

HOME PREACHER,
OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, who by the resurrection of Thine only begotten son, Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened to us the gate of everlasting life, we humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may steadfastly set our hearts upon those things which are above, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we may also appear with him in glory. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix.* 97-104.

IN streets and op'nings of the gates
Where pours the busy crowd,
Thus heav'nly Wisdom lifts her voice,
And cries to men aloud:

How long, ye scorers of the truth,
Scornful will ye remain?
How long shall fools their folly love,
And hear my words in vain?

O turn, at last at my reproof!
And, in that happy hour,
His bless'd effusions on your heart
My Spirit down shall pour.
But since so long, with earnest voice,
To you in vain I call,
Since all my counsels and reproofs
Thus ineffectual fall;

The time will come, when humbled low,
In Sorrow's evil day,
Your voice by anguish shall be taught,
But taught too late, to pray.

PROVERBS I. 20-23.

WISDOM crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: 21. She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words,

saying, 22. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23. Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

PROVERBS II. 1-9.

MY son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee; 2. So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; 3. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, &c.

Prayer.

OUR soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that wait for the morning; more than they that watch for the morning light, unto Thee O God, do we lift up our eyes. Every day will we praise thee, and ever bless Thy name for ever and ever. Each returning day would we offer to Thee the first tribute of our thoughts, the freshest ardour of our affections. But this is the day which the Lord hath made, which brings to us, with its hallowed light, the memories of

creating goodness and of redeeming love. To Thee, therefore, who hast made us for Thyself and unto Thyself hast redeemed us by the blood of thy dear Son, would we, on this above all days, with adoring love and gratitude lift up our hearts. O come and let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker; for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For unnumbered mercies, for blessings often unnoticed, oftener unimproved, ever undeserved, we thank Thee, O God. For our being and well-being, for the supply of our wants and the preservation of our lives, for the health of body and vigour of mind, for all the temporal blessings Thou hast bestowed and the evils Thou has averted, we bless and praise Thy holy name. But as for the blessings of Thy providence, so also would we thank Thee for the riches of Thy grace. Our souls would magnify the Lord, and our spirits would rejoice in God our Saviour. For He that is mighty hath done great things for us, and holy is His name, and His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation. Hungry, Thou hast fed us with the bread of life; poor, Thou hast made us heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; in our darkness the day-spring from on high hath visited us; in our loneliness we have been gathered into the communion of saints; burdened with guilty fears and

forebodings, Thou hast begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Alas! that for these and all Thy benefits our gratitude should be so cold and feeble; that the homage of our lips should be so often belied by the unfaithfulness and disobedience of our lives, and that, instead of dedicating ourselves to Thy service, we but too often follow only the devices and desires of our own hearts. Help us, O loving Father, no longer thus to offend Thee. Suffer us no more to wound our consciences and grieve Thy holy Spirit. Grant to us that godly sorrow which worketh repentance not to be repented of. The sins we confess enable us to renounce; the errors we deplore help us to correct. Henceforth may there be no longer so grievous inconsistency between our holy professions and our week-day work. Let not our hearts be ever again debased by worldly cares, and our purity sullied by wicked indulgences. May the high motives and holy aspirations of religion infuse a new elevation and dignity into our daily lives. May all our powers of mind and body be consecrated to the service of Him who hath redeemed us by His precious blood, and made us members of His body and temples of His holy Spirit. Let no selfishness, or covetousness, or sensuality, or ambition, or any other unhallowed passion, reign within our breasts, but let every thought of our minds, and every feeling of our hearts, and every energy and activity of our lives, be brought into captivity to the

obedience of Christ. May every period of life as it passes render us more gentle, earnest, unselfish, heavenly-minded, bring us ever in spirit and character nearer and nearer to Thee. And when the years of our brief and hurried life are ended, and the hour of our departure comes, may it find us in peace of conscience, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, in charity with all the world, and in the sure and blissful hope of a glorious immortality: all which we ask for the sake of Him who is the pledge and earnest of all Thy gifts, in whom and with whom Thou hast freely given to us all things, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, enable us to guard against misjudging whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, or of good report, and to follow those who by deeds of faith and love have obtained the praise of Him whose judgment is ever according to truth. This we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix.* 33-37.

LET Christ, to whom we now belong,
His sov'reign right assert;
To Him we owe the grateful song,
To Him the loving heart.

He died our safety to obtain,
And make his grace to shine;
O Lamb of God! was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine!

He justly claims us for his own,
Who bought us with a price;
The Christian lives to Christ alone,
To Christ alone he dies.

Jesus! thine own do Thou receive;
Fulfil our heart's desire;
O let us to thy glory live,
And in thy cause expire!

Thine, wholly thine, we long to be;
Our sacrifice receive;
Made, and preserv'd and sav'd by Thee
To Thee ourselves we give.

MATTHEW XXVI. 1-13.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2. Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. 3. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. 5. But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people. 6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster-box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. 8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11. For ye have the poor always with you: but me ye have not always. 12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. 13. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

SERMON XXII.

“AND BEING IN BETHANY IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER,
AS HE SAT AT MEAT, THERE CAME A WOMAN HAVING AN
ALABASTER BOX OF OINTMENT OF SPIKENARD, VERY
PRECIOUS, &c.” -- Mark xiv. 3-9.

AMONGST the incidents which marked the close of Christ's earthly history, there is none more touching or suggestive than that which the Evangelist thus narrates. We have here a noble and beautiful action rescued from detraction, and consigned by One, from whose judgment there is no appeal, to immortal honour. And you will notice with what exquisite delicacy our Lord here balances censure with commendation, sets honour over against detraction. “There were some that had indignation,” it is said, “within themselves,” when the woman, in her lavishness of devotion, poured forth the rare perfume on the head of Him she so loved and honoured. “Nay” is the burthen of the Saviour's reply, “condemn her not; this very deed which in your narrowness and coldness ye censure, shall go down to unborn ages, and be the theme of praise to countless tongues. Wheresoever this gospel is preached, this that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” Or, again, did the censurers regard her action as that of a mere thoughtless, unmeaning prodigality? “Why was this waste

of the ointment made? It might have been sold for so much and given to the poor!” “Nay,” is the Saviour’s reproof, “her deed is neither meaningless nor profuse:” not meaningless, for she has in this, her strange demeanor, a deeper meaning than meets the common eye. She has in her heart a love which yearns for expression, and yet which transcends the power of mere uttered language to express; and the only way she can find to give vent to her irrepressible emotion is to declare it thus. All she can do is to symbolize it, to pour forth as if her very soul in the precious ointment with which she besprinkles her Lord’s head, and to feel the incense of her gratitude, with the fragrance of the perfume, floating forth on the very air He breathes. She hath done what she could to express her affection.” Nor, our Lord teaches them, is her act to be regarded as profuse and wasteful any more than unmeaning. For the precious material she so lavishly expended might indeed have been turned into money, or into meat and drink and clothes, and so, as her censurers suggested, have been given to the poor. But in so conceiving of it, they applied to an act of beauty a mere utilitarian standard; they would fain test by the criterion of material utility a deed belonging to a far higher and nobler order of things. As well might they have sought to weigh love in scales, or measure thought by rule and compass, or try to detect the presence of moral evil by a chemical test,

as judge by a money standard an act of most delicate spiritual nobleness. As well might they have looked on the summer fields and asked to what purpose this waste in the growth of lily and rose! Might not all this fertility of nature, instead of running to waste on useless flowers, have gone to grow provender for cattle or food for man? As well so have questioned as have asked, in their gross irrelevancy of thought and feeling, "Might not" the material wasted on this act "have been sold for three hundred pence?" -- might not this beauty have been turned into hard cash, "and given to the poor?" Yes, it might have been, but the world had been no gainer by the exchange. The bodies of a few hungry men might have been fed with bread, but an act had never been done which has fed, age after age, countless hearts with the inspiration of nobleness and self-devotion and love. Saved and turned into money, the means of a slight dole of alms might have been gained; but there had been irrecoverably lost the opportunity for an act of touching pathos of almost prophetic tenderness to the dying Redeemer of the world. "For," said the Lord to the utilitarians of Bethany, "the poor ye have with you always, but me ye have not always She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

We have here, then, exception taken to a noble act of Christian feeling and devotion, and our Lord's defence of it:

from which defence three thoughts, with reference to acts of which this woman's is the type, suggest themselves, viz.:-

I. *The immortal honour that attends them.*

II. *Their symbolic power of expression.*

III. *The non-utilitarian standard by which they are to be measured.*

I. Condemned by other observers, this woman's action was *consigned to immortality* by Jesus.

“Wherever,” said He, “this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” Though not the motive, yet it constituted one element in the reward of her act of simple devotion to her Lord, that it should be had in undying remembrance, and that her name should go down to future ages linked with the name of Him she revered and loved. Not many names, amidst the myriads who have lived and died on this earth, have survived in the world's remembrance. Of the deeds which men have done in the past, how few are those which still live in history! But amidst that bright galaxy of men renowned for the great words they have spoken or the noble deeds they have done -- poets, philosophers, statesmen, warriors, philanthropists, heroes, martyrs -- amidst the world's noblest who have made this earth illustrious by their presence, and who shine as the stars for ever, how strange to reflect that the only one to whom inspiration has assigned a place is this simple

villager of Bethany; and that the one act to which undying fame is promised is not an achievement of genius, or power, or heroism; no production even of inspired intelligence, or daring, or devotion; no glorious poet's song, or warrior's victory, or martyr's death; but a simple insignificant tribute of affection offered to her Lord by a lowly woman at a village feast. She aspired not to greatness; she dreamt not of fame; but there, on the firmament of glory, next to that bright and morning star, her pure light in unobtrusive beauty shall shine for ever. To have her name united in honour to the name of Jesus was a destiny to which her humble spirit, in its highest visions of happiness, could never have soared; yet, as the sculptor of old engraved his own name indelibly on the marble of which the statue was fashioned, so that that must perish ere he could be forgotten, so, though by no presumptuous act of hers, this her deed of love has graven her name, as with a pen of iron, on the rock for ever, in that gospel which is her Lord's everlasting memorial.

And yet it may be said, of what avail to her is all this fame and honour? Of what avail to any man is posthumous fame? Satire has often aimed its keenest invectives against the desire of posthumous fame, and in one view of the matter not unwisely or unjustly. "What's fame?" exclaims the moralist:"

“A fancied life in others’ breath,
A thing beyond us even before our death
Just what you hear, you have, and what’s
unknown,
The same to you if others’ or your own.”

Strange illusion surely it is, when men throw away life to acquire after death a renown which they can no longer enjoy--when their imagination anticipates a fame they shall never know, and the applauses they are never to hear ring in their ears and prompt them to the sacrifice of present ease and enjoyment. What shall it matter to you, whether you are remembered or forgotten, execrated or applauded, when of neither praise nor censure can you any more be conscious--when you are for ever beyond the reach of the world’s honour or the world’s malice? What worse than childish folly to waste thought and energy in the pursuit of that honour which is to be won only when the ear is deaf to the voice of applause and the pulse of ambition is stilled for ever! And so, was it not, after all, a boon of little worth, which in this promise the Lord conferred on his humble follower? Gone for ever from the world, does it not seem as if it would affect her just as little to be set, like Judas, as the mark of the world’s undying scorn and abhorrence, as to be cherished and honoured for ever as the loved and loving friend of Jesus!

Now, though there may be some ground for that view of the matter, which makes the absurdity of the desire of posthumous fame one of the stock moralities of ethical writers yet, as we might well infer from its forming the subject of an express promise of our Lord, it must be not altogether an unworthy or unchristian object of desire; it must, at any rate, be no despicable result of noble acting, to be cherished in men's remembrances when we are gone, and to have that "which we have done spoken of for a memorial of us."

And of this a moment's reflection will convince us. It is, indeed, unquestionable that fame, applause, glory, the honour that cometh from men, can never, considered in itself, be a legitimate object of a Christian's desire. To interpret the words of our Lord as implying or inculcating such a notion, would be to set them in direct contradiction to other passages of Scripture--as where those are condemned who "do their works to be seen of men," "who love the praise of men more than the praise of God," who "seek the honour that cometh from man, and not the honour that cometh from God only." No! The first aim of a Christian is not to *appear*, but to *be* right, not to gain the *honour* of nobleness and goodness, but to *be*, through Christ's grace, noble and true and good. Reality, not seeming; goodness, not glory, sincerity before God, not

show or semblance, however imposing before the eye of man--this is what a Christian seeks. His love for Christ, and devotion to the will of God, should ever be such as that he would do the right, not only though in doing right he be unknown and unhonoured, but though it expose him to dishonour and infamy. Who can doubt that obscure goodness is infinitely preferable to illustrious sin? If the two are incompatible, could a Christian hesitate for a moment to sacrifice the love and honour and respect that make life sweet and death less bitter--to tear from his heart the most cherished hope and wish, rather than wound conscience or tamper with truth and holiness? Would it be a light thing, in reason's eye, to gain immortality of renown at the expense of one untrue word? Or to be hooted and hounded out of the world with scorn and shame, and consigned to eternal infamy amongst men--would not this be a fate, however terrible, from which a wise man should not shrink, if only thus could he keep true to Christ! Of what avail the acclamations of a world he has left behind, to the soul that is trembling in dismay beneath the frown of God? Or can it alleviate one pang of a lost spirit's agony, that the far distant scene of its former life is ringing with its praises at that very moment when it is stretched on the rack of Jehovah's wrath? Nay, better one smile of God, than a world's hallelujahs; more appalling

one shadow darkening the brow of Infinite Justice, than to be for ever execrated by the whole race of men.

But all this admitted, it is yet not the less true, that, though not the motive of a Christian's actions, it is a most noble result, a glorious reward of them, when a good and holy man's memory is embalmed in the affections of mankind. To dwell with God is the chief desire, but who that knows what it is to love and to be loved would not wish to be remembered, when he is gone, by those who were dear to him on earth? If the memory of the sainted dead be dear to us who survive them; if there be homes where the loved and lost still, in the sacredness of an undying affection, may be said to live; if there be scenes which are haunted and hallowed by an invisible presence, where the dear old voices seem sometimes to fall sadly and sweetly on the ear, and we name softly and reverently the household names of those whom God hath taken--is it not natural that we, in our turn, should wish so to be remembered? It is a natural, and by no means an unchristian feeling that makes us cling to old scenes and friends the longer we live; that makes it sad for a man of strong affections, as the end approaches, to think that the hour is coming when on all he loves and has cherished so long he shall look his last--that in a few brief months his step shall fall no more on the old path or the familiar threshold, and that on these dear faces he shall never, never, in all the ages, look again. And so it is

something to be told, that like this woman, we shall still in memory survive, and that our name and our deeds shall live on loving lips. We seem to ourselves to gain thus, even on earth, some triumph over death--to enlarge and prolong existence in the hearts of those who shall never cease to love us. And if we extend the same thought to others beyond the circle of our immediate friends, surely to a man of large and expansive Christian spirit it must be a thought unspeakably delightful, that some word he has spoken, or deed he has done, shall survive, age after age, to enkindle holy ardour in many a mind, and to prompt to deeds of Christian nobleness while the world endures.

And who can tell of what incalculable results each Christian act, a word spoken in season, an act of noble truthfulness, or tenderness, or self-sacrifice, may be the seed? Who can trace the innumerable lines of influence along which a Christian's example may be propagated? What mind can embrace the calculation of all the possibilities of good, on through age after age, down the evergrowing future, which may spring from one holy Christian life? And if earthly greatness has sometimes caught inspiration to deeds of heroism from the dream of posthumous fame, if it fired the poet's heart, old, blind, and poor, to think that he was writing words which the world would not let die, or if the dying warrior has ever found strange consolation in the thought of his country's

gratitude, a name in her annals and a sepulchre among her heroes, surely to a Christian heart not less dear should be the thought, nor less inspiring to holy deeds in Christ's service, that the good we do shall live after us; that our example, if not our name, shall survive us; that our influence at least shall be associated with all that is holiest and purest and noblest on earth, even if it may not be said of us literally as of this woman, "That wheresoever this gospel is preached this which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her."

II. The second view of this woman's action to which I propose to direct your attention is its *silent, symbolic, power of expression*. She had in her heart feelings which craved for outward expression, and yet which, in their intensity and illimitableness, transcended the power of mere words to express. And so she did what she could. As always, in such states of mind, feeling clothed itself in the form of imagery of symbol, and she gave vent to her emotion in the expressive act here narrated. And a moment's reflection will teach us how exquisitely true to nature, and so how fraught with instruction in this respect, the narrative before us is. For are we not all conscious often of the states of mind, of thoughts and feelings, which it is impossible adequately to express in words; and if we try so to express them, we find that we have miserably failed? The attempt to convey by words to others all that is in our hearts is often

vain, not simply from our imperfect command of language, with all its compass, copiousness, flexibility, as a medium of expression for our internal experiences. And so, when language fails us--when either from intensity of feeling we have not the heart to speak, or when we try, and feel it to be all in vain--we involuntarily betake ourselves to that other mode of telling forth our soul, the silent mode of sign, of symbolic look or act. The word "joy" is but a poor, cold vocable, that conveys to the outward ear no meaning, save as the auditor already knows the emotion for which it conventionally stands. But who fails at once to see what is meant by a smile or look of delight beaming on the countenance, or to know what the feeling is that tells itself out in a merry laugh ringing from the lip? The word "sorrow" is not like the thing it represents, and any other word, if men agreed upon it, would serve as well. But who mistakes the meaning of the trembling lip and tearful eye? And when in deep grief the sufferer's lip is dumb with an anguish which cannot shape itself into words, the blank look of unutterable sorrow may be stamped, in language far more expressive than the tongue could utter, on every lineament and motion of the face and form. Hours would be insufficient to describe emotions that may be conveyed by a glance, and in a moment of high-wrought feeling there may be concentrated into a single look what the most eloquent observer could not exhaust in the longest verbal delineation.

“And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.” Imagine yourself present at that scene and conceive that it had been yours to witness that look, to behold that face, with all its majestic purity, its awfulness, its gentleness, its unearthly sorrow and tenderness, turned upon the wretched disciple when that cruel word of thrice-spoken falsehood had just crossed his lip. Do you think that the most eloquent tongue might not weary itself in the endeavour, by all forms of uttered speech, to convey all the mingled sorrow and love, the reproachful pity, the lofty scorn of baseness, yet unwearied forbearance and love to the base, the more than kingly dignity, yet also more than womanly tenderness, which that one glance of Jesus expressed?

And in the same way with symbolic actions, such as that of the text. The beauty of such actions lies in this, that they condense into a moment thoughts and feelings which it would require a long and elaborate description verbally to portray, and which even then would be but faintly and inadequately expressed. Take, for instance, one most touching incident in the history of David. As he lay, we are told, worn and faint in a mountain cave, there came on the warrior an irrepressible longing for a draught of water from the well of Bethlehem; and though his longing seemed vain and foolish, for the foe lay encamped between him and the fountain of whose streams he had so often drunk, he could not refrain from giving vent in words to the craving, “Oh

that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" There were those around him who loved their chief so dearly that they were ready to imperil their life for the gratifying of his slightest wish. And without a word, caring not for the dangers to which for so slight an end they exposed themselves, "three mighty men" fought their way through the host of the Philistines, and brought back to him who was dearer to them than life that for which he craved. But we are told the king, when he received it, would not drink that draught which at such cost had been gained, "but poured it out unto the Lord," saying, "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this; is not this the blood of men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" What wantonness, what worse than childish fickleness, are we not at first tempted to exclaim, is here! To what purpose this waste of that for which such a price has been paid? What gross ingratitude in return for heroic devotion. Nay, it was far otherwise. For is there not more in this action than meets the eye? As we try to fathom and express its meaning, do we not begin to perceive what a world of unexpressed feeling of lofty thought and nobleness, and generosity and piety, is involved in it. This simple draught of water, so procured, is to David's eye the type of that which is most noble in humanity, of love and faith and courage and self-sacrifice; it is an offering not fit for such as he, too great for mortal to receive. To God alone is it meet

to be offered up. And so, in kingly humility, in unselfish piety, he pours it out to Him to whom life and love and all that is noblest in man are due. This, and infinitely more than this, is involved in that simple act. What long-drawn words would be required to unfold all its expressiveness!

Precisely analogous is the case brought before us in the text. This woman owed herself, and all that made life dear to her, to Jesus. His mysterious hints of a dark doom that was at hand, told her that from that dear Lord she soon must part. Love and faith and self-devotion, boundless tenderness and sorrow struggling in her heart, she was conscious of feelings that craved for expression, and yet which, in their intensity and illimitableness, transcended the power of words to express. She could not speak, but she did what she could. Spontaneously feeling clothed itself in a form that was its own. The affection, the self-surrender, the yielding up of all that was precious, the yearning to pour forth as if her very being in the service of this all-glorious One--this, and infinitely more than this, of which she herself was unconscious, she involuntarily shadowed forth in the breaking of the vessel and the pouring forth of its precious deposit on the head of Jesus.

And He to whom the offering was made discerned a meaning in her simple act, which words had been poor to tell. Happy we, let me add, if in our symbolic acts our Lord can discern the same spirit of love and faith and

self-devotion. Our holy communion service, for instance, might, in one view of it, seem as the woman's act seemed to the unsympathizing spectators, a mere meaningless work, or a waste of substantial food on empty ceremonial. The material of our holy offering, too, might be sold for so much, and given to the poor. But not useless or unmeaning will it be, if, like hers, it be to many a devout spirit the medium of holiest thought and feeling. As we assemble at our simple communion feast, there will come amidst us the same divine guest who sat at that humble board at Bethany. Here, too, to the Lord's side many a Mary-like spirit may repair, to hallow and ennoble these poor earthly elements, by that which to Him who reads all hearts they silently, yet so touchingly, express. Happy we, if, as we break the bread and drink the wine, we feel our Saviour near; and by this our simple act, tell forth a love, a trust, a high resolve and holy aspiration, a boundless affection and self-surrender, such as that which through her offering breathed. Then will the odour of a more precious ointment, a fragrance sweeter far than this earth's rare incense, fill the house. And of us, too, will our gracious loving Lord declare--
"They have wrought a good work on me."

III. The last point to be now considered is the *unworldly or unmaterial standard by which the woman's action is to be estimated*. To her censors it seemed an act of unmeaning prodigality. They saw in it only a resultless

expenditure of what might have been turned to substantial material uses. If there was to be such expense incurred why not get some substantial result for it? Why not, instead of wasting the costly essence on the empty air turn it into hard cash and buy meat and drink and clothing with it for the poor? “Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor.”

Now our Lord’s reply condemns this view of the woman’s action as false and shallow. There was no real waste in its seeming profusion. It was a good and noble action, and it was made to appear otherwise only by the application to it of a narrow and fallacious standard. In conceiving of it as they did, they apply to an act of beauty a mere utilitarian measure, and would fain test a deed of spiritual nobleness by a criterion which had no relation to the order of things to which it belonged.

Now, the error which these superficial censors committed is one which in principle lies at the root of many of our false judgments, both in matters secular and in matters spiritual -- the error, viz., of reversing the order of importance, and judging of that which is the end as if it were only the means. There are some things, which, according to the nature which God has given us, we admire and love as ends, others which we come to admire and love in a secondary way as contributing to those ends. The

latter may be compared to the ladder by which we climb, useful only because it helps us up; the former to the object we wish to reach. The one is as the road which leads homeward, or the carriage in which we travel, valued only because of the facility and speed with which they enable us to reach our journey's end; the other is as that desired end itself valued for itself, as our ultimate destination.

Now the error into which, even in secular things, we are very apt to fall, and which in spiritual things may be described as the essential spirit of irreligion, is that, either of stopping short at the means, and prizing them as if they were ends in themselves, or of absolutely reversing the right order, and valuing the ends only as means, while we elevate the means to the place of honour, as ends. To take one of the grossest examples of this error, money, which is obviously only a means to the attainment of something else, may become an ultimate object of desire, in and for itself. It is of course beyond dispute, that money were mere dross if it did not stand for food and raiment, and shelter and comfort; if it were not the conventional representative of innumerable objects of desire, which it is the means of procuring. But it is also notorious, that men often begin to like money as an end, to drop out of sight all that can be got by means of it, and to seek to accumulate it with a more and more intense desire only for its own sake. Nay, sometimes the diseased craving goes to such a height, that everything

which money can procure, all that renders money valuable, will be sacrificed for the sake of money's worth, for the sake of money's self. And the insane standard by which such an one measures all things, the question by which every action is to be decided, is, "How much money will it save or spend?" Plead with him the cause of religion or charity, set before him some noble end of patriotism, of social or national honour, of intellectual or moral worth--his only answer is, "to what purpose this waste?" Nay, visit the home where the miserly wretch is denying himself and his family the common comforts of life, wholesome food and warm clothing; self is dearer to him than these, and still his answer is, "To what purpose this waste?"

Another and more common, though less palpable example of the same error, is the false estimate of the value of knowledge. There is a constant tendency to degrade knowledge from the position of an end to that of means, to value it only in so far as it contributes to practical uses, and to regard the time and money expended on those kinds of knowledge which cannot be turned to practical account as to so much sheer waste. It is undoubtedly true, that knowledge is useful as the means towards a thousand valuable ends. But it is also true that there are few of the things which knowledge can enable us to get--money, food, sensual gratification, social position and rank, fame, honour, and the like--which are more worth having than knowledge

itself; and to say that the time spent in filling the mind with any kind of knowledge, which cannot help a man to make money and get on in life, is wasted, is to say that money, and getting on in life, are higher and better things than knowledge.

Of what use are learning and scholarship? Why let a son waste precious years in mastering dead languages, or studying philosophy, or cultivating a taste for poetry and art, when he is intended not to be a clergyman or an author, but a practical man of business? These things won't help him on in life! All the scholarship on earth won't make him a better judge of dry goods. The learning of Porson or Bentley would not help him a bit in speculation on cotton, or an investment in bank or railway stock. The youth must push his fortune as a manufacturer, or merchant, or engineer--what will all the poetry and metaphysics in the world do to help him here? No! let the few years he has to spend on education be devoted to the practical branches; let him learn to write a good hand, be ready at accounts, acquire, if need be, a knowledge of the modern languages; but that is all the learning he needs. Other kind of learning might only make him a book-worm, and at any rate, if they did not spoil him for a man of business, they are practically useless. To what purpose such waste?

Now it is, as I have said, quite true that in the business of life many kinds of knowledge are utterly useless. And if

the chief end of a man, even in this world, be to be a clever and successful man of business, to spend his time in acquiring such knowledge is sheer waste. Moreover it is also true, that forasmuch as to live is the condition of all other enjoyments, it is a very important thing for a youth to master those kinds of knowledge which are technical or professional, which will qualify him to earn his bread, and creditably to discharge the duties of his secular calling. Nor can any man be such an idiot as to despise money, or the qualifications that enable us to make it, seeing that money is the means, not of low enjoyment only, but of all sorts of enjoyment and influence, high as well as low. Yet, on the other hand, when all this is said, it leaves the broad principle unaffected that practical utility is not the test of knowledge, seeing that knowledge in itself, and for its own sake, is, to him who knows its worth, better and higher than all that can be got by means of it. All that can be gained at the very best by excluding what is called useless learning, and confining a boy to the kind of knowledge that will help him to push his fortune in life--all that at the very best can result from this is, that he makes a fortune. But a fortune is worth only what a man can enjoy out of it; and if his mind is narrow and uncultured, if he has not in youth acquired the invaluable power of conversing with the great minds of all ages, of appreciating and enjoying those things which a cultured taste and a comprehensive, broad, liberal

intelligence alone can enjoy, then is he shut out from that which gives its chief value to money and leisure. He may indeed, without this, have everything that can minister to animal and sensuous delight; but a man can't get more than a limited animal enjoyment out of his money. If he try, he is drawn back by the warning hand of physical disease; if he persist, he soon, by the endeavour after excessive sensual enjoyment, destroys the very power of enjoying. The only way in which affluence and leisure can extract more out of life is when its possessor can thereby command the means of wider intellectual happiness, when his large and liberally cultured mind can rise beyond the narrow limits of sense, and by the expansiveness, the elevation, the intensifying of existence which knowledge communicates, live, as compared with the mere moneyed man, three lives for one. It is no waste, then, to cultivate and inform the mind in youth even with what seems useless learning. It is false economy to restrict it to the narrow beat of practically convertible information. There are not a few men of business, who, even in the secular sense, have chosen for themselves and their children this better part--men who, amidst all the toil of business, manage to keep up liberal tastes, and who can escape from the feverishness and shake off the dust and soil of life's conflicts ever and anon, in converse with the great minds of ancient or modern times, of their own other countries and tongues. But no man who has ever happened

to witness the spectacle which we may have sometimes observed -- that which is presented by a man who has got on in life who has succeeded in amassing affluence, yet whose lack of culture leaves him with money but without the larger part of money's worth -- the coarse, narrow-minded, ill-informed man of small ideas and a big purse, with a plethora of wealth and a collapse of thought, at whose table our body is overfed and our intellect staved, whose walls are covered with pictures which he cannot appreciate, and shelves filled with books of which he can enjoy nothing but the gilt backs, the man of soulless, unrefined, affluence and vulgar magnificence--no man, we say, that has ever witnessed and understood such a spectacle, would be disposed, in answer to the exhortation largely and liberally to cultivate the mind, to say, "To what purpose this waste?"

But the last and most deplorable example of the reversal of the order of importance between means and end is that which relates to the highest of all ends--those of religion. Most mournful is it if, with respect to these, a man ever, either in express words, or virtually by his conduct, says, "To what purpose this waste?"

Religion, religious faith, religious acts are of those things that are their own ends, and with respect to which it is foolish, as well as wrong, to ask of what use are they? what shall we gain by them? or to what purpose this

waste?” may be an inquiry with reference to the rewards or profitable results of religion, either in the life that now is, or in that which is to come. And in both cases the same answer must be given. The value of religion does not consist in these things--not in anything out of itself--not in what it brings or gains, but in what it *is*.

There can be no question that, in so far as external advantage in this world are concerned, much that we include under the designation “religion” is utter waste. Religion is not a marketable commodity. Its duties are not only not conducive to temporal gain and advancement, but often in many ways act as a drag or hindrance in the pursuit of them. The *time* spent on religion, for instance, is so much abstracted from other occupations: a sincerely pious man will, in proportion to the earnestness of his piety, be withheld from that exclusive devotion of his best hours and energies, that unremitting self-surrender to business, which is often the indispensable condition of great success. The man whose heart is set on a heavenly reward cannot throw himself with the same intensity of desire into the pursuit of earthly honour or fame as those who have no higher end in view, to whom these things are all in all. He who is living in habitual communion with God and the things unseen, must often slacken the ardour and shorten the hours which the man who lives only for the things of time may devote--and successfully devote--to worldly industry. For

the latter objects, much of the time that is spent in prayer, meditation, holy exercises and employments, is mere waste. Moreover, the *money* devoted to religious objects, to charities, schemes of Christian usefulness--churches, Sunday schools, religious instructors, missions at home and abroad--all this is a direct abstraction from the gains which a non-religious man is permitted to retain. And, in general, whilst good conduct tends in some sort to success in life, it is yet true that that which constitutes the essence, the life and soul of religion, its internal spirit, its exercises of love and faith and aspiration, its self-denials and struggles, its inward conflicts and triumphs --has no connection with earthly advantage, and has often led to earthly ruin and loss. "We have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" was the miserable question of religious selfishness: and the answer, as we contemplate the earthly issue of many and many a Christian life; its utter lack of earthly good; its poverty, obscurity, ill-health; its family troubles, bereavements, early death--still more if we go back in history and stand by the martyr's side as he is hurried in shame and horror out of the world, the answer is-- "Nothing, worse than nothing." And we are thus unable, from his point of view, to utter one word in reply when the observer to whom this world is all in all asks, To what purpose this waste?"

But this world is not all. And the answer, which might seem a sufficient and satisfactory one to many, would be, there is not waste in all this worldly expense and loss: for the religious man will reap, for all his religious toils and sacrifices in this world, a rich recompense in the world to come. But this is an answer only less defective and fallacious than the other. For our last remark is, that religion, in so far as it is real and pure, is not a thing which is precious to a man because even of an eternal reward to which it leads, but simply because it is in itself, now and for ever, the supreme delight, the chief joy of the soul. It is true that there is a reward in store for the child of God, that there are blessings outward as well as inward awaiting him--a prize of ineffable joy and blessedness, in comparison with which this world's highest moments of rapturous delight are faint and cold; and to this coming joy and happiness the Christian, in all his efforts and sacrifices, is not forbid to look: still it is not less true that that which gives to religion its value to religious acts and exercises their preciousness, is not anything future, anything eternal. They are precious in and for themselves. He is not a true lover of this world's knowledge who loves it for itself--to whom to know truth, to bring the mind into contact with it, is all the reward he seeks. And in like manner of divine knowledge. The truth of God to the earnest and holy minded man is not precious only or chiefly because to

believe it is the means of salvation, because only by the knowledge and belief of it can he escape hell and gain heaven. If this were all, in his study of God's word the believer would be but getting up his salvation-lesson, going through the necessary drudgery for the prize of a future heaven. But to the truly spiritual man divine knowledge is its own end, the contemplation of truth its own most precious reward. To know God, to have the eye of the soul opened to the perception of infinite purity, to be brought in mind and spirit into contact with that light of the knowledge of the glory of God which is revealed in the face of Christ; this is as much the immediate delight of the eye or sweet melody the present joy of the ear. And as it is with knowledge, so it is with love. What true-hearted child ever asks of what use is it to love my father or mother? What shall I gain by all this expenditure of affection? To what end or purpose all this waste of tender words, and loving, reverential acts? Or what brother, husband, or friend ever dreamt of inquiring, why should I repair to the presence, and reciprocate the affection of him who is so dear to me? What practical future benefit shall I gain by all this expression of fondness, by all these words and acts and gifts of love: -- Would not the all-sufficient answer be: "Gain! reward! result! I seek none, dream of none. Love is its own most precious reward; the richest joy that love can confer is simply to love, to love more, to love on for ever." And so

with the divine object of a Christian's reverential love, the Father of his spirit, the Lord, Redeemer, Lover of his soul. Earth knows no sublimer emotion than that mingled awe and tenderness, reverence and affection, which breathe in the Christian's heart towards the Father in heaven. And if it be so for the loving child to cling to the father's presence, or to rest in the mother's arms, ask not of what use it is for the soul, amid the anxieties and perturbations of life, to repose in the Infinite affection, and in all doubt and sorrow, through all change and care and trouble which the changing years are bringing to rest in the everlasting arms. If earthly affection or friendship has ever known the strange bliss of a sacrifice, the sweetness of toil or sorrow or pain borne for the sake of one who is dearly loved, ask not the Christian soul why, or for what ulterior end, it gives and spends and suffers for Jesus. What practical gain shall issue from it? To what future good or reward does it tend? To what purpose this waste? Oh, cold heart! Oh, what ungenerous spirit of calculating selfishness! What reply can such questions merit? The goodly fellowship of the prophets, the glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs, the holy Church of Christ throughout all the world, with one consenting voice reply, "We count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for whom we have suffered the loss of all

things--rejoicing even in this that we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake.”

-- JOHN CAIRD, D.D.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS CEASED TO CRY.

ONE day, as John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing in Jordan, a wonderful thing happened. It was drawing towards evening, and a great many people had been baptized. Then, when there was no other person applying, the Lord Jesus went up to John and asked to get baptism. Now John had not known Jesus up till now. Galilee, in which the little town of Nazareth was situated, was far north from the deserts where John had spent his time. He knew that the Messiah was coming, and that he was to go before him, bidding people get ready to see their King; but he did not personally know Christ. The Spirit, however, had said to him beforehand, that he would tell him when Jesus should come, and give him a sign to confirm the word. Just, therefore, as the Spirit, had said to Samuel of old, when young David came before him, Arise, anoint him for

this is he; so now, when Jesus stood before John, asking to be baptized, he knew from the Spirit that this was the Christ, and was at first surprised and startled that he should ask such a thing. He said, I have need to be baptized of thee, and dost thou come to me? Jesus, however, showed him that though he had no sins to confess, and needed no repentance, yet there were other good reasons why he should receive an ordinance which his Father had appointed and John yielded, and baptized him. Then happened the wonderful thing I referred to. As Jesus had come up from the water, and was kneeling in prayer, the sky above him was cleft open, as you may have seen the clouds rent, and from the opening, there came down a shape of light like a dove, and lighted on his head. At the same time a loud voice was heard out of the brightness above the sky saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. When the voice ceased, and the skies were closed, the bright dove did not go away, but remained on Christ's head. And as John and others were looking on and wondering, Jesus rose up, and eagerly left the place, journeying away to the south.

After that John went on preaching; but now he did not merely say that Christ was coming; he told the people that he had come. Weeks passed, however, and Jesus did not again appear. At length John saw him standing among the crowd as he was preaching, and he said, There is one at this moment whom you do not know, so great and good that I

am not good enough to have the honour of stooping down and untying the string of his shoe. I have come baptizing with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost. A day later than that, he actually pointed him out as he was coming towards the place where John was preaching, and said, behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. The next day, too, he sowed him expressly to two of his own disciples, and these, following Jesus, spent the rest of the day with him in the place where he was lodging, and soon after went away with him into Galilee, where he began to preach, like John, about the nearness of the kingdom of heaven.

John, however, did not stop preaching, but went on telling the people that Christ whom God had promised to send was actually come, and calling upon them to repent and to believe in him. But by and by there were not the same crowds following him. A great many people had flocked to hear Jesus, who had begun to work great miracles both in Galilee and Jerusalem. And though Jesus himself did not baptize people with his own hand--his baptism was to be with the Spirit--yet his disciples baptized a great number. Some of John's followers heard of this, and they thought it too bad that one whom he himself had baptized should draw away the people from hearing their great master, and they came to him and made a complaint against Jesus. But this gave occasion for John to bear

clear, strong witness about Jesus, and to bring out his own humble spirit. He called up to the mind of his complaining disciples that he had always told them he was not the Christ, but far far less than he, and only sent to preach about his coming. Instead, therefore, of being sorry to hear that so many were flocking to the side of Jesus, the news made him very glad. He was but the Bridegroom's friend; Jesus was the heavenly Bridegroom, and it was his joy to hear His voice, and to stand by and see Him winning the church to Himself. He knew quite well, he said, that he himself was to grow of less and less account; Jesus was to grow greater and greater. For he was the beloved Son of the Father, who had all things put into his hand.

Everything for men would turn on their treatment of Jesus; if they believed in him, they would live for ever; if they refused to believe, the wrath of God would be on them.

I have now give you something of the last words which, we are told, John spoke about Jesus. Boldly speaking ever about men's sins, whether those who heard him were rich or poor, he had said to Herod, the prince of a good part of the country, that he ought not to have married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Herod heard John gladly about many other things, and often took his advice; but he did not like him to speak about this sin, and Herodias was fiercely angry. So the tetrarch, as he was called, sent soldiers, and took John, and put him in prison. His

disciples, however, were not shut out from seeing him. It was at the same time a great trial to one whose life had been so free, to be locked in a prison; but he comforted himself with the thought that the King had come before whom Herod and all princes, however great, were as nothing. I think he expected to hear of some great movement, that would change the whole state of things in Palestine. But when his disciples brought word that Jesus was doing great works of mercy, and was not bringing judgments on the guilty nation, he was perplexed and disappointed; so he thought he would send him a message to remind him of the hopes of Israel. He would not have been led to do it, I believe, had he not been in prison, and made weak and weary there. As it was, perhaps he felt as if Jesus were not remembering him; and so he sent two of his disciples with this question, Art thou the Christ, or must we wait for another. It is to be noticed with great care what answer Jesus sent back. He wrought many miracles of healing in the presence of the two followers of John, and said to them, Go, tell John what you have seen and heard, and say, he is a happy man who does not feel stumbled at my working such works as these. He wanted John to think again; to look at the matter with more care, and to say what better or other work could he do, who was come to seek and to save that which was lost. I cannot doubt that John understood from the answer that Christ's healing power,

and his preaching the gospel to the poor, were the true marks of Him whom God had sent.

If John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus, had some wish or hope that Christ would come to deliver him from prison, he had his wish fulfilled ere long, though not in the way he might mean. For the doors of the prison were soon to be set open, not to let him out again to live on the earth, but to receive him up into the sky. It happened in this way. Herod's birthday came round, and he wished to keep it with great splendour. So he made a great feast for all his lords and nobles, and a very grand affair it was. Much eating and drinking there was, and everyone's heart was merry. Now, the queen had a daughter who was a very pretty dancer; and at a time when all were ready to be pleased, she came to where the king and his nobles were sitting, and danced in their presence in such a manner that the whole company were delighted. The king himself was in raptures, and when Salome had finished, he cried out, Ask anything you please; it is yours though it should be worth half my kingdom. The young woman, hearing this, slipped out of the room, and said to her mother, What shall I ask? Now is my time, said the wicked woman in her heart, and she bade her daughter ask the head of John the Baptist. So back she went to the king, and startled him by saying, Give me here John Baptist's head in a dish. Herod was very sorry; he did not mean anything like that: but then he had sworn, and

what will the lords think if he draw back from his rash word? So he sent one of his guard, and John was beheaded in the prison, his head brought to the king, and given to Salome, and carried by her away to her mother. But John himself had been carried by the angels into the palace of the King of kings, to wait for the coming of his great Lord from a still more cruel death.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you give examples of other persons besides John not wishing Christ to do what he was doing, from thinking themselves unworthy of it?

2. Can you give another instance of God's voice being heard over the heads of the people, and tell what those present thought it was?

3. Which of the Gospels speak of John the Baptist chiefly as the Forerunner, and which of them mostly as Witness?

4. What was to be the emblem of Christ's baptism of men with the Holy Ghost?

5. Can you find an instance in the Old Testament of a person displeased with a work of God's Spirit, because he thought his master was slighted?

6. What did Jesus say of John the Baptist, proving how highly he esteemed him?

7. What eminent martyrs, other than John, and after Christ, do we know of in the New Testament?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting Matt. viii. and John xiii.; John xii.; Matt. iii., Mark i., Luke iii., John i.; Matt. iii., Acts ii.; Numb. xi.; Matt. xi. and John v.; Acts vii. and xii.; 2 Tim. iv.

Prayer.

O LORD, we thank Thee that Jesus the Lamb of God has come. We rejoice to know that His blood cleanseth from all sin. We pray to have our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. We wonder at the wickedness of those who could murder John, and kill the just, and good, and holy Jesus; but we know that we have by nature the same sinful heart as others, and thank Thy grace which has taught us better than many. May we have, more and more, the baptism of the Holy Spirit from the hands of Jesus. And may we be prepared to follow Christ bravely, whatever may come, willing, if need should be, even to die for His sake. To Him be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD God, merciful and gracious! mercifully look upon our infirmities, and endue us with the spirit of meekness and patience, that no evil we suffer from others may move us to do evil unto them, but that we may overcome them by doing them good. And in all our dangers and adversities, stretch forth Thy hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxxi.*

FIRM as the earth thy gospel stands,
My Lord, my hope, my trust;
If I am found in Jesus' hands,
My soul can ne'er be lost.

His honour is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep;
All that his heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.

Nor death, nor hell, shall e'er remove
His fav'rites from his breast;
The bosom of his faithful love
Shall be their endless rest.

MATTHEW VII. 21-27.

NOT every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; 25. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26. And every one that heareth the sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; 27. And the rain

descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

LUKE XIV. 16-24.

THEN said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper and bade many; 17. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused, &c.

Prayer.

O THOU who art the giver of all good, yet who for the bestowment of Thy blessings, wilt be sought after by them that fear Thee, let Thy merciful ear, we beseech Thee, be open to the prayer of Thy servants; and that we may obtain our petitions, grant that we may ask those things which are agreeable to Thy holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Thou who art very pitiful and of tender mercy, we bless Thee that Thou dost not banish us from that presence we have so often profaned, nor refusest to listen to those

prayers that have so often proved insincere, but art still more ready to hear than we to ask, and to bestow upon us more than we can desire or deserve. May Thy goodness lead us to repentance. May the sense of Thy longsuffering and forbearance fill us with sorrow for our ingratitude and disobedience. Father, we have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and are no more worthy to be called Thy children. We have forgotten Thee, who hast been ever mindful of us. We have been cold and unloving to Thee, who hast loved us with a ceaseless, unwearied affection. The warmth of Thy benignity has but too often only increased the hardness of our hearts; the greatness of Thy compassion only served to deepen the guilt of our persistence in sin. All that we have, all that we are, we owe to Thy bounty; and yet the wealth of being and of blessing Thou hast so graciously bestowed we have consumed in selfishness, or wasted in folly, and vanity, and sin. To all Thine other gifts Thou hast added a gift which comprehends, which transcends, them all. Yet alas! Thy crowning mercy hath only served to consummate our guilt; for we have rejected and despised the Son of God, we have been insensible to greatness of Thine unspeakable gift.

And yet to Thee, our loving Father, with all our sinfulness and our selfishness, we are still emboldened to come. Thy property it is always to have mercy; Thy pleasure, not to punish, but to pardon. Thou desirest not

the death of the sinner, but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live: turn us O God, from all our wickedness, that we may live. Thou willest all men to be saved; save us O our God, for in Thy mercy is our only hope. From the sins that offend Thee, from the impenitence that provokes Thee, from the very unbelief that rejects thee, save, good Lord. From guilt which only Thou canst pardon, from impurity which only thou canst cleanse, from wretchedness which only Thou canst alleviate or remove, save us, good Lord. O God, make speed to save us: O Lord, make haste to help us. Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would we give it Thee; but we plead with Thee by an infinitely more precious sacrifice than we can offer, by Him who hath borne our sins and carried our sorrows in his own body on the tree. From the stain of sin do thou cleanse us: from the shame of sin do Thou cover us; from the dominion and power of sin, Redeemer of our souls, be pleased to deliver us. Endue us, we beseech Thee, with the mind of Christ. Bestow on us the spirit of self-sacrifice--a mind that ever contemplates first, not our own, but others' good, a heart that knows not a selfish wish, a will that bends all its inclinations and purposes to the will of God. Help us to be in thought wise and prudent, in speech incorrupt, in life and conversation pure. Bestow upon us that inward purity to which all outward things become pure; and whatsoever the lot in life which Thou hast assigned to us, help us to find in

all around us food for holy thought and helps to holy discipline. To Thee our gracious Father, to Thee our loving Saviour, we this day anew commit our way, beseeching Thee that this day and ever our minds may be illumined by Thy wisdom, our erring steps directed by Thy guiding hand. Direct us in our doubts, shelter us in our dangers, support us when we are weak; and when we stumble and fall, O do Thou raise us up again. Make us more and more fitted for Thy service while we live, more and more prepared for Thy presence when we die, granting us grace in this world, and glory everlasting in the world to come.
Amen.

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

John v. 20, 22, 23, 25.

Evening.

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice,

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of the damnation.

John xi. 25, 26. John vi. 40. John v. 28, 29

TUESDAY.

Morning.

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven, to the other.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Dan. vii. 13. Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. Rev. i. 17. Rev. xiv. 14.

Evening.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and he dead at his appearing and his kingdom.

And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand,
Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand,
Depart from me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire, prepared
for the devil and his angels.

2 Tim. iv. 1. Matt. xxv. 32, 33, 34, 41.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall
enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I
judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save
the world.

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath
one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same
shall judge him in the last day.

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they
shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and
them which do iniquity,

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be
wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. vii. 21. John xii. 47, 48. Luke xiii. 41, 42.

Evening.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed thee, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Matt. xiii. 43. Dan. xii. 3. Rev. ii. 10. Rev. vii. 17.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Heb i. 6. Rev. v. 11, 12.

Evening.

Neither knoweth any man the father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, for he knew what was in man.

And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.

Matt. xi. 27. John ii. 24. Rev. ii. 23. Col. ii. 2.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name;

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Ps. lxxii. 17.

Ps. cxviii. 26.

Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Rom. x. 12.

Evening.

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Ps. xlv. 3. Heb. i. 1, 2, 3, 4.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Ps. cx. 3. John x. 28. 1 Cor. i. 8. Phil. iii. 20, 21.

Evening.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 29. Heb. ii. 18. Heb. vii. 25. 2 Tim. i 12.