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→\*SERMONS\*←

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE OF OBEDIENCE.\*

BY REV. HENRY B. HARTZLER, EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION, CLEVELAND, O.

*And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—PHIL. ii., 8.*

WE are all children going to school. This world is our school-room and this life our school-term. Our school-life is one of probation, instruction, discipline, preparation. Its wondrously varied agencies and appliances are adapted with infinite wisdom to the widest range of human capacity and need. The house of probation is large enough, and the school-term of life is long enough to enable us all to secure the object for which we have been sent here. Then, at the last, as we succeed or fail, we shall pass out of this school by gracious promotion into the higher department of Heaven, or by deserved expulsion into the outer darkness, disgrace and despair of hell.

In this school of life there are many important lessons to be learned, the most important and most difficult of which is the all-comprehensive lesson of *obedience to God*. This is absolutely essential to success. Without it there can be no proper adjustment of our various relations, no perfecting of character, no success and abiding happiness. The life that has not learned this

\* Substance of a sermon preached before the faculty and students of Adelbert College of Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, on the Day of Prayer for Colleges, by Rev. H. B. Hartzler.

fail to reach their elders. But children's sermons do not come easily; they are difficult to make, because they must be simple, short, and lively. To drone, argue, read or orate to the children always fails; it must be bright, cheerful, tender talk—the outcome of a full memory of childhood, a deep sympathy with its care and joys, and an indescribable sort of fatherhood and motherhood in the pastor. In these days the qualifications of the ministry in all churches must be manifold; but not the least of them seems to me to be a gift, well cultivated and trained, for dealing with children both in masses and individually. In some congregations the children never hear a word from the pulpit otherwise than such as they may be able to pick up in the sermon. But, in yet a larger number of cases, the Sunday-school scarcely knows the face and form of the minister. What sort of harvesting must that be which altogether misses the young

hearts in the sowing of the seed? Something will possibly be said as to the little time preachers have to spare for such work as this. Two services on a Sunday are quite as much, it is said, as most men can stand. Be it so; there are six days in the week in which something ought to be done for the children. Well, it may be replied, something is done. True; but by whom? The total abstainer in the Band of Hope. But in how many instances is that, in any sense, the minister's work? Should he not have his own gathering? Might he not take part on one night in the week, or in his turn, in the "Children's Hour"—a most popular form of a week-day Sunday-school, with recreation and play, as well as instruction? A well-instructed ministry, in hearty sympathy with work among the children, will display no little originality in devising methods by which the pastorate of every church shall include a direct and personal care for the children.

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### SPEAKING AND ELOQUENCE.

BY JOHN HALL, D.D., LL.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), NEW YORK.

Speaking is one thing; eloquence is quite another. A child can speak, and, it is very well known, can make an impression, sometimes pleasant, sometimes the reverse. We get from the French the well-known *l'enfant terrible*, the loquacious little tot that lets out family secrets and embarrasses the whole party. A parrot can be taught to speak, and is also sometimes infelicitous. It is told of an eminent clergyman, whose wife liked such birds, that at a clerical gathering in his house the parrot broke out in very unclerical language, obliging him to explain that it was not in his house, but probably from the sailors, as it came from its native land, that it had learned this dialect. Still more unfortunate was the lady—young, or at least unmarried—whose parrot cried out, whenever a gentleman appeared, "Hook him!" and which was soon made parrot *emeritus*, and not required to speak any more.

Eloquence is more than speaking. The Latin word for "speak" is *loquor*. The

*eloquor* ("e," out of) means, according to Quintillian, to "bring out all the things thou hast conceived in the mind, and bring them home to the hearers." It is speaking out of the heart into the heart. If the occasion be not one implying emotion, it is from mind to mind, but as earnestness of feeling and gravity of subjects are usually implied, eloquence is commonly connected in some degree with the production of feeling. Men—and women—can speak with the lips; eloquence is speaking out from the depths within.

There are, of course, what we may call physical essentials to eloquence. The power to articulate so as to keep the attention more on the thing said than on the speaker, is one of these. If a man stammers badly, or has any unfortunate peculiarity, attention is disagreeably fixed on him rather than on the things he wishes to say. Demosthenes is said to have had a natural hesitation of speech and shortness of breath, but to have overcome these

difficulties by effort. Just how the pebble in his mouth bettered matters I cannot say, but it is certain that even stammering can be overcome. To accustom himself to speak to a crowd, he declaimed to the waves on the beach. Physical peculiarities need not deter any one from the effort to speak. I had the pleasure of knowing an Englishman, one Dr. Urwick, whose "life" is public property. I have heard him when the audience was thrilled; his head was large enough, but he was at least fifteen inches below the medium height—a positive dwarf.

Among the essentials to eloquence the first is probably the sincerity of the speaker. He may have convictions doubtful as to their truth, but they must be *his* convictions. They must be out of his heart. Hence an actor identifies himself, as far as he can, with the character he represents.

A sense of fitness is a second essential. Deep emotion over a trifle, vehement gesticulation and impassioned shouting over a common matter, or, conversely, a light manner over a grave matter—these and such things are not consistent with eloquence. An eloquent man may be betrayed into them, but he is then out of character. To utter the simplest and most ordinary matters with the arms swinging after the fashion of the old wind-mills is not the way to call out emotion. It will move not the heart, but the ribs and shoulders in suppressed laughter. Even students can realize the need of this "fitness of things." When a young elocutionist, known to the writer, asked to entertain an agreeable company with a "recitation," got on his feet and announced as his theme Milton's *Satan surveying the horrors of hell*, he put a great difficulty in his own way, and as he went on:

"Is this the region? this the soil? the clime?  
Said then the lost archangel."

It was soon plain that in a sense he was "lost" too. There was no encore.

Hence it is that something to say is essential to eloquence. Talking against time, talking for talk's sake, never can be eloquent. An excellent but not over-accurate minister, whose duty it was to attend an annual convention, used to announce it, and add—"So next Sabbath

I'll be vacant," meaning that there would be no service. But speakers are sometimes "vacant" who do not announce it in words; yet the audience sees it and no heart is moved.

Any marked departure from the truth of things spoils eloquence. The present writer having preached in a place where for old time's sake there was a crowd, was announced to lecture the next evening, "the mayor in the chair." The mayor was an excellent man, but not eloquent. So he had his introductory speech not only written, but in type for the next morning's paper (oh! the cares of mayors and others dependent on the vote)! It so happened that the Monday was unusually wet, even for Ireland, and there being a charge for admission, and the people being remarkably sensible, there were about five hundred persons in a room for fifteen hundred. "That the reverend gentleman does not need to be introduced to you this crowded and enthusiastic audience shows." The people, wet as they were, laughed heartily, and it was hard for him, and for the speaker, to recover from the effects of the blunder and be eloquent.

To be witty is one thing; to be the occasion of wit is another. To be eloquent one must use words not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the ideas they convey. There is a little unfitness when a person is lost sight of in wonder at the dress. It is so with speaking. Hence simple, transparent language is a good element in eloquence. Mr. Spurgeon, of London, is remarkable for his use of plain Saxon. If a gentleman proposes to "enumerate the characteristics of heterogeneity that differentiate it from homogeneity," the ordinary hearer, not having his Webster "in meeting," is discouraged at the outset. His heart cannot respond. Time was when educated English speakers rolled out long, formal Johnsonian periods in words largely Latin with English terminations. Recent speakers of true magnetic power, like John Bright, speak English in simple, natural sentences. It is possible to be eloquent on this plan. "Heap" or "crowd" is an easier word to say and to understand than "conglomeration."

Feeling is essential to eloquence. The speaker must believe what he says; he must feel it. He must feel that it has some relation to his hearers. An abstract statement—the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles—does not call out feeling, but it is brought out when a father, with a man's heart under royal robes, hears of his son, rebellious but loved for all that, and dead, and forgets his dangers, his dignity, his son's guilt—everything but his affection, and cries out, "O, my son Absalom! my son! my son Absalom! Would God I had died

for thee! O, Absalom, my son, my son!"

We saw recently a good hint for speakers who would be eloquent and effective. "Do not," it was said to them, "run on upon long lines. Lines are length without breadth or thickness. Make points. They are seen, are definite, and can be fixed in the memory." We add: Have at heart interests worth talking about; understand them thoroughly; feel them as true to you; feel them as true to others; then speak of them plainly, truly, fitly, feelingly, and you will be eloquent and effective.—*Christian Hour.*

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## THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), PHILADELPHIA.

### No. II.

V. For disciples to identify themselves closely with the world risks injury to conscience. Life is full of "partings in the way," where duty and inclination more or less diverge. Sometimes the opposition is plain—as at cross-roads one course runs at right angles to the other—but again the difference is apparently very slight, as at a fork in the road, where both paths seem at first to run very nearly in the same direction. Here lie life's crises, and a worldly Christian, accustomed to consult self-indulgence, is perpetually sacrificing duty to inclination, not so much where the choice is plainly between right and wrong as where the way of inclination is simply questionable, open to a doubt. Where lies the harm to spirituality in yielding to a doubtful inclination, where there is no positive inherent sin? The harm lies in this, that I sacrifice a certainty to a doubt. I have no question that the way I do not incline to cannot mislead. Some sacrifice it may imply, but it cannot betray into sin or departure from God, while the very fact of a doubt proves that the way to which I do incline is probably a snare to conscience. Now, mark that whenever I pursue a path of doubtful inclination I have sacrificed duty to pleasure, eternity to time, Christ to the world. I have given myself and

not my Saviour the advantage of my doubt. I have discouraged a sensitive conscience in its remonstrance, and to continue to do so is to sear the moral sense into comparative insensibility. That moral sense is as delicate and susceptible of injury as the pupil of the eye; one may as safely rasp the eyeball as to do that which, however mildly, grates against conscience. On the other hand, in a spiritually-minded Christian, who habitually obeys its voice, sacrificing even a questionable inclination to a certain duty, conscience becomes more acute, sensitive and clear-voiced until spiritual discrimination gets so keen as seldom if ever to leave us to be betrayed by doubt or hesitation as to what is God's will and our duty and privilege.

So important is this culture of a spiritual conscientiousness that whenever you find a Christian yielding to doubtful indulgences, you can sorrowfully foresee just where such an one is drifting; but I have never known a disciple cheerfully and habitually to sacrifice a pleasure, because of a doubt as to its influence on spiritual life, who did not grow rapidly in all that makes up the beauty and glory of a pure and holy character.

VI. Again, to be a worldly man and surround myself with world comforts and lux-