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” (Luke xvi: 9.) Money is like fire—a good servant, a bad master. Do not let it be your master. If you do, it will blind your mind, harden your heart, hurry you into divers and hurtful lusts, and consume your life. If you make it your servant, use it aright, it can be transmuted by your wise and holy employment of it into a friend, a comfort, a reward in the world into which you enter when you cease to live in this. For, that morbid fear of the idea of reward, unhappily bred in us in violent reaction against a salvation by mercenary working and giving, does not once appear in our Lord’s teaching. He does not fear, and His apostles do not fear, to speak of it in the plainest and most emphatic language—a “great reward in heaven,” (Mat. v: 12) “openly” given, (Matt. vi: 4)—how openly the judgment delineated in Matt. xxv. may show—a “prophet’s reward,” (Matt. x: 41); a “righteous man’s reward,” a reward that shall not be lost, (Matt. x: 42; a reward to “every man according to his works,” (Matt. xvi: 27.) These are among our Lord’s utterances on earth. And when He had been in His glory, and is announcing to the beloved disciple in Patmos His second advent, it is with this feature: “I come quickly; and my reward is with me to give to every man according to his work shall be.” If these words mean anything they imply that while entrance into His kingdom is by grace, and in it here we are kept by the power of God, that place in it hereafter shall be affected by our fidelity, or otherwise, in His service on the earth.

And the acts of Christ are in the same direction as his words. How freely He gave! He keeps nothing back—from the five loaves and two fishes, all that was on hand for His whole company—through gifts of healing, up to His own “life a ransom for many.” A woman brought out her stored ointment and poured it on Him. The covetous Judas grugged the money’s worth so wasted; and some of the disciples shared in the exception. How Jesus vindicated her! Even the plea set-up for the centurion by the Jews, “He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue,” which a right instinct brought before Christ, He does not spurn in disregard.

So the future bearing of talent, consecrated to Him, the apostles plainly recognize. They exhort us not to be “beguiled of our reward,” (Col. ii: 18); they counsel us to the doing of such work as will “abide the fire, that we may receive a reward,” (1 Cor. iii: 14); they define the reward as of “the inheritance,” (Col. iii: 24); and most justly, for it is as children and heirs we get it; they credit Moses with having “respect to the recompense of the reward,” (Heb. xi: 26), and they encourage us to have the same, and look for “a full reward,” (2 John v: 8). Now it is of no use, or even propriety, to say we are not to

dwell on all this, lest it be abused. The true protection against abuse is not to slur over and keep back part of the divine testimony, but to tell the whole of it. There never was such a thoroughly balanced system of moral checks and counter-checks as we have in the gospel,* and if we only let divine truths all stand out in their place and proportion as they are in the word, the devout soul will be kept in the right way.

We do not wonder, therefore, that when the spirit is poured out on the believers at Pentecost, one of its earliest manifestations should be in the free employment of goods for christian use. The attempt has been made to identify this display of unselfishness and generosity with communism, but on most insufficient grounds. Communism declares property a crime. Christians did nothing of the kind. "While" the land was unsold by Ananias and Sapphira, it was their "own," and, when sold, the money was in their "own power." It was not that no one owned anything, but in overflowing, overmastering love, and pre-occupation with other and higher things, no one *said* that anything he possessed was his own; and, when occasion arose, believers, like Barnabas (Acts iv: 35-37), turned real estate into money for common christian uses.

We are apt to modify our estimate of the example the apostolic church here set, by reference to the peculiar circumstances. The love of the believers was fresh and ardent; they felt the vivid joy of a new discovery; the baptism of the Holy Ghost was abundant and miraculous; there were special needs created by a body of persons remaining in Jerusalem, and possibly many anticipated the introduction of a state of affairs when property would be useless. Yet our right to turn away the point of this case from our consciences is not so strong as we may suppose. The spirit of God is not limited as a gift to us; we have more for which to be thankful than the Pentecostal believers, in our free condition, and as the heirs of all the preceding christian ages; there are wants to be met now, and work to be done now, not common to this band of believers and ourselves; and, in point of fact, are we not all approaching a time, which may come to any of us momentarily, when property, as such, will avail us nothing? † It is mainly the baptism of the Holy Ghost we need to bring us under the power of the world to come, and to teach us to use the world as not abusing it.

Of the importance attached by the apostle Paul to the right use of money, the references he makes to the Church at Philippi, give us the means of judging. How cordial, confidential and appreciative is he all through the epistle to that church! It was the first he founded,—the

* How complete is the illustration of this truth in the case of a believer's assurance. An on-looker, without experience, might say, "Why, if a man is assured of his final safety, he has not the natural restraint from sin." But let a believer try the principle of sinning because he is safe, and the very idea of it obscures his view of his safety. So far as his assurance is based on the testimony of his spirit, and God's spirit with his, it is lost, with the loss of holy purposes.

† Without regard to death, many occasions arise when to give money away would be to save it. There are persons who, had they sold their real estate three years ago, and used half the proceeds for christian ends, would have been richer than they are to-day, even in money. The "shrinkage" of three years would have paid all the church debts and replenished all the empty benevolent treasuries. A good man, whose property the war swept away, used to point with devout gratitude to God to a minister he had carried through college and seminary in the time of his prosperity, as a part of his wealth that would not be lost.

first church in Europe. (See Acts xvi: 9-12.) When he was a prisoner in Rome, and had not a few difficulties surrounding him, the warm-hearted believers remembered the apostle, and once and again sent to his need in money, or in comforts. He "rejoiced in the Lord greatly." It was not the first time, (Phil. iv: 16), but on the other occasions he was comparatively near. He counts their liberality "fruit that abounds to their account." For he looks away from himself. He thinks how the service is regarded from the Lord's side, whose servant he is. It is "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God," (v. 18) and it shall not go unrewarded. God, not Paul, is the paymaster. He "shall supply all you need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (v. 19.) We hear to-day many a Macedonian cry. Oh! that we had in response Macedonian liberality! For the Philippian believers had like-minded fellow-givers elsewhere in Macedonia, as we learn from 2 Cor., chapters viii. and ix., when the efforts were made on behalf of the poor saints at Jerusalem. They gave abundantly, though they were the poor of a poor province, and they did not require to be entreated, but they, on the contrary, entreated the apostles to take their money and use it for the benefit of the poor saints at Jerusalem. Indeed, it is impossible to find more elevated views of Christian giving, or more inspiring presentations of the grace than in these chapters.

It is in the same connection that Paul had already given an "order" as to the best and wisest way of raising the money for the "Collection for the Saints," (1 Cor. xvi: 2): "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." We think, in some instances, undue stress is laid on this passage, as if it were meant in its terms for all churches, and for all time, and as if it enjoined a contribution to God's cause every Lord's Day. Whatever may be said for this on other grounds drawn by inference from this passage, it does not directly so teach. All that is enjoined is that, as the money was to be raised, and raised without friction, or pressure, or anything to destroy the fine aroma ("sweet-smelling savor,") of a gift of Christian love, the Corinthian Christian should, on the first day of the week, lay aside, for this end, such a portion of his means as God's blessing had given him; in order that the whole might be placed in the proper hands when Paul came for it. Undoubtedly the principle of this is wise and widely applicable. "Every one" is exhorted to give. The standard for every one is "as God hath prospered him." The time of consecration is "the first day of the week," with all its memories and associations of blessings. On that day God is worshiped and served with the heart, the lips, the time, the body, as it is bowed before him. Why not also with the means He has given? When can the struggle with native selfishness be more hopefully entered upon than on the day of the Son of Man, who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor? (2 Cor. viii: 9.) The spirit of this direction—which we may be sure is given in perfect adaptation to man's nature, his difficulties, and the helps he needs—would be carried out apparently by laying aside at such times as we

come into possession of our means of living, as weekly, monthly, yearly, or annually as at stock-taking, of what in our prayerful and conscientious judgment we should give to the Lord, so that, as stated in the last lecture, there be no need to fight the battle, or divide in haste, and perhaps in unfavorable conditions,* when the appeal is made to us.

This would lay the foundation of habits of *systematic beneficence*, which is not giving when "in the humor," when asked by persons whom we are willing to compliment, or unwilling to refuse; not giving "now and then;" for what important cause can be so sustained? Nor is it giving one great donation at death, when the suspicion is always liable to be raised that we kept it as long as we could and only surrendered it to the Lord when we could do no better. Nor is it giving a trifle, however regularly, but "as God hath prospered."

There can be laid down no absolute and fixed rule for adjusting the claims between self and God. No mechanical arrangement, no arithmetical proportion can be perfect and satisfactory in all cases. Selfishness can evade in some instances. The pressure of any rigid rule may be unequal, but the difficulty of adjusting a rule for an income tax, and the admission that no plan was absolutely perfect, do not touch the right of imposing it in emergencies and its general obligation. The precedents in scriptures—Old Testament or New, we do not press as formal injunctions and authorities as to amounts, but as examples; we do not allege that they are to be servilely imitated by us, but that Christians who feel that the Lamb, their Saviour, is worthy, should catch, in their higher place, the spirit of the same, and wishing to glorify Him in their prosperity, should follow these precedents until they find a better plan demonstrated on all the lines of argument, scripture, experience and observation.

These are the objects for which Christian people may lawfully make money. They may be defined sharply. The first is *giving*. Does that startle you? Think of the advice given to a converted thief by an apostle, when we would have advised, first of all and most urgently, to earn an honest living: "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. iv: 28). How godliness draws out by appeals the best part of man to the noblest uses! How many think of their first fruits as for the Lord? How often the first earned money is laid out unworthily! How many would be unable, as they think of the uses to which spare money goes, to say with the devout Israelite, "I have not taken away ought thereof for any unclean use." Let God's portion come out of the front of the heap. The gift will consecrate the remainder.

The second object which men may lawfully contemplate, is increase of capital. Every man is warranted, if not bound, to consider this.

* It is easy to see how contingencies are encountered in our present hap-hazard, desultory way of proceeding. A case is to be "presented;" shrewd calculations are made as to the best men to present it; another set of calculations follows as to the time, and place, and way. One must discover the *mollia tempora fandi*. The expected donor may be ruffled in temper, or have had disagreeable letters, or made a loss, or been vexed by some professing Christian, and if the allocation of a portion of his property is then and there to be deliberated upon, how little hope is there for the right decision! Is this the way in which the Lord's cause should be upheld?

The man who lays by five dollars is a capitalist—a truth forgotten by the brawling missionaries of discontent, who denounce the rich in a spirit of fanatical socialism. This capital may go to enlargement of business, insurance of life with provision for old age or sickness, or for dependents. Religion and good sense go together, and it were well for us in America if we remembered in this particular their joint counsel.

The third object for which money may be made is for the present comfort of one's self and of those dependent upon us. Nature and revelation are at one again as to this obligation. All men know the worse than infidelity of the "loafer," idler, roue or drunkard, who does not provide for his own. The three may be concisely stated as giving, saving, spending. Most persons devote too much to the last object; a smaller number overrate the second. The smallest number do anything like justice to the first, and even good men do not generally put the objects in this order, but the reverse, spending, saving, giving. But there is danger here of "robbing God," of coming to Him as no pious Jew would come, "empty." They do not "honor the Lord with their substance and with the first fruits of their increase."

Now, the scripture precedents have this use to us, that they may aid us in determining God's proportion. They give us a good starting point. Let no one plead in extenuation that such a course is not formally commanded. Will you be good enough to search your Bibles for a formal command to pray? The first formal command is in Psalm cxxii: 6, many hundred years after the founding of the Jewish Church—and it is for Zion. Prayer was offered and accepted in innumerable cases before this. So these offerings, though not formally commanded, were offered and accepted, and, in proper circumstances, regulated by the divine appointment. Leviticus calls new machinery into existence, but it affirms the old principle of a proportion for God. The New Testament modifies the machinery, but it does not abrogate the principle.

Now we plead for this systematic giving, albeit it is disliked by the *covetous*, who deem all lost that is given away; by the *heretics*, who think we may do what we will with our own; by the *lazy*, who dislike the trouble of examining and deciding; by the *double-minded*, who wish to have a by-way by which to escape duty somewhere between "God and their own conscience." We plead for it because of the evils of our present experiences. Men are liable to group what is in the spending department with what is in the giving. The burden laid on Christians who try to raise money is too hard. The plan we have works unequally. The favored few in a great city are permitted to do a disproportionate part of the giving, and the object is too often estimated, not by its merits, but by the dignity of him who presents it; a lady, particularly if good-looking, is supposed to succeed where one of the other sex would fail. A major-general would get more than a colonel, and I presume a bishop of the modern sort more than an ordinary clergyman. Men have to be coaxed, manœuvred, sometimes bullied into giving. There is competitive giving. The cheerfulness is too often lacking, and the worldly wisdom, which is spiritual foolishness, brought into use to obtain money, I should fear would drive away the

blessing of the Holy Ghost. We would introduce a new kind of proportion; for proportion has been introduced. How often men will give "as much as my neighbor," which sometimes means a rival in trade, or "as much as any of my neighbors." We would do away with all those unspoken and sometimes unutterable reasons for publishing the names of subscribers, whether to please them or to stir up others, and for which there is sometimes no reason that would not be equally good for printing their secret prayers. We would avert the common catastrophe of men growing greedy for want of some principle of giving; we would save rich men from the nervous fear they now feel at times of bringing on them benevolent collectors. We would, by this principle, check at once early extravagance, and aged men's narrowness. We would have something at the credit of the Lord's cause, on which it would be pleasant to draw. Too many hearts are now like the feet of Belshazzar's image, in this regard, "part iron and part clay." We would have them hearts of flesh, compassionate, gentle, pitiful and realizing the one certain traditional word of the Lord and Master, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

These words may fall into the hands of some who have no need to save, who have capital enough and ample provision for all their wants and for those who come after them also. To them, let it be said in all kindness, in the name of Him who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, Give according to your means, or He whom you offend by failure therein may make your means according to your giving.

LECTURE IV.

The question may be asked: To what uses should we put the means obtained by systematic and generous giving on the part of Christians?

In the answer to this question, it is hoped there may be not only some guidance to sincere Christian persons desirous of doing their utmost for the welfare of their kind, but also by necessary implication, some further arguments for the consecration of property. For let us not forget the relation in which we stand (*a*) to the Giver of all we possess, (*b*) to the kingdom of grace He has set up in the world, (*c*) to our fellow subjects in that kingdom, and (*d*) to the world around us. Our Lord has suffered in our nature, and entered into his glory, the glory of a Conqueror, of a Peace maker, of an Administrator, of a Teacher. He is King in Zion. David the man of successful war, and Solomon the man of prosperous peace, taken together, represent Him as our king of righteousness. This glorious person is not inactive in his seat of honor. This "priest upon his throne" is building the temple of the Lord, (Zach. vi: 13). Already by His grace subjects of the kingdom, we can be fellow workers with Him—necessarily become so when we are reconciled. We enter into His aims, are baptized with the Spirit, and catch His inspiration. There is a glow of enthusiasm kindled by the apprehension of this kingdom. It is world-wide by right, and shall be world-wide in fact: "Yea all kings shall serve him," (Ps. lxxii: 11). It is beneficent in its character. "He shall save the poor and needy." It is perpetual: "His name shall endure for ever." It is just in its administration. "In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." This is the spirit of the kingdom to which we belong. It is foreshadowed in the seventy-second Psalm—an ode which for completeness, elevation and grandeur of conception, is without a rival even in the Psalms themselves; the theocratic rule of David and his son forming the starting point whence inspiration rises to the delineation of Messiah's world-wide and everlasting kingdom. He who occupies its throne died—died to lay the foundation of the kingdom—died to conquer the last enemy in death. "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and I am alive for evermore." If this Psalm was—as many have alleged, and the postscript seems to suggest—David's death song, with what point and emphasis does he say "He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba—prayer also shall be made for him continually ("My kingdom come") and daily shall he be praised." Other kingdoms are maintained by the taxation of their subjects; they desire the welfare and success of that which they enjoy in common; and they feel that the glories of their sovereign are in some sense theirs. And so, contrary to the expectations of them who crucified the Lord of glory, it is with Him. And the grouping is significant. Gold, and not the "gold of Ophir," which would have been the term if its mere excellence were in question, but gold of Sheba, the strangers' gold, foreigners' gold—gold from those who, like Sheba's queen, are drawn by His wisdom to Him—this gold is linked with prayer and praise, as the things to be given to Him. The divine plan is to reconquer what has been used against His kingdom. Gold has been the tempter of multitudes. It is not bad in itself. Like every creature of God it is good. It is the inordinate love of it that is a root of evil, not the *aurum*, but the *auri sacra fames* of Virgil, the accursed hunger for it, that has wrought the ruin. Aaron and the people can

make it into a golden calf that shall dishonor God, but Moses can employ it to frame the mercy seat; a wedge of it may ensnare Achan,* but none the less it may be the honorable badge of high office around the neck of Joseph. With gold the god of this world can dazzle, and blind, and ruin his subjects; with gold the Saviour of mankind can be honored and served. To Him, as His subjects, we are pledged.

In what ways, then, can money be given to Him? In the Old Testament and in the New, objects like the following have been urged upon the Lord's servants:

1. *The Care of the Poor.* They were commended to the kindness of the ancient church in various ways. The fields were reaped with regard to them, something being left on the corners for the gleaners. The festivals were framed with regard to them, a portion to the poor being included in the rejoicings of God's happy servants. The Sabbatical year contemplated them, and gave them some share in the products of the earth that year. Loans were to be made to them without interest and without their garments as a pledge. Portions of the Levitical tithes were set apart for their use. Their permanent bondage to any one was forbidden, the Jubilee setting the embarrassed free, and giving them the right to re-enter their land if it had become alienated. The scrupulous payment of their wages is everywhere enjoined; and in a word it is impossible to think of a kinder, wiser or more humane legislation for the poor than we find in the Mosaic arrangements. It is impossible to explain this on any other theory than their divine origin. How otherwise should the Hebrews, just freed from a degrading bondage, have risen at a single bound, to the framing of a social code a thousand years in advance of the most civilized nations around them?

We pass into the New Testament, and the goodly tradition runs on into the Christian Church. Special officers are chosen by the Christian people for the care of the Christian poor. The Deacons of Acts vi, contemplated the systematic care of the widows. To "remember the poor" was a charge to Paul and Barnabas when sent out to the Gentiles, (Gal. ii: 10,) and systematic provision for poor widows was a part of the machinery of the primitive church, (1 Tim. v: 3-10) They constitute the wealth of a church in the eyes of ancient saints, who regarded the Saviour as meaning what He said (in Matt. xxv: 40), "Ye have done unto me what ye did for the least of these my brethren." One of the greatest curses mediæval corruption inflicted upon men, and for which it ought never to have forgiveness, was the turning of gentle, scriptural, holy, generous charity into a penance and the price in a bargain with the Almighty, who is bought off with so much goods flung to Him, sometimes from a hand stiffening in death. Charity was an angel from heaven. Superstition degraded her into a chaffering pardon-broker, negotiating purchases at the cheapest rates of homesteads and possessions in the heavenly Jerusalem.

But this must not blind us to the truth that the aid of the poor is one of the uses of money for Christ. Of course their claim upon us is not uniform. Our kindred first, is the Bible rule; then our own church, our own city, our own country—such would probably be the order both of nature and of grace. The problem of the poor threatens to be a

* It is surely a significant warning against covetousness among God's professing people, that Achan, at the entrance of the people into Palestine, and Ananias and Sapphira, at the planting of the Christian Church, should have been made such signal examples of God's hate of this sin.

grave one in this country, and we are in a great degree unprepared for it. It would be a step in the direction of its adjustment, if we made a clear division of them into two classes—those who are in church connection, and those who are not. The former the churches could and should look after. The latter have only the claim of citizens on the State and should be sustained by taxation. Both Church and State would have, on this plan, the strongest reasons to limit the number of idle dependents. For when it is said “the poor shall not cease out of the land,” it is not meant that the same individuals and families, from generation to generation, shall be in poverty, but that from various causes persons will become poor and helpless. The aim of the community ought to be as of the church by its nature, to lift up out of poverty and raise to intelligence and independence. The gain to the poor would be great in making it their interest to be in real connexion with the church, for human virtue is so weak that it needs to be “shored up” to the utmost possible extent; and in the degree in which churches provided for their own, in that degree would the burden be lightened upon them, in common with the community, and church influences of the right kind would constantly diminish the number of the poor—on the one hand by their preventive, and on the other by their elevating tendencies. We say “preventive,” for a true church wages incessant war with the improvidence, idleness, drunkenness, uncleanness and like vices, which are the too fertile producers of our pauperism.

It may be thought the burden of our poor would be too heavy on many congregations. Where is the evidence? Where the effort has been honestly and wisely made it has been successful. If a congregation is poor, then associate sister churches and make the object a common one. Cases in point could be produced. I have pleasure and pride in reporting of the Irish Presbyterian Church with some six hundred congregations, and by no means the richest part of the community, that she has provided within a few years a fund so administered, that no orphans of her deceased members shall lack Christian care, provision, and education. In point of fact comparatively few of her members ever obtain public relief, and I have no doubt, with a little organization, she could take care of them all. I shall count it a good day when such shall be the avowed policy of the American churches.*

2. *The maintenance of Divine ordinances* and of the plans and the persons needful to that maintenance requires our means. You do not need to be reminded how the gifts of the people furnished means for the costly tabernacle in the wilderness—wonderfully costly—considering their position, if the estimate of Prideaux be near the truth, namely, \$1,220,600. Nor do we need to recall the munificence of king and people in providing the temple. Solomon found the means, and was

* Self-defense ought to stimulate effort in this direction. Appalling crimes are too common. All sorts of fanatical “issues” find favor among the ignorant. Do not these poor dupes and wretched criminals cry in their misery for light and saving Christian influences? Even in things natural and physical there is a voice from their wretchedness. How much need there is of preventive help to come and save the sufferers from the merciful hospital, which otherwise will be needful by and by? Here is a half-naked child, laying the foundation of consumption, and to be a burden on the community. There is a poor drunkard getting ready for paralysis—yonder an over-wrought mother preparing for “the incurable;” here a damp, unsavory den, is generating fever for the inmates and for the better-lodged neighbors hard by; and these, more pitiful still! the profligate and polluted group, beside and around which the decent poor cannot but live, the young to be steadily contaminated by them and made ready for the police court and the prison, for infamy and misery. We have not, indeed,—except in some of our great cities—such masses of poverty and ignorance as amaze and terrify in the old world, but the present is our opportunity, while the evil is manageable, to ward off such calamities from the country of the future, and meantime “to do good and to communicate” on the largest scale.

able to pay for the work as it advanced, though it is estimated that the royal contribution was \$90,000,000, and the people's \$150,000,000. When dedicated it was a clear offering to God. The sacred edifice was at once God's and the people's. They could truly call it "our holy and beautiful house," and yet the temple of the Lord. There were no builders' liens upon it. Hiram had no mortgage upon it for his part of the work. What a gain it will be to religion in ways that are on, and in ways that are under, the surface, when the same plan is pursued with all Christian churches!

The Jewish law provided for the men for the temple service. Sustained by the rest was a whole tribe whose members were distributed in part through the land—educators, priests, Levites, among the people, of them, with common ties, cares, interests, family sympathies; for a celibate priesthood was not provided.

In the New Testament the same principle—that the servants at the altar should live by it—is forcibly inculcated. Purse and scrip were forbidden by Christ to the disciples, (Matt. x: 9, 10) whom He sent out, (Luke x: 4-9). Paul reasons out the question carefully as to the obligation of the recipients of spiritual things to minister of their carnal things, (1 Cor. ch. ix), though for prudential reasons, in some instances he did not avail himself of his right.

The ministry of the word, in all churches, Protestant, Roman Catholic or Jewish, in churches established by the State, or in churches acting on the voluntary principle, it is acknowledged on all hands ought to be supported.

This implies the training of ministers, the requisite preliminary education in colleges and seminaries. Elevation of ministerial support will gradually diminish the calls on the churches at this end, for when the temptation to well-to-do young men to stay away from the hardships and poverty of the calling, is removed, they will in far larger numbers be educated at their own or their families' expense.

Now it may be said that if clergymen fix the standard of their living too high, that is their own affair, and there is no obligation on the Christian people to come up to it. This objection is so natural and so plausible that it ought to be dealt with at a little length. In point of fact, it is not the ministers but the people who fix the scale of the ministers' outlay. You can see this yourselves when you stop to reflect. Let any congregation in this State call a minister, and is it not well enough known beforehand in what kind of home he should live, what sort of establishment he should maintain? Let him fall conspicuously below the estimate and he is censured; and he knows that. Let a minister in this city appear on the streets in conspicuously bad attire and would not his people soon say "it is a shame;" "it is a disgrace," namely, to them. He reflects dishonor on them. Now all clergymen well know this, and they sacrifice much rather than sacrifice moral

* Here is one great advantage of a minister being provided with an official residence, call it "Parsonage," or "Manse," the English and Scotch terms, linked with many a blessed memory and hallowed association, or by any other name you will. He is saved the discussion of most perplexing questions just at the time when all his energies ought to be free for taking up his work; and his wife is saved a world of trouble. If the house is in a fashionable quarter, his number of people cannot complain as if he were "taking airs on him," nor the richer, as if he rivalled them. If it is in an unfashionable end of the town, the richer members cannot find fault with him for forgetting what is due to them by their pastor. If the wife of a rich deacon or trustee feels it awkward to drive to a very "shady" quarter to see her pastor's family, it is not the minister, but her husband and his friends who settled the location; or, if the minister himself feels that the house is more showy or expensive than his means warrant, it is a little consolation to know that he did not make the selection.

influence. It was cruel in Pharaoh's court to require the Hebrews to make brick without straw, and it is a more refined and less excusable form of it in our christian congregations when they require ministers to conform to all the requirements of what is known as a gentleman on the income of a mechanic. There are ministers in abundance in this State who must be men of education, character and ability, watchmen on the walls of Zion, whose financial position would be improved if they were watchmen on the streets of New York city, and the moral qualifications could be dispensed with. Even the ministers best supported in our largest cities in multitudes of cases eke out the means needed to supply ordinances to their congregations—*on the scale and according to their standard of the congregations*—by the money they earn by their pens, or otherwise, or by the money which belongs to their families, and ought to be transmitted. They thus become, in point of fact, the largest contributors to the maintenance of ordinances in many congregations.*

The claim of the ministry is not upon charity, but upon justice; and to put the contributions in this direction among "charities," is hardly fair to the ministry, nor true to the truth of things. Lawyers, on proper occasions, attend to our secular interests and aid us; doctors of medicine to our bodily ailments; clergymen to the moral and spiritual instruction of our own and our children's children; and it is hard to see why the one should have a just and the other only a charitable claim. In all these cases the parties are called to the work, and in all of them there is a certain honorable delicacy that forbids a bargain beforehand. The difference, however, is that members of the other two learned professions can send in their accounts, while ordinarily the minister has a contract beforehand, in which, however, the same delicacy on his side is intensified by other considerations peculiar to his profession.

I do not think myself singular in the opinion that there is need to discuss this question before our thoughtful Christian people. It is attended with this infelicity that the men who know the case best are precluded from expounding it, by a feeling that is creditable to them—an unwillingness to seem to plead their own cause in the Lord's name. An impression also exists that though ministers' salaries are small in too many cases, so numerous and valuable perquisites come to them that they are enriched. On this, two remarks may be made. (a) The whole system of perquisites is of doubtful worth. In political, commercial, professional life, there is always danger, from the very weakness of human nature, of turning the eye towards the uncertain element of perquisites, since the fixed part of the income will be available at any rate. It is to me a grave question whether it would not be a wise thing for clergymen to forego all special privileges—in bookstores, on railroads, and so forth, and insist on paying their way like other gentlemen, and being supported accordingly. Whenever such things come in to eke out an insufficient salary, they make consciences easy that ought to be troubled, and they can hardly help carrying some taint

*Take a case. A minister is called to a charge on a salary of \$2,500. Before he settles, his congregation take a house for him, *at his expense*, at \$1,500. The balance of a thousand dollars and his own means are expected to secure to them a sufficiently respectable ministry. This is a very aggravated form of the evil. But if a minister, as any one can see, can only maintain his place at a cost of three thousand dollars, and his people give him but two, or in the country at a cost of \$1,500, and they give him a thousand, he has to make up the balance or be in debt; and, in either case, there is loss, first and heaviest to the congregation, then to the minister in a vexed and depressed spirit, then to the whole church, and then to the community.

of humiliation to the recipient. Are not "donation parties" the laughing stock of intelligent people, the "pious frauds" of Protestantism?

(b) There is great danger of ministers suffering from the exaggerated popular estimate of the irregular additions to their salaries, as from wedding-fees and the like. I heard a number of clergymen of the richest congregations of New York talk of this thing, and every one of them would willingly have commuted all such for less than five hundred dollars a year—not a large sum to a clergyman's family in a great city.

3. *The diffusion of the light of the gospel* is another of the objects for which money is to be used. No Tract Society, or Bible Society, or mission enterprise can be maintained without money. There are gains in security, peace, commerce, prosperity, and above all in moral and spiritual benefits from these outlays: but there are not gains *in kind* to the giver. His work is one of faith. Men often buy and lay aside stocks that are cheap now, because paying no dividend, but of which they believe "that they will come up." They are not certain when, but they are willing to wait. Faith in Jesus Christ when it gives does not look for dividends now, but they will come, and often sooner than from the earthly investments. It is not laying out but laying up. The christian is making—if in the right spirit—an investment in a new world which is sure to pay him a hundred fold.

Here we come upon ground on which conviction is sufficiently clear and duty is generally acknowledged. It is not needful to linger upon it. Rather let what remains of this lecture occupy itself with some further reference to the way of giving, and the reasons for right practice in this matter.

Is it necessary to emphasize *willingness* as a mark of true giving? What an example the poor returned captives of Ezra's time set! They were not above forty-two thousand, and not rich, but they laid out half a million of our money on the temple (Ez. ii: 68, 69), and instead of having to be solicited they offered freely. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Sometimes a gift is marred in the giving to a fellow-man as it detects some feeling in the act that wounds, or humiliates him, or shows it to be constraint. Now the Lord looketh on the heart. No ease or grace of manner can deceive Him. How can we attain to this willingness? Only by remembering how Christ gave Himself for us, and that we voluntarily gave ourselves to Him.

Is it needful to revert to *unostentatiousness* as a feature of true giving? To God, not to the church, or to the society, or to the world, is the gift bestowed. When the motive is "to be seen of men," all claim upon God is annulled. Common delicacy indeed prevents refined persons from sounding a trumpet before them, "as the hypocrites do;" but agents and collectors and secretaries find out what is palatable and do it after them. There are times when donations ought to be public, but of course giving as an advertisement, as a means of bolstering up credit, of making a name, of paying for an honor, or for a place, need not be named among us. These transactions are not christian "giving" at all, but barter, dishonorable to one party and sometimes to both.

Is it needful to say that we should give under the conviction that *we are stewards*? Can we meet Him whose stewards we are and give account to Him? Shall it be with joy and not with grief? We heap

odium on men unfaithful to their trusts,* and so we should, for fidelity and honor lie at the basis of all confidence and comfort in commercial life, and in family relations. How shall we stand before the owner of all who has entrusted much to our hands? Rich speculators are sometimes heard of as "unloading" stocks whose depreciation is imminent. And many men would do well to "unload" that which they might have turned to glorious uses, but which in a little time will be to them useless, if not worse.

And why should you give? It is one of the evidences of character. We know men's tastes, desires, aims, by the objects on which they lay out their money. Men of artistic tastes purchase costly works of art. The man of enterprise pushes new industries. The voluptuary pays enormously for his pleasure of palate, or of lawless passion. The politician gives for party aggrandizement perhaps with a view to personal advancement. The humane and benevolent find their appropriate and congenial objects. There are known rich men in most cities with plenty of money of which they make no use, before whom if you put a religious cause they would tell you "it is not in their way." They recognize the character that is in giving. A subscription from some of them would surprise the community almost as much as a donation to a race course from prominent christians. This test is universally recognized. Here, therefore, is one of the ways of confessing Christ. You sing, pray to Him, praise Him. This is good. Mind and body do Him homage. Estate remains—the third element of your life. It is said that when the Emperor of Russia lately called for a loan it was promptly subscribed, and a reason given was the personal popularity of the Emperor. But our King is warring always for truth and goodness—against all evil. How shall we prove our loyalty and devotion to Him if we withhold the gold which He has put into our hands?

Giving is a needful discipline, a salutary check on selfishness. When Job protests his integrity (in ch. xxxi: 24), one of his disclaimers is, "If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold thou art my confidence." Not many men happily acquire a sordid love for it, in itself. Many, however, with splendid features of character, do become fascinated with the making of it, and are so busy in it that they let it lie in heaps unused behind them, like the hunters on the plains who used to shoot the buffalo, not because they wanted them, but for the excitement of shooting. Such need to conquer themselves and educate themselves until they feel it to be more blessed to give than to receive. God could do without our giving, but *we* cannot.

If we fail in this matter of stewardship we shall be reminded of our failure by the God of providence. He did not allow Abraham, or Jacob, or Isaac, or David, or Moses, or Hezekiah to escape the temporal consequences of their respective sins. Nor can we count on such escape. Nor has He any lack of ways of taking vengeance of our inventions. If we sin as to means He can withdraw them from us. A fire, a panic, a war, a shrinkage can come in His providence. No more rapidly did Jonah's gourd wither than our possessions melt away! Men fail to realize that all is in His hand. Or he can leave

* It is curious and suggestive that from the Latin *maleficientia* we get through the French the legal word for unfaithful stewardship, *malfeasance*. The antithesis of *maleficientia* is *beneficientia*.



them with us, without their yielding us any comfort. Some of the richest men are not at all happy men, their very wealth in many cases burdening their minds, embittering their closing years, and in the quarrels over it when they are gone, exposing the least lovely portions of their lives. Or leaving our means with us and allowing us to enjoy them in some degree, He can leave us and ours to ourselves so much that the means become a source of envy, jealousy, wrath and strife, and bitter quarrels among those who ought to be bound together in love. Nor does it require you to be a millionaire to realize this. All wealth is relative. Family jars can be called out over a thousand dollars as easily as over a million. The apple of discord was of gold. How often the gold that was hoarded, against duty, conscience and generous impulses, becomes an apple of discord among men and women of the same flesh and blood! The law-courts sometimes let in light on the hateful, pitiful, spiteful war, and the poor, as they read it or hear of it, thank God that no one will fight over their spoils when they are gone!

Or He can turn our means into a curse to those who inherit them, for a curse can cling to property. How many men, aye, and women, stumble in the race of life, not because they were poor, but because they were rich. The profligate spendthrift is the scourge God often lays on the back of the ambitious father, who meant to found a house and leave a family rich, and who sees him a roue and a wreck. I have never seen more bitter tears than those that overflowed an aged father's eyes in just such circumstances. "I have toiled, and slaved, and have been counted a miser, and it was all to make him a man; and he tramples over me, and wishes I were dead that he might be free to waste all."

And now in closing these addresses, in hearing which great numbers have shown great patience, let me speak a concluding word to any who have never made the original consecrating act of themselves to our Heavenly King. Oh ye, who are yet uncommitted to this Kingdom, let me beg you to come to His side for all you need. Come to His cross for pardon. Let Him speak to you. Speak to Him, "Lord remember me." Listen to His word, "Thou shalt be with me in paradise." Come to His throne for grace, strength, patience, help. "My grace is sufficient." With His strength perfected in your weakness what cannot you do? Come to His table for spiritual nourishment. You wrong yourself if you believe and yet stay away. Remember Paul in the storm and tempest beseeching the sailors to take some meat. (Acts xxviii: 32, 33, 34.) Oh friends, the storms of life, its temptations, sorrows, are many and severe. I pray you to take this meat of the Lord's providing, and be of good cheer and doubt not that He will bring you through.

And as for you who have believed and are living to Him—giving gold, prayer, praise—you are on the way to another land. How much of all that men count dear here is taken to represent its glory, crowns of gold, harps of gold, the very streets of pure gold, like unto clear glass. "And the gold of that land is good"—never tarnishes; is never lost or stolen; never fails to satisfy; never rusts so that the rust of it eats the soul; never hardens the heart, nor petrifies the feelings. Go on your way gladly; the rest is near, and it is glorious.

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