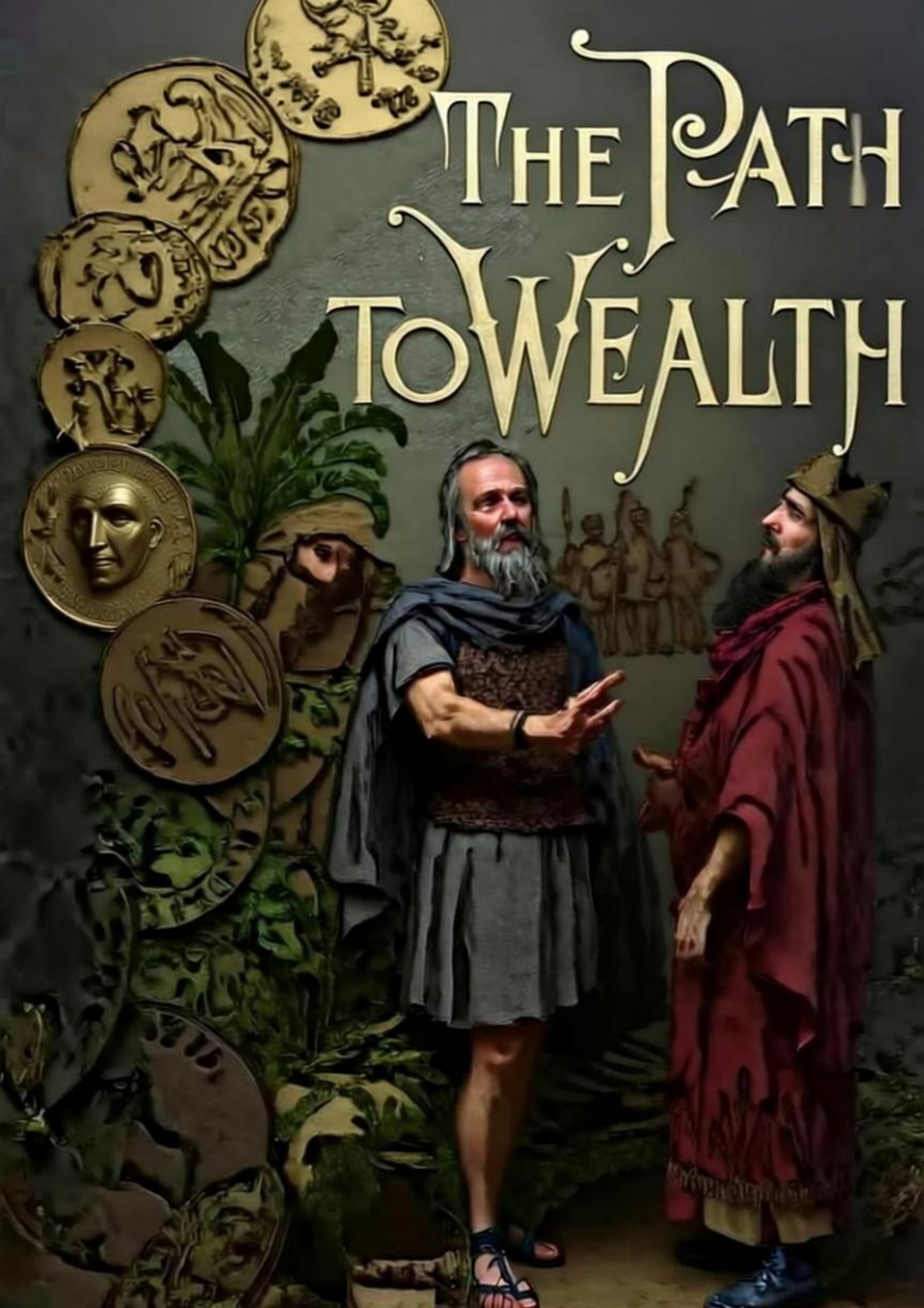


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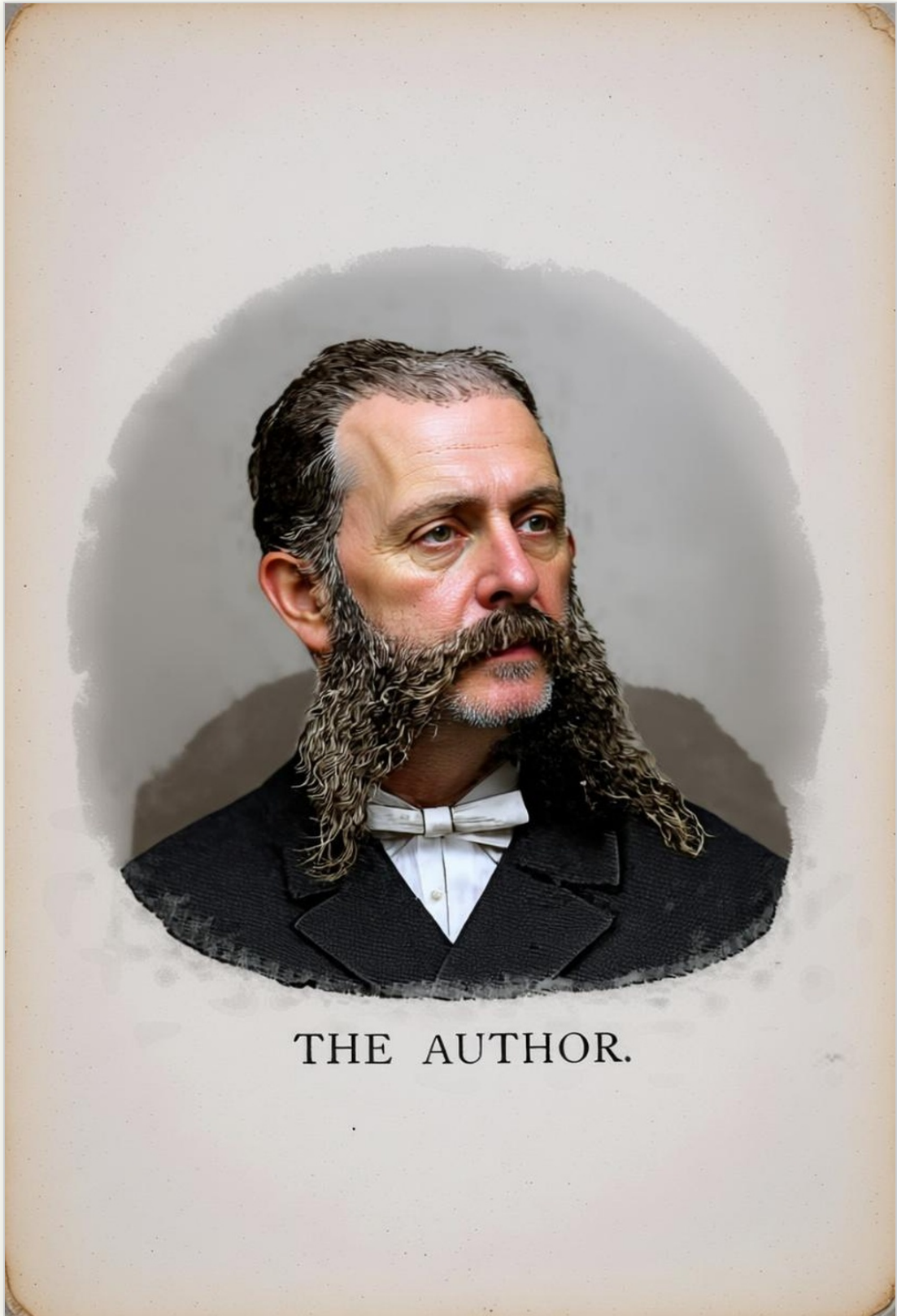


THE PATH TO WEALTH

OR,

LIGHT FROM MY FORGE

A modern transcription for today's technology.



THE PATH TO WEALTH

OR,

LIGHT FROM MY FORGE

A DISCUSSION OF GOD'S MONEY LAWS

THE RELATION BETWEEN GIVING AND GETTING

CASH AND CHRISTIANITY

BY

A BLACKSMITH

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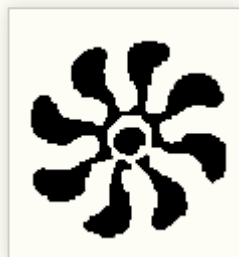
ADDITIONAL PAPERS ON SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE,
WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THIS WORK,

BY

Rev. E. C. B. HALLAM,
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Rev. JOHN POLLARD, D.D.,
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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

Rev. J. H. VINCENT, D.D., LL.D.,
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Chancellor of Chautauqua College of Liberal Arts, etc.



B. F. JOHNSON & CO.,

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”—James 1:22 (King James Version)

When I first encountered *The Path to Wealth*, I was struck not only by its bold proclamation of God's money laws, but by the practical wisdom it offers for living them out. This book is not merely about giving — it is about **obedience** and **discipleship** in the area of our finances.

Through years of personal experience and observation, I have come to see that tithing is one of God's most effective tools for teaching His children responsible money management. When we faithfully set aside the first ten percent of our increase into a dedicated “God account,” we are not simply writing a check to an organization. We are actively learning stewardship.

What is especially powerful is this truth: **if we learn to manage the 10% well, we will also learn to manage the 90% well.** The discipline, accountability, and wisdom developed in handling God's portion naturally flows into how we handle our own. By practicing faithful stewardship with the tithe, we grow in financial responsibility — and by extension, we position ourselves to increase our own wealth under God's blessing.

This practice transforms tithing from something many approach with dread or last-minute anxiety into a deliberate, joyful discipline. Instead of scrambling when a need arises, we have resources already set apart and ready. We move from being passive hearers of the Word to active doers of it. When the God account is full, we prayerfully look for ways to use it. When it is empty, we

can say “no” to new requests with a clear conscience — unless the Lord calls us to go beyond the tithe in sacrificial giving.

This is the spirit of James 1:22. God does not want us merely to agree with biblical teaching on money — He wants us to **live it**. Systematic tithing, paired with a “God account,” builds both financial responsibility and spiritual maturity. It frees us from guilt-driven giving and leads us into cheerful, purposeful obedience.

It is my prayer that this newly formatted and preserved edition of *The Path to Wealth* will help a new generation discover these timeless truths. May it encourage every reader to become a faithful doer of the Word in their finances — for the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom.

May the Lord bless you as you walk in obedience and discover the joy of being a good steward of all He has entrusted to you.

FREDERICK ROLLER

Pastor, Redemptive Church of Hard Truths
Editor

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book is written in the interests of God's money law. This law is clearly revealed in the Bible and is plainly manifest in nature. At the same time, it is either entirely neglected or manifestly misunderstood by the average Christian. It is evident, so much so "that he who runs may read," that God has constituted nature and grace according to the principle that the way to get is to give, and the way to lose is to keep. Most men, however, shut their eyes and will not see this great truth.

The lack of a knowledge of God's monetary demands upon the people on the one hand, and the bearing of these demands upon our financial success on the other hand, is simply amazing, in view of the clearness of the teachings of Holy Scripture, and in view of the importance of the subject. I trust the public will not come in for the largest share of the blame for this ignorance.

It is a matter of certainty to me that a prime condition for the financial success of the individual is in giving to God the amount He demands; or, to put it stronger, God pledges Himself for the financial success of that individual who renders obedience to the Divine money claim; and hence the title of this book is given in no figurative or secondary sense, for an infallible answer to the question, "How to acquire wealth?" is, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse." To tell the simple truth ought never to be considered beyond the bounds of modesty, and I believe it to be the truth when I say, that this book now sent out to the public proves beyond doubt the wisdom of the command and the truth of the promise, "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." But for fear Solomon's words should

be so construed by the doubting as not to mean hard cash, then I will state plainly, that this book proves from the Bible and experience that poverty is always driven away and piety generally cultivated by paying to God ten per cent. of our income. Incidentally it is shown that obedience to God's money claim upon Christians would convert the world to Christ in a very short time.

An effort has been made to state each point briefly, so that the time of busy men may not be occupied longer than is necessary to make each argument clear and convincing. A book twice the size could be easily written were the same arguments elaborated to their fullest extent. The characters introduced to the reader are REAL, and the objections interspersed, for the most part, written in the language in which they were stated by actual and not imaginary men. The experiences are not only true in their statement, but each experience is given by a different individual with the trade or profession as stated, while the name of each person could be given were it deemed prudent.

The idea of the blacksmith, his son and the blacksmith shop has a foundation in fact, but the school house and the Baptist church are introduced for the sake of variety, and to give added interest to the subject under discussion. The book is divided into "Talks" rather than chapters; first, for the sake of something new, and second, in order to be true, as it is really made up of talks stenographically reported by a lady who has been converted to the doctrine and practice of tithing through the instrumentality of the Author, and out of love for the cause she did the work.

It is the earnest wish and devout prayer of the writer that this book may be productive of good, and lead many a man to "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse" in response to the demand of God.

THE AUTHOR.



Bishop J.H. Vincent



INTRODUCTION

There are whirlpools in the great sea. There are whirlpools in the great sea of society. In a whirlpool the circling waters tend toward the central vortex, and everything that comes within their swirl and sweep is caught, and finally swallowed down to that deepest which makes neither return nor report of its victims. Whatever counter-currents and temporary eddies may play on the other lines of this great gyration, deceiving at first both observer and victim, the controlling current soon proves itself master, and ere long the power of the whirlpool is asserted and confirmed. Everything centres in a central self which greedily engulfs leaf, feather, fish, reckless fowl, fotsam and bark, resisting but never satisfying the measureless maw of the insatiate sea. The very air is whirled into a cyclone over this consuming maelstrom—terrible symbol of an all-dominating selfishness.

In the great sea which God made there are but few such fatal vortexes. The sea of society is full of those who have perverted a normal selfhood, and that true self-love which is the bond of man's individuality, into a selfishness which is the one central centre of life, and which lives neither for God's glory nor for the good of men. Such souls are the maelstroms of society. They live for self. They measure everything by the personal advantage which they hope to secure. The far-reaching sweep of their own ambition lays hold of whatsoever they account good and desirable, and steadily, by forces cunningly plotted and unrelenting purpose, they appropriate to themselves the things they account of greatest good in their personal life. They live for gold, for place, for power, for prominence, for ease and luxury. The Ego is the

centre of their universe. They not only ask, “What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?” but they ask nothing else, and account as the best things of God’s creation and providence, and the best things of human society, that which feeds and adorns their own dying and unprofitable bodies. They sacrifice the interests of others at the shrine of their own advancement. They get all they can and keep all they can. They are willing that the poor shall continue poor, if they themselves may grow more rich. They are content to build their princely fortunes on a pitiable mass of society bound down and ground down by oppression.

These social whirlpools may be developed in individual life, and in a larger way in associated commercial, political and ecclesiastical life. What the one unsanctified selfist seeks daily to do on a small scale, these combinations of society seek to accomplish on a colossal scale. Thus are formed the great maelstroms of trade, of politics, of nobility and royalty, and of priestly tyranny, which, in the so-called “church” of the ages, has sucked down into ignorance and superstition—the blackness of darkness—so many millions of deluded souls.

Thus the root of all personal and social evil is selfishness. This is the deadly whirlpool. The apostle to the Gentiles, in his prophecy concerning the “perilous times” of “the last days,” strikes at the very secret of all deterioration and crime in a single sentence:—“For men shall be lovers of their own selves.” No wonder, therefore, that he adds—“covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof.”

There are fountains in the sweet gardens of our civilization. There are upspringing jets of water from lofty, out-of-sight sources, which play in the sunlight, filling the surrounding air with freshness, imparting new life and

strength to grass, plants, trees, washing the leaves of overhanging branches and the petals of fragrant blossoms in the neighborhood, causing them to shine with a new beauty, and to render a lovelier ministry of color and fragrance to the passer-by. These up-springing fountains describe curves of beauty, and give one constantly a sense of strength and of generous intention. The fountain puts gladness into the hearts of men; causes childhood to leap in very excess of joy; giving back to the benevolent sun light for his light, life for his force, and beauty for his glory.

In the gardens of our modern society there are some, alas! too few, such fountains. They are the men and women supplied from divine reservoirs with the water of life. They give freely, having freely received. The sources of their life are in the heavens. They beautify the neighborhood in which they live. Flowers bloom more brightly, birds sing more sweetly, the air is more bracing, the foliage fresher, the sunshine brighter, the earth and heavens more glorious because of the divine love which leaps up in looks and words and deeds from these fountain-hearts.

These live for others. They are not whirlpools, but fountains. They do not ask, “What can this do for me?” but “What can I do for others?” The spirit of help is the spirit of their lives. The cry of their souls is not, “Lift me up,” but “Whom shall I lift up?” They do not take souls away from the light, but they bring souls into the light. To them giving is better than receiving, serving better than being served.

As the selfist combining with his fellow-selfist constitutes the great selfish social organizations and forces which ruin society, so does the unselfish child of the all-loving God, combining with other fountain-lives, create great spiritual social organizations, and generate mighty spiritual energies which tend toward millenniums of blessing. What on the one hand the evil combinations—political, commercial and ecclesiastical—do for the degradation of humanity, the spiritual, loving combinations in the true Church of Christ do for the regeneration and uplifting of humanity.

The great need of the age is the fountain-life of grace which shall neutralize and destroy the whirlpool life of self. And this radical change in society must be effected through the individual members of the church, who, loving their kind, denying themselves, and giving their substance, create in every community personal and social centres from which flow fountains of living waters for the refreshing and for the healing of the nations.

It is mortifying to the intelligent Christian, and sorely embarrassing to the promoters of true reform, to find in the church merely one-sided views of religious life. There are people who ignore the essentials. They hold with tenacity to the doctrinal formulæ, forgetting that no finite being in the universe holds larger measures of truth than Satan himself. There are people who exalt forms and ceremonies in religious worship, forgetting that parrots can talk, Æolian harps emit sweet sounds, and sparrows chatter in the leafy wood, and all without thought, love or motive. There are people who put stress on sentiment and emotion in religion. If they “feel good,” they have no doubt as to their personal security and their acceptance with God, although acceptance with God is valuable to them chiefly as it gives them a guarantee of security, all of which is only another form of selfishness, and lacks the very first element of religious character. These people covet moods and states of feeling. They revel in songs and prayers and hallelujahs. The thrill of sentiment and the warm current of emotion are “the all and be-all” of religion. Such saints forget that mere mental exhilaration and good feeling may co-exist with carnal hearts, selfish aims, and utter worldliness of temper. There are people who have everything in the religion of Jesus Christ—which is a religion of sacrifice—but the spirit and act of sacrifice. They have ideas and ideals, reverent postures, ritualistic recitations, spontaneity in prayer and glow of hope, but they never make sacrifice of self in the service of their Saviour. They give little or nothing; they believe in a “free gospel,” the law of one-tenth has never put its iron into their consciences; the demand of the heathen has never sounded from beyond the sea into their inner life; they give at random under pressure; they give when funny stories are told, when rivalries

between men and classes and sexes and societies are started, when suppers and shows and feasts—the fruit of cunning devices—are given; there is no conscience in their giving; there is no prayer before it, nor is the offering of money mingled with the incense of worship; they regard all finance as a secular part, and solely a secular part, of the church life; they ridicule the law of the tithe as the crotchet of a crank; the grace they profess never touches the “pocket-nerve.” No wonder that the church is limited in her resources; no wonder that salaries are deficient, and the treasuries of the benevolent departments empty.

The church needs to-day an awakening and a revival on the subject of systematic, conscientious, spiritual and worshipful giving. It must understand that giving is the law of the fountain-life. What is grace but giving? God’s grace—God’s gift! God’s grace in us—the giving of ourselves, the giving of our powers, the giving of our all to humanity. This is full surrender; this is symmetrical piety; this is a true religious harmony in which the whole of life becomes one with the divine law of life.

There is, moreover, a business aspect which this subject assumes, worthy of our most careful attention. The church ought to be a model of society, a picture of the millennium, when love and wisdom shall abound in the hearts and lives of men. On this theory, business men ought to be able to turn to the church and watch her methods of transacting business as models for them in the affairs of everyday life. Money should be collected, accounts kept, expenditure made in a manner so honest, systematic and becoming that the hard sense of an unsanctified world would be compelled to pay tribute to the integrity, thoroughness and clearness of our church-management. Children brought up in the church should acquire commercial and ethical ideas and become familiar with business modes, all so commendable as to make them better business men in the after years because of their training in the Church of Christ.

We have a beautiful picture of systematic, spontaneous and universal giving in the days of Moses and Israel, when the call of the Lord was heard, and the “offering” of the people given “willingly.” “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, I shall take my offering.” It is said that “all the congregation of the children of Israel came very near whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the Tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.” “Every man,” “every one,” “all the men whose heart stirred them up,” “all the women whose hearts stirred them up,” and the “rulers” and all the “children of Israel” brought a willing offering unto the Lord.” Great ideas exalted them, divine work filled them with imagination, and the divine work full of beauty and of incalculable use inspired them. And with marvellous unanimity and heartiness and promptness the nation poured forth its gifts to the Lord, gifts of every sort and according to individual ability. This spontaneous movement, so brilliant, so wise and worthy, was so turned into the steady and legitimate service of the people, that the tenth of all that they had was to be placed on the altar of their God. Such inspirations, incentives and systematic methods are needed in the Church of the Most High. Home should teach the doctrines underlying systematic benevolence. The pulpit should proclaim them. The Sabbath school should reiterate them. The administration of the church should illustrate them. Then will the coffers of Zion be filled to overflowing, and the work of the Lord shall be carried on in the earth, and the heart of the people, made glad by giving, shall be made twice glad by the vision of the result, as the blessing of the Lord shall consecrate and crown their work.

In all giving of our resources to the cause of God, we must remember that the value of the gift depends upon the motive of the giver. Great ideas must incorporate themselves in noble character, and the gift must be the fruit of character. The Sabbath collection may thus be made a more splendid expression of true religion than any anthem that choir ever rendered, or any

song that ever sounded forth from the congregation. When the gifts that drop into the passing basket come from great hearts, sustained by great ideas, and contemplating great aims, and are in themselves prayers which take the form of deeds—then is the “collection” worship, and the ringing of silver and copper and gold sweet music in the heavens.

John H. Vincent.

Chautauqua, N. Y.,
August 28, 1888.

SYSTEMATIC GIVING

The following talks were commenced in our blacksmith shop to a number of customers and their friends, who came to hear what I had to say on “Systematic Giving,” as they call it, but what I prefer to call “Systematic Paying” of what we owe to God.

I am a blacksmith, the son of a blacksmith, and the grandson of a blacksmith. The old shop in which these talks commenced had been occupied by three successive generations, my grandfather, my father, and myself. Each of us in turn shod all the horses of the little village, repaired all the ploughs and wagons, and, in short, did all the blacksmithing that was to be done for miles around. At nights, the men and boys of our little community used to assemble in our shop, and while father and myself would transform old horse-shoes into new ones, there would be a general discussion of things, both light and grave, the conversations being enlivened by the blaze of the forge, and made merry by the cling-clang of hammer and sledge, as they rattled on an anvil which gave “no uncertain sound.”

We had some profound philosophers in our village, and some equally noted for their knowledge of the Bible. The shoemaker, the doctor and the man that kept the only shop in the village, where we bought our dry-goods, groceries, hardware and stationery, were the best talkers, and seemed to know the most; although after I was converted, it did seem remarkable how much God revealed to me of the Bible, myself, and everybody else; and how He let



HOW THE TALKS BEGAN.

loose my tongue more know better than our nightly company at the blacksmith shop. On the day preceding this particular night when these talks commenced, there were several farmers in with work to be done, and while waiting they had a general conversation on the great demand for money from the churches, and the general subject of Christian giving, some complaining

that there was nothing but collections and subscriptions, while others explained the reason why, and justified the demands, but objected to the general system by which the people gave their contributions. They struck a subject upon which I had very decided views, for I had given it considerable attention, and thought I knew the Bible plan, and I said some things which seemed new and startling to them, although my ideas were as old as Abraham at least.



By some kind of general consent, an unusually large number came to the shop that night to hear what I had to say on that subject. An influential business

man from the city was visiting the doctor, and he brought him along,



while our company was also graced with the presence of our own minister, who found out what was going on, and came to listen. It was a representative gathering and I tried my best to be equal to the occasion, and “give saint and sinner their portion in due season.” All work was laid aside for that night, and as the company sat around upon the benches, the forge, and upon boxes, I sat upon the anvil, with my leather apron for a cushion, and began my discourse on...

SYSTEMATIC PAYING

TALK NO. 1

“THERE are some duties which can be found out without the aid of the Bible, and there are a great many things which are necessary to know that the Bible was never intended to teach, and yet there are a great many other things which we could never discover if the Bible had not been given us. God has given us two great books—the Bible and Nature—and in one or the other of these books each duty of man to man, and of man to God, is clearly revealed to us. Nature is God’s first book, and the Bible is His supplement: what is not revealed in one is communicated in the other. From nature we learn there is great need of benevolence, but she reveals to us no law for its exercise; or adequate motive to prompt its action. The Bible steps in and confirms nature as to the need of benevolence, but, in addition, it supplies powerful motives for its exercise, and gives exact rules for its guidance. There are attached to all the laws of God, whether as seen in nature or revealed in the Bible, rewards and penalties. No man can keep a law without being blessed, and no man can break a law without being cursed. So far as what is generally called natural law is concerned, this is evident to all, and no time need be taken to prove it. If I put my hand in the fire it is burned, no matter how pious I may be; and if I do not eat I shall starve. Both of these disasters would be the result of the natural operation of well-known laws. Experience proves that the

laws of the Bible are equally unyielding, for, be it remembered, the Bible does not make any of its laws: it simply reveals what already exists in the very nature of things, but which could not be found out by unaided reason.

“I shall attempt to make it very clear, in my talk, that God has communicated to us the exact minimum sum which we are to contribute of our means to the support of His cause; that His will has been communicated to us in the Bible in such a way that it has all the force of a law, or a direct command, and what I have just said concerning the keeping or the breaking of other laws is appropriate to this subject. I trust also to be able to prove that there are very great blessings, both temporal and spiritual, promised to the man who gives the proportionate amount of his income as demanded by the Bible. Probably I shall put the stress on the temporal blessings; and, from a business standpoint, attempt to prove that there is money in it. The careful reader of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament, must see how often God promises material blessings to His people if they keep His commandments, and how often God promises to bless His people with earthly good if they regularly and faithfully tithe their income.

“Over and over again, by different writers and under different circumstances, it is in effect most distinctly asserted that ‘The tenth is holy unto the Lord,’ and the prophet Malachi, who is the last prophet under the old dispensation, and who may be said, in some sense, to be the prophet who ushered in the New Testament dispensation, uses this significant language concerning tithing (Mal. iii. 10, 11, 12): ‘Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.’

“It is not necessary for me to state that the word tithe, when used in the Bible, always means tenth, and is never used in any other sense. Putting this expression into modern language, it means, that ten per cent. of our net earnings are to be devoted to God and to His cause; that is, to religious and benevolent purposes. God distinctly promises that, if we will be faithful and pay Him ten per cent. regularly, or, as the Bible puts it, ‘Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,’ He will give us both material and spiritual blessings. I fear there is a tendency in modern religious teaching to postpone all blessings until we get to heaven, and perhaps unduly associate ‘poverty and piety,’ forgetting that Jesus said, ‘The meek shall inherit the earth,’ and Paul taught that godliness is equally good to make money with or to take a man to heaven. This modern teaching states that if God blesses us here in the performance of our duty, the blessings will be of a spiritual character; but I affirm that there are more promises in the Bible of a material character, promising those who keep the commandments material blessings, than there are promises of a spiritual character. I do not state that material prosperity in itself is to be compared, in importance to spiritual prosperity; for, comparatively, one is dross and the other is gold, one is the bubble on the ocean and the other is the ocean, one relates to time and the other to eternity, and there is no comparison. But, for some reason or other, the Bible gives greater prominence to the earthly advantages of obedience to God than modern religious teaching; and the reason is likely found in the fact, that our material condition very greatly affects our spiritual advancement, and that of the world.

“It is easier for a man with health and wealth to be good, than it is for a man stricken with disease and oppressed by poverty. The grace of God can, and does, equal any difficulty that may be in the way of any man’s piety; but granting that two men are equally good and that they represent the conditions to which I have referred, there can be no comparison between the possible influence of the one upon the spiritual condition of the world, and the influence of the other; so that, in a relative sense, the blessings of health and

wealth are of overwhelming importance, and are to be coveted. I affirm that God promises to give us health and wealth if we will pay Him our tithes. He promises to fill our barns, to give us houses and lands, to make our business successful, to protect our families, and, in every way, blessings of a temporal character are promised to those who will keep this commandment of paying ten per cent. to His cause.

“It may be profitable for me, in the first place, to talk a little on...

‘THE ORIGIN OF TITHE-GIVING.’

“If you will turn to Genesis xiv. 20, you will there learn that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. It appears that Abraham had been engaged in a warfare with Chedorlaomer, a heathen prince, and was successful. God had given Abraham the victory, and enabled him to rout the enemy. In returning from the war he brought much spoils with him, and meeting Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God, he gave him a tenth of the prize he had captured. Whether this was a spontaneous thank-offering to God for the signal victory which he had achieved, or whether he was carrying out a commandment he had received, we are left to conjecture.

“I am inclined to think, by some means or other, God had communicated to Abraham His will, that He demanded of His people ten per cent. of their income for the carrying on of His cause. There is strong presumptive evidence of this, of which I will not now speak, but I may do so hereafter. Whatever the truth may be concerning this, it is certain that God afterwards adopted the tenth as His share of the increase of the people. We find that it became incorporated in the Jewish statute books; we find it coming from the lips of the prophets, from the kings, and from all those who were in authority over God’s ancient people.

“The next reference to tithe-giving is in the memorable case of Jacob, when he was fleeing from Esau, and on the road to his uncle Laban at Padan-aram. The story says that on the road he laid him down to sleep, and he dreamed a dream; in his dream, he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending, while God was on the top of the ladder, and had a conversation with Jacob. At the conclusion of the conversation, Jacob made a bargain with God (Gen. xxviii. 20, 21, 22): ‘And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If 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 me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.’ It is not irreverent to say, that this was a business bargain of a man with his Maker; and it seems that God was pleased with it, and graciously accepted its conditions, and He fully carried out His share of the bargain.

“Jacob reached the house of Laban in safety, and hired with him as a keeper of sheep. While he was there he fell in love with Rachel, one of the daughters of Laban, and served seven years for her; but at the end of the term he was cheated by his old heathen uncle, and received Leah instead; at the end of another seven years, he was rewarded with Rachel. It seems, during the fourteen years which Jacob had been in the employ of Laban, that the latter’s flocks had wonderfully prospered; and Laban, with an eye to business, valued Jacob’s labor, and manifested great anxiety to retain his services. Jacob had now quite a large family around him, and wanted to leave Laban, so that he could provide for his household, but Laban prevailed upon him to stay, saying (Gen. xxx. 27, 28): ‘And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.’



THE SCENE OF JACOB'S TITHE VOW.

“A bargain was made between them, that Jacob was to have all the spotted and speckled sheep and goats for his share. Jacob reminded Laban that before he came to him he had but little, but now he had a multitude of sheep and goats, and that the Lord had blessed him for his sake. The bargain, as just mentioned, was made between them; and it seems wonderful, that from this time on, most of the sheep and goats came spotted and speckled, the strong lambs of the flock were nearly all marked that way. Laban, stirred with jealousy, changed Jacob’s wages, and paid him on another plan; but it would seem from the narrative that Jacob’s share of the sheep was always larger than Laban’s, and that Laban, filled with envy, changed the nature of his wages ten times; but it made no difference what kind of sheep were to be Jacob’s share, his would always be the largest. Jacob increased wonderfully, and the story says (Gen. xxx. 43): ‘And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants, and man-servants, and camels, and God, asses.’ in a conversation with Jacob, states, in substance, that the reason of all this increase was because He had taken Him into partnership, and given Him a tenth of his earnings; for in the conversation referred to, God cited Jacob back to the years gone by, when he was a refugee, and had nothing but his staff, to the time and place where Jacob made the bargain with God, and said (Gen. xxxi. 13), ‘I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me; now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.’

“It is reasonable to suppose that God would take special care of the business of that man in which He had a one-tenth interest, even if the Bible were silent upon the subject; but the Bible is by no means silent, as it expressly declares, over and over again, that the reason why His people were so blessed in their worldly goods, was because they regularly paid Him the tenth; and at other times it expressly declares, that the reason why diverse circumstances overtook them was because they robbed Him of the tenth which He demanded.



JACOB AND LABAN.

“So far as I can see, the next reference to tithing in the Bible is a direct command from God. If you turn to Leviticus xxvii. 30, 31, 32, you will find the following: ‘And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.’

“And then please turn to Deut. xiv. 22, 28, 29, and you will find the following: ‘Thou shall truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shall lay it up within thy gates. And the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.’ Numerous other texts might be cited reaffirming the same commandment, but those already quoted make it very clear that God demanded a tenth of His people’s income as His share; and this commandment was just as binding upon the conscience of His people as any commandment imposed upon them.



MOSES AND THE LAW.

“I wish to notice, in the next place, that obedience to this commandment was essential to the prosperity of God’s ancient people. The Old Testament is full of directions concerning the method of giving the tenth, and it states and re-

states the advantages and blessings which will follow the observance of this commandment, and the dire calamities which will come upon them if they rob God, or fail in the performance of this duty, to pay Him the portion of their income which He demands. It is very clear that, when the people of God obeyed this commandment, they prospered wonderfully, they were blessed with material increase, their crops were plentiful, the health of the people was remarkable, and, in fact, in every way they enjoyed material and spiritual prosperity. It is also very clear that, when they disobeyed this commandment and gave God a less sum than ten per cent., the curse of God came down upon them; their crops were blighted and mildewed, they fled from the presence of their enemies, they were scattered and driven from one place to another; and I shall show you, in a moment, that God distinctly states that these calamities came upon them because they robbed Him of His dues, and kept for themselves what He demanded for His cause.

“In the reign of good king Hezekiah, the people gladly paid their tithes, and as a result, they were very prosperous. Please turn to II. Chronicles xxxi. 5–10: ‘And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have plenty left; for the Lord hath blessed His people, and that which is left is this great store.’ Here you see, my statements are fully borne out. It is distinctly stated that the children of Israel brought in their tithe of all things with gladness, and as a result, God blessed His people; they had enough and to spare for themselves, and the house of the Lord was abundantly provided for; it not only was provided with enough for the necessities of the priests, Levites, and the poor, but there was abundance to spare. To summarize this Biblical quotation, we get the following:

“(1) Tithing was a commandment. It was for all the people, for it was published ‘abroad.’

“(2) The children of Israel gladly kept this commandment, and tithed all they possessed, not excepting anything.

“(3) Azariah, the chief priest, told the king that the people were bringing in their offerings according to the directions of God, and that from the very day they commenced the observance of this commandment, the following were the results: (a) The house of God was abundantly provided for; His servants, the priests and Levites, and all who worked about the Temple, received their pay; there was no lack of means to carry on the expensive machinery of conducting worship for the people. (b) God had blessed His people with great material prosperity because they kept this commandment. (c) So great was the prosperity of the people that their tithes had founded a surplus in the house of God, for after all the demands had been met, there was a ‘great store’ left.

“In this instance we see demonstrated that by paying God ten per cent. the ninety per cent. which the people retained for themselves was a larger sum than the whole would have been if it had all been retained. Such a statement may be contrary to a narrow materialistic philosophy, but it is not contrary to the experience of the Church of God in all ages, and it is in full harmony with the experience of the devout and the enlightened Christian in any country, and under all sorts of circumstances. ‘There is that giveth and yet increaseth.’

“From this historical event, it is fair to argue that the same results would follow in any age where the same conditions exist. Hence, what we need to make all the people prosperous and to give the Church of God abundance, is for all the people to pay tithes; and, as the less is included in the greater, what is needed for each individual to bring down the blessing of God upon his enterprises, and give him prosperity, is, for him to tithe his income.

“These are propositions which cannot be successfully controverted, unless it can be shown that this law has been repealed in the Bible, or that Christian men are not under its obligations; but no such repeal is found either in the Old or New Testament, nor can any good reasons be adduced to show that the law is not binding on Christians. Certain it is, that a great many people to-day observe this law; and, so far as can be learned, they each claim that God deals with them as He did with His ancient people the Jews, and they are greatly blessed.

“Now, I wish to show you that, when the people of God failed to pay Him ten per cent., the curse of God came down upon them. Turn to Malachi iii. 7, 8, 9: ‘Even from the days of your fathers ye have gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts; but ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.’

“In the tenth verse, which has already been quoted, He promises that if they will bring in their tithes He will bless them abundantly with material and spiritual blessings, and states, in the next verse, that He will rebuke the devourer for their sakes, and promises that their fruits shall not be destroyed in the ground, nor shall their vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, and declares that all nations shall call them blessed, and that they shall become a delightsome land. I want you to observe that these are blessings of a material character—blessings of wealth, and honor, and power, and prosperity; all the blessings that an individual or a nation can expect or desire; and these blessings are promised if they will bring the tithes into the storehouse, or, in other words, pay to God one-tenth of their income.

“In summing up the statements of this quotation, we get the following:

“(1) That God claims the tithe of all things as His.

“(2) That to withhold the tithe from God is robbery.

“(3) That God punishes such robberies in kind, that is, they rob Him of His share of their earthly substance, and He punishes them by devouring worms, which destroy their crops, by blight, which causes the vine to cast her grapes before they are ripe; in short, He brings a material curse upon them for a material sin, and in all their borders their enterprises are unsuccessful.

“These calamities came upon the Jews because they did not pay tithes.

“(4) God invites them to return to Him, and to bring in their tithes as aforetime.

“(5) That if they do so, He will return to them, and give them great material prosperity, as He did in other days.

“It is very clear to the Bible student that the prosperity of the Jews ran parallel with their observance of this commandment, and that their adversities and many sad national calamities ran parallel with their disobedience to this commandment. It is worthy of note that Jacob is the first man to formally make a business bargain with God, for he distinctly stated that, if God would be with him, give him bread to eat, and bring him again to his father’s house in safety, he would give Him one-tenth of all he earned. Jacob faithfully kept his part of the bargain, and as a result, God did bless him in his business, gave him wonderful material prosperity, and returned him to his own land a great and a rich man.

“Now, it is natural to suppose that, as this was such a success in the case of Jacob, he would impress it upon his children, and endeavor to get them to follow in his footsteps. His example and influence upon his posterity was so great, that this law of the tithe seems to be interwoven in their natures; and the giving of the tithe, after a time, seemed to be so essential to their

prosperity, that they kept this commandment when they had backslidden in all other matters.

“It is an historic fact that no nation has had the vitality and rebound of the Jewish people. They have been scattered among all nations; they have been banished from nearly every land under the heavens; they have been a hissing and a by-word. This nation has resembled the bush Moses saw, ‘which was burning and yet not consumed.’ History tells us that the Jewish people have always been a money-making people. No sooner are they expelled by one nation, with all their goods confiscated, than we find them in another country, and they speedily become the merchant princes, the great money loaners, and the bankers.

“I believe this quality of success, or propensity to make money, in the Jews is attributable to the fact that no matter what laws they neglected, they were careful to pay God His tenth, and God was in honor bound to bless them with material prosperity, because He had promised it in the Bible, and He compels nature to yield her fruits freely to the man or nation who gives back to nature’s God one-tenth of her produce. Such is the characteristic of money-making in the Jews, that it has become a proverb to say ‘As rich as a Jew.’ Jacob, the father of the Jews, learned the secret of making money, and every man who has imitated him has had similar success. I think it is clearly seen from what I have said, that to give a tenth of their income was a command of God for His ancient people, and that they greatly prospered in its observance, and were equally hindered when they failed to observe it. These are statements which, I think, no Bible student will deny.

“Now, I wish to show you, in the next place, that THIS TITHING COMMAND IS BINDING UPON CHRISTIANS. God’s laws are eternal; they are like Himself, and ‘He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.’ All the laws of the Old Testament that are applicable now, are equally binding now, even though there may be no re-affirmation of them in the New



Born in London, 1784, and died in 1884, just after his one-hundreth birthday. A man of great piety and extraordinary benevolence. He spent his time and vast fortune in aiding the down-trodden of his own race. In their interest he visited Russia, Poland, Morocco, Syria and other parts of the world. In 1867 he built and endowed a large Hospital at Ramsgate, England, for the benefit of all classes.

Testament. We often hear people speak about being ‘free from the law,’ but to many minds I fear that expression contains as much error as it does truth. If it means that we are free from the moral law, or that Christians have a right to break any of the commandments, it is truly a very great error, for each and all of the ten commandments are as binding now upon Christians as they were upon God’s ancient people, when those commandments were first given; and this remark applies with equal force to all the moral laws or commandments of the Old Testament.

“There are certain ceremonial laws that typified the coming of the Lord Jesus, which are now done away with, because Christ has come and fulfilled that of which these were the types. There were also certain laws which had only a local application, which are no longer applicable, and therefore no longer binding. Then, again, all that are in Christ Jesus are free from the curse of a broken law, because Jesus ‘bore our sins in His own body on the tree,’ and thus became the curse for them. Thus the punishment of a broken law cannot be inflicted upon the Christian, and only in this sense is it true that any man is ‘free from the law.’ This I believe to be Paul’s meaning in the text, ‘for ye are not under the law but under grace.’

“All the great moral and fundamental laws of the Bible, which are applicable now, are just as binding now as when they were first given; and it is a remarkable fact, that their adaptability to all ages and conditions of society is recognized by all civilized governments. No person can say that ten per cent. of the income of God’s people was more needed in olden days than now. The Church then had a very narrow sphere; it was confined, for the most part, to the Jews, for they knew nothing of missionary enterprise. When the Church had this narrow sphere, and was so circumscribed, God demanded the tenth of His people’s earnings to carry it on; but now, with the ever widening field for

Christian activity, if there is any need for change, it would be that the sum to be contributed be larger rather than smaller.

“The world is now open for the missionaries of the Cross, and the teeming millions of the earth’s population are crying, ‘Come over and help us,’ and their hearts are saying, ‘Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?’ There are, in our own large cities and centres of civilization, tens of thousands who are practically as heathen as the heathens of Africa, and the Gospel must be taken to these home heathens. The demand for tracts, Bibles and missionaries was never so great as now; and, although the liberality of Christian people is on the increase, yet the Church of God cannot respond to the demands of the hour, and tens of thousands are living and dying without Christ, and the Church goes a-begging, and the people continue to perish. There are very few churches carrying on even their present home enterprises with the voluntary givings of the people, and none of them can enter all the doors which are continually opening to them. The missionary field is restricted, the field for labor is limited, all because the means are not forthcoming to carry on the work of God. Not only is there a great lack of funds for missionary enterprises, but how many local churches are there that can pay their own local and legitimate expenses from the voluntary givings of the people?

“We find the Church of God descending to business methods in order to raise money enough to pay its expenses; hence, we have tea-meetings, bazaars, concerts, and, what is still more abhorrent, kissing parties, voting, lotteries, dumb socials, necktie parties, and all sorts of schemes to raise money; while the vast majority rob God of His tithes, and hypocritically sing:

*‘Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.’*

If Christian people would live up to the Bible demand, and pay God one-tenth of their income, there would be no need for such methods of raising money—there would be enough and to spare; and I believe the millennium would soon be upon us; for the conversion of the world is, in my opinion, now reduced to a question of money. We have the men and women whose hearts God has touched, and whose souls are aflame with missionary zeal; we have a Gospel that meets the requirements of all sorts and conditions of men; full provision has been made for the salvation of the world, ‘For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? And how can they be sent without money? And how can they get the money except it be given them in God’s appointed way, by the tithes of the people ‘who have heard the joyful sound?’ As a matter of fact, it is doubtful if the givings of Christian people amount to three per cent., whereas the demand of the Bible is ten per cent.

“Now, I ask, if God demanded a tenth of the earnings of His people under the Old Testament dispensation, surely He cannot demand a less sum now. If there were no New Testament endorsement of giving ten per cent., would not the law, given in the Old Testament for the maintenance of God’s Church, be binding upon Christian men under this dispensation? Who would dare say that such a reasonable demand, a demand which had worked so well in the past, both as to those who paid tithes and the cause which received them, is now done away with?

“God has so arranged in nature, that all the needs of nature are met by adequate supplies; shall God be inconsistent with Himself, and make provision for His Church less than her needs? But under the present spasmodic and haphazard way of supporting His cause, the needs of the Gospel, of humanity, and of benevolence, are not met; and, as near as can be figured, if all the people adopted the Bible plan, the revenue of the Church

would be increased nearly, if not quite, fourfold; and if this were to happen, the supply would equal the demand, and the purposes of God would then be accomplished. But fortunately, under the new dispensation, ‘God has not left Himself without witnesses;’ and, as a matter of fact, this commandment is not without New Testament sanction—very much stronger sanction than we have for keeping holy one day in seven. Please read Matthew xxiii. 23: ‘Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.’

“The scribes and Pharisees were so particular about tithing their earnings, that they brought it down to the most insignificant matters, and tithed the very herbs. We learn from this quotation, that even when they neglected the weightier matters of the law, such as judgment, mercy, and faith, they did not neglect to tithe their incomes, undoubtedly keeping to this tithing habit since they learned that there was money in it; just as men will continue to sow their crops, and expect God to bless the seed sown, whether they have religion or not; just as worldly men in these days subscribe to the building fund of a church, for the reason that the church will increase the value of their property. ‘For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light;’ so these scribes and Pharisees had learned, that it was a law of God to pay a tenth of their income, and that this tenth bore the same relation to money as seed does to a crop. In other words, they believed that earthly prosperity had been promised to the man who would tithe his income, regardless of his moral character, in the same way as ‘God maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good.’ Now, you will notice in this quotation that Jesus states, that they ought to tithe their incomes, as they did, but that they ought not to neglect the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. If you strictly analyze this quotation, you will see that it is a direct endorsement of the law of the tithe.

“The story of the Pharisee and the Publican I take as at least an indirect endorsement of paying ten per cent. of our income to God. The Pharisee boasted of the fact that he fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all he possessed, and thanked God that he was not an extortioner, nor an adulterer; while the Publican, standing afar off, smote upon his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner.’



“Now, you will please notice that each of the things which the Pharisee thanked God for was good: he thanked God that he was not addicted to the vices mentioned, that he fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all he

possessed, that is, gloried in his self-righteousness. Notice, that the language put into the Pharisee's mouth by the Saviour makes him 'abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good;' and one of the good things which he glories in is the fact that he pays tithes. It was not what this man did that Jesus condemned, but the fact that he expected to be saved by his good works; whereas the Publican understood the plan of salvation, and leaned wholly upon the mercy of God. I take it that this story is an endorsement of the Old Testament commandment. As I look into this story, it affords much stronger evidence of the position I take concerning the New Testament endorsement of the tithe than I first thought.

"The force of this illustration is increased tenfold when we clearly see what Christ wishes to illustrate. The Pharisees were a self-righteous sect; they were sticklers for keeping the letter of the law, and held that salvation came only that way. Theirs was pre-eminently a salvation by works; they were the advocates of the letter of 'the law given by Moses,' and when 'grace and truth' came by Jesus Christ, the new doctrine was bitterly opposed by them. The teaching of Jesus, as explained by Paul, was: 'Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.'

"To enforce this idea, and to emphasize the truth that salvation is wholly of the mercy of God, He told this story of the Pharisee and the Publican. He represents the most perfect man He can find from the law's standpoint; He invests him with the best qualities possible, and makes him the faithful observer of the laws that are at the very root of human welfare; he was a man of prayer; he was honest with his fellows; he was just to all; he was chaste and virtuous; he was so devout that he fasted twice in the week, and he gave tithes of all he possessed. Thus, when Jesus would picture a man who was as good as he could be without the grace of God, He makes him a man who pays tithes, and tithing is associated in the same rank of merit as prayer and

devotion, as justice and honesty, as virtue and chastity. Thus Jesus approves of tithing as He does the other good things, which are not disputed.

“Again, we learn from Hebrews that Jesus is made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, and not a priest after the order of Aaron. Jesus, then, is in the line of Melchizedek, and Abraham paid tithes to him. Now, if Jesus stands in the same relation to the world as Melchizedek did, it is clearly our duty to give a tenth of our income to Jesus, just as Abraham did to Melchizedek. I refer you particularly to the seventh chapter of Hebrews for a clear discussion of the priesthood of Jesus, showing that it is in the Melchizedekan line, and of a much higher order than the Levitical priesthood. The latter seems to have been limited to the Jews merely, and each priest held the office for life only; but this wonderful and mysterious Melchizedek seems to have had a universal priesthood. He was the king of the notorious Canaanites at Salem, as well as priest of the most high God. His priestly office extended over Jews as well as Gentiles, for he officially blessed Abraham, the father of the faithful; and the fact of Abraham humbly and gladly accepting his blessing, and paying him tithes of all, shows that he was greater than ‘he that had the promises,’ and Abraham acknowledged Melchizedek as standing in the place of God.

“Then his priestly office had no end, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually. Now, consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils; and herein that he did receive tithes, but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And it is yet far more evident, for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life; for he testifieth, ‘Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’

“Several things are very clear from this chapter: Melchizedek was a king, Jesus is a king; Melchizedek was a priest with universal jurisdiction, whose office and functions should last forever; Jesus is a priest forever after the

same order. One of the requirements of this priestly office was, that the people should pay tithes—a requirement which was met with gladness and profit by ‘the father of the faithful,’ and since then by all who have been ‘like minded.’ And inasmuch as the office and its functions overlap and extend beyond every other dispensation, and survive all other priestly authority, its heavenly authority and demands not being affected by time, then it is as clear as the noonday sun that Jesus demands tithes of all the people as a right; and when the tithe is paid, then giving or benevolence can start.

“I dare to affirm that the Christian man is under the same obligation to keep this command of God, to give a tenth of his income, as he is to keep any other law, as he is to tell the truth, or to keep holy the Sabbath day. Each law of God is equally binding on the heart and conscience of every good man. If it be proven that God demands a tenth of our income, as I think I have proven, then it should bind the conscience of all among us.”

I here concluded my first talk amid cries of “Go on, go on; we are not tired.” But, if they were not, I was; so I promised to give another talk on the same question the next evening.



Mr. Macdonald was born in Perthshire, Scotland, in 1824. He started in Canada, a poor clerk. From the beginning he gave a tenth to God, and hence, we believe, his marvellous success. He is an earnest Christian worker, and a great giver. No person knows the full extent of his givings. As this note is written a gift of \$40,000 (approximately \$1,400,000 in 2026 dollars) from him is announced towards the erection of a Hospital at Toronto, Canada.

TALK NO. 2

WHO SHOULD TITHE?

OUR company in the blacksmith's shop had returned to hear what further remarks I had to make concerning "systematic giving." I had no idea in commencing the talk on this subject, that it would extend to another evening, but there were so many things pressed upon my mind—so many Biblical and other considerations as I warmed to the subject—that I found it was impossible to get through on the first evening, and so by the unanimous request of all present, I agreed to resume the conversation on the following evening.

The prominent business man from our neighboring city drove all the way out from his place of business on purpose to be present at the next conversation, and all who were there previously were on hand again. They also brought others including two more preachers, so that all the boxes, boards and barrels we could find around the place were brought into requisition for seats, and then a number had to stand. I had made up my mind during the day to talk this evening on the question:

WHO ARE UNDER OBLIGATION TO TITHE THEIR INCOMES?

I made my first proposition, namely, that all intelligent men are obligated to keep this command as laid down in the Bible. On stating this proposition I thought I saw looks of dissent in the Doctor's face, so I asked him to give us the benefit of his thoughts on that subject, whereupon he said, that "if all are under obligation to give ten per cent. of their incomes, the law would be unjust, for while some could give a tenth very readily, it would be simply oppression in the case of others. Ten per cent. to some is really less than five per cent. to others, and God surely cannot make such an unjust and unequal

demand upon his people.” He also stated that “the New Testament gives people perfect freedom as to what they shall give, and each is expected to give according as he has been prospered.”

These objections were argued at some length. I listened very attentively to the Doctor’s remarks, and then, without being the least flurried, for I felt perfectly sure of the position I had taken, I proceeded as follows:

“So far as I can understand the Bible, the command to give a tenth is addressed to all sorts and conditions of men, and it is a universal obligation. I find that the priests and Levites were required to tithe their tithes, or to pay a tenth of their income. Their income was derived from the tithes of the people, yet these same priests and Levites were required to pay to God ten per cent. of their income.

“The Bible makes no exception whatever; the command is as universal as ‘Thou shalt not steal,’ or ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’ Each man is commanded to bring in his tithes, no matter what his condition may be, whether he be rich or poor, in debt or free from debt; nor can I find that any profession whatsoever is exempt. Poor men are under the same obligation to pay their tithes to God as rich men.

“Our good friend, the Doctor, has argued that it would be a small matter for the man in receipt of a large salary to give the tenth, while it would be an infliction upon the man who earned just enough to live upon. He states that a man in receipt of four thousand dollars per annum could give four hundred of it to the Lord with much less sacrifice than a man in receipt of four hundred dollars per annum could give forty of it to the Lord.

“I admit that the Doctor’s argument looks logical, but I assure you that it is a fallacy if you get below the surface. This you will readily see from the following considerations upon a parallel case: God commands us to give Him one day in each seven days, which is over fourteen per cent. of our time. Time

is essentially money to ninety-nine per cent. of us; and, from the standpoint of the objection, it is a very sore affliction for mechanics and laboring men to lose one day's wages in seven days, by being compelled not to work on that day by a law of God.

“Take a man earning one dollar a day, and by God's direct command he is required to give one day in seven to Him, and forfeit one-seventh of his income, or over fourteen per cent., amounting in one year to the large sum of fifty-two dollars. This is a larger sum than many wealthy men give in money; and yet this poor man, who can hardly give his family sufficient food and clothing, is required by Divine law to give the same proportion of his time to God as a rich man. Without taking the great God into consideration, and reasoning apart from experience, nearly everybody would say that such a law is monstrously unjust; but reasoning as we do from the historic standpoint, with the centuries behind us, having at our command the experience of the nations of the earth, with the testimony of the mechanics and the good; in fact, with the universal testimony of the ages in favor of the Sabbath day for man and beast, we all say that this law is wise and good, and good in proportion as a man may be weak in mind, body or estate; a blessed provision for the rich and strong, and an indispensable boon for the poor and needy.

“Now then, in view of this, would you advise the man with four thousand dollars per annum to give one-seventh of his time to God and advise the other, with four hundred dollars per annum, to work that day simply because he was poor? Certainly not; and the reason lies in this, that in some way or other, by actual experiment on the part of individuals and nations, a man can accomplish more in his lifetime by giving fourteen per cent. of his lifetime to God, or by working six days a week and giving God the seventh, than he can by working seven days a week.

“The only way to account for it is because it is a law of God; and the same reasoning applies to the tithe. If God demands forty dollars per annum from the man who receives only four hundred dollars, then certainly the remaining

three hundred and sixty dollars will go a great deal further than the four hundred would if all were kept.

“The whole subject hinges upon the question, ‘Does God require it?’ The Bible is our authority, and it is accepted as such by each one of you, and I think that there is no duty mentioned in the Bible more distinctly than the duty of giving the tenth unto the Lord. We have seen it commanded and practised under each dispensation; the good in all ages have practised it, and it comes to us with all the authority of a ‘thus saith the Lord.’ Patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings have taught it by precept and example.

“It is always safe to do what God bids us without asking questions, but more particularly is this the case when experience bears such unequivocal testimony to the profit of keeping this command. Verily ‘godliness is profitable unto all things having promise of the life that now is;’ and the Bible distinctly says, ‘There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.’ Again, ‘He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord;’ and, as Dean Swift once said, in preaching a charity sermon from this text, ‘If you accept the security, down with the dust.’

“Let us put it another way. Which farmer is under the greater obligation to put in a plentiful crop, the poor man or the rich man? The Bible distinctly compares giving to sowing, and says, ‘He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.’ The Apostle uses this in strict reference to money; Paul uses it in connection with directions concerning taking a collection, and it was one of his arguments when he wanted a liberal contribution for the saints. He tells the Corinthians that God will bless them with money in proportion as they give money to His cause; he urges them to give liberally and cheerfully, and backs up his exhortations by saying, ‘And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.’



THE SOWER.

“It is most astonishing how blind hosts of Christians are when they read the Bible! These rich promises of material prosperity are either not noticed, or when they are, they are very rarely taken in their plain and obvious sense, as God states them; some forced, and generally figurative or spiritual interpretation is put upon them; and poor Christian men who will loan their money to a bank and sleep in perfect assurance of getting it when they need it, worry themselves beyond measure for fear they may give too much to God’s cause, and may ultimately come to want, in spite of the many strong and explicit declarations of the Bible that the way to get is to give. Solomon said, ‘He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will He pay him again.’ A greater than Solomon said, ‘Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.’

“The same amount of faith exercised in the Bible, as business men use with one another, day by day, would soon convince the poorest Christian man that his financial success is guaranteed by the great God on the condition that he ‘lays up his treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.’ If these promises and statements mean anything, and if the Bible can be trusted even a little, then it is certain that the only way for a poor man to get better off—the only way for a man in receipt of four hundred dollars a year to get that amount increased—is to tithe that which he does get; for the express condition of a plentiful blessing, both temporal and spiritual, is to ‘bring all the tithes into the storehouse,’ or to put in a plentiful crop.

“Reasoning without experience, it seems a very foolish thing for a farmer to take the little grain which he may have left and during seed time deliberately throw that grain away, handful after handful. Particularly would this be so if he had not enough grain to provide bread for his family during the year. If a stranger, who had no experience in the laws of vegetation and growth, were to come to this earth, he would surely say that the man was very foolish to thus

throw away deliberately the bread which he needed for his family; and yet, if he would stay until the harvest, he would learn that the grain thus sown had increased, ‘some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold,’ and that it was the highest wisdom that prompted that farmer to throw away the little grain he had, for by giving he got; while if he had kept it, he would have lost the little which he had.

“Now God distinctly states that giving money to His cause bears the same relation to wealth as giving seed to the ground does to a plentiful harvest. ‘He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully, and he that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly.’ This is said in reference to money. God promises dollars for dollars, and if a man has faith enough in God’s promises to sow the proper amount of wealth seed, God will surely honor him with a crop just as he honors the farmer, who sows the proper amount of grain per acre with good crops.

“I shall perhaps surprise you by making even a stronger proposition, namely:

A MAN IN DEBT IS UNDER OBLIGATION TO PAY A TENTH OF HIS INCOME TO GOD,

and to yield to God the first fruits of that income, or pay God his tenth before touching any part of the remaining nine-tenths.” This seemed too much for the shoemaker, and with much warmth he stated, “You cannot make me believe that; charity begins at home, and a man must be just before he is generous; a man who does not pay his debts is a dishonest man, and the money a man gets who is in debt does not belong to him but belongs to his creditors, and for him to give away this money to the Church or to the poor is dishonest, and God cannot accept of any such offerings.”

I smiled at this earnest remark of my good friend, the shoemaker, and proceeded. “If the overhanging black cloud of debt, the cloud which has cursed many an eloquent minister’s usefulness, and blighted the happiness

and ruined the hopes of many a Christian man, could be represented, say by a weight of ten thousand pounds, I firmly believe that seven thousand five hundred pounds of it is caused by robbing God of his dues, and it may be that the remaining two thousand five hundred pounds is the result of improvidence.

“Sometimes poverty is a misfortune over which the pious poor have no control; at other times it is a blessing from God; but both of these conditions are, in the very nature of things, exceptional, inasmuch as the rule must of necessity be that the children of the king are well provided for, and the normal and ordinary condition of God’s obedient children is that of comfort. Confirmed poverty or financial disaster, for the most part, is blameworthy; and, taking the Bible for our guide, it is clear that these things are sent upon us more often to punish us for our sins than to bless us, excepting as punishment may cause us to forsake the sins that brought upon us our disasters. In such cases punishment itself is a blessing.

“A man in debt is weak at some point or other, and probably disobedient to God as well as weak. Now, if he would free himself from this intolerable burden, he had better take a partner into his business, who, upon the receipt of one-tenth of the profits, pledges himself for the prosperity of that business. God certainly agrees to do this, and any man who professes to have faith in His precious promises must take Him at His word. A man in debt, a farmer, for instance, would exercise false economy, and would be really dishonest with his creditors, if he should sell his seed wheat and seed potatoes, and pay the proceeds to the liquidation of his debt; for by so doing he would be cutting off the very means he had of paying his obligations.

“I think the analogy holds good in the case of a man who takes his seed money—that which belongs to God—and pays his debts with it. He also is practically dishonest although he may not seem to be; for, by paying his tithes, he has God’s promise that he shall be ‘blessed in his basket and in his store.’ God has distinctly promised that if we bring in all the tithes into the

store-house, He will ‘pour us out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.’

“Again, when a man is in debt, it is right for him to pay that debt first which seems to have the greatest claim upon him. There are certain obligations which appeal to a debtor’s honor more than others, and a sensitive man always gives these obligations the preference. Surely, if God demands the tithe of His people, then it is a legitimate debt, and a debtor is under at least equal obligation to pay this debt as he is to pay other debts; and, under all the circumstances, I think all will admit that this is a debt which appeals to his generosity and sense of right-dealing more than any other, and by paying it first more than any other, and by paying his other creditors he consults the true interest of the other creditors.

“Again, a man in debt must not pay his debts at the expense of starving his family; he must feed his children. Nor is he justified in starving himself. He is surely under obligation to give his children a certain amount of education. He is also under obligation to supply their spiritual and mental requirements in the same way as he is bound to supply their physical wants. The same remark applies to his own spiritual and mental requirements.

“Now, God has commanded that one-tenth of a man’s income shall be devoted to the cultivation of the spiritual nature of himself, his family, the community and the world; for, on the one hand, the money thus given will help to evangelize the world, and, on the other, his own spiritual nature is cultivated by works of benevolence and charity.

“But it seems to me that the strongest argument in favor of a man in debt paying tithes to God is the fact that he has God’s promise that, by paying Him first, he will be in a position to pay every other creditor. God certainly promises to put all men in that position who will obey Him, and any man who is not shamming faith in God’s precious promises must take Him at His word. We trust God’s promises for the forgiveness of our sins and for taking us to

heaven; and, since we trust Him for the greater, why is it that we cannot trust Him for the lesser? The man who risks his all upon the promises of God which are to be fulfilled during this life, will find that his faith is mightily increased in the promises which are not fulfilled until death. If I am to trust a man for a very large sum, I can do so with much more assurance, if I have been doing business with him in a small way, and have found him true to his word. This is precisely the experience of men who trust God in regard to earthly or material promises, ‘for God is not slack concerning His promises.’

“Ye men in debt, it is time that you learned the Bible truth that the way to get is to give, and the way to lose is to keep what you have, for ‘There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.’ There is a story in the Bible which, in some measure, illustrates this truth: There was a great famine in a certain land; no rain had fallen for years; the cattle were all dying; vegetation was all parched; the streams had all dried up; the wells were all empty; men and beasts were dying by the thousands. During these troublous and trying times, a prophet of God, when on a journey, saw a poor woman outside of her cottage gathering sticks, and he addressed her thus: ‘Bring, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand;’ and she said, ‘As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.’

“And the man of God said, ‘Fear not; go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.’ And she went and did according to the saying of this man of God, and the results were just as he predicted. She came to the barrel day after day, and found the meal did not waste; she came to the cruse of oil

day after day, and found that it did not fail; and yet she fed the prophet, her son and herself day by day.

“Now, if this woman had disobeyed the voice of God spoken by His servant, she and her son would have eaten the cake which she was about to prepare, and then would certainly have died, as thousands of others did; but she believed God, and by some law, known only to God, He kept the meal from wasting, and the oil from failing.

“We have evidence enough to believe that the same God lives to-day, and acts practically as He did in the case to which I have referred; and hence, if we give what He commands us to give, and consecrate it to His cause, we shall be protected. Our fortunes will not fail but increase, as in the case of the widow who fed Elijah during the great famine.

“But, again,

RICH MEN ARE UNDER OBLIGATION TO TITHE THEIR INCOMES.

I fear rich men get too little sympathy from the majority of us; but, alas, there is many a poor rich man, bowed down with care and worn out with anxiety, who is a fitting subject for our sincere sympathy. The little experience I have had of life, and the knowledge I have gained from the experience of other men, teach me that a man's happiness and peace of mind does not always increase in proportion to his wealth.

“There are many rich men who can look back to the days of their poverty as their happiest days; and, although they have now accomplished what they dreamed of accomplishing when they started out in life, and are in possession of the wealth which they have striven for, yet they find wealth and power fail to bring them the peace and contentment which they expected, while riches entail great responsibilities and anxieties, and involve great risks. What a

consolation it is for a rich man to have a partner at his back who has unlimited capital, unfailing wisdom, with infinite love and tenderness. Such is the condition of the rich man who takes God into his concern.

“I have no sympathy with the cry we often hear of ‘wicked rich men,’ and ‘good poor men.’ I believe there is as great a proportion of rich men who are good as there are of poor men who are good. It is certainly easier for a man in comfortable circumstances to be good than for a man in poverty; for, although the temptations which come to wealth are great, still those which are the result of poverty are greater. But, while this is true, the wealth of our rich men is not consecrated to God as it ought to be; and, when a man is in possession of any power with which he can do good, and fails to use the power which he can do good, he brings guilt upon his soul.

“If our rich men and prosperous business men would tithe their immense incomes, what a vast amount of good would be accomplished! How the ignorant would be educated, the poor be fed, and the heathen brought to the feet of Jesus! What a mighty impulse the consecration of this wealth would give to the cause of God and humanity! Is there anything which could make more glad the heart of Jesus?

“And, on the other hand, the paying to God His share would give wealthy men a permanent hold upon their possessions, for this is the declaration of God in the Bible, expressed or implied, repeated scores of times. It is said, ‘Riches take to themselves wings and fly away,’ and nothing is so uncertain as business. From carefully gathered statistics, we learn that four out of five business men become bankrupts at some period of their lives, and, alas, a great many go to the wall altogether; but I believe a case is yet to be found of a man paying his tenth to God, who did not pay every other man one hundred per cent., and who has not been prospered as a result of his tithing.

“A gentleman who is very earnest in propagating this Bible doctrine states, that he wrote a circular letter to every clergyman in the United States of

America, asking them their experience on this point, whether they had ever known a man to become bankrupt who had systematically tithed his income; and he states, that from the thousands of reports received, there was not a single instance where a man had been a loser by tithing his income, but there were instances by the hundred where men attributed all their wealth and prosperity to the fact of their paying God tithes. Very many of them commenced tithing when their earnings were very small, and they were now rich, and attributed all their success to God.

“Personally, I have never known a man to be a permanent, business failure who thus took God into partnership, and I appeal to your own experience whether you have ever known such a man or not. I know very rich men paying tithes who attribute their wealth to paying God ten per cent., and who declare that all their earthly possessions have been given to them by God in reward for their obedience in keeping this commandment.”

At this point I was interrupted by a gentleman who was sitting on a Life Assurance advertising board, which generally stood outside of the shop, but had been brought in to do duty as a bench. The gentleman was a stranger, well dressed and intelligent-looking; he had a sharp, thin face, and eyes that sparkled with determination. He spoke with ease and deliberation, and all eyes were turned upon him. He said: “You will pardon me, sir, for interrupting you, but my own experience so strongly confirms what you say that I cannot resist the temptation to give it for the benefit of those who are present, and as a confirmation of your theory; although the idea of paying tithes because it is financially profitable, I confess I do not believe in, and I have but little faith in the man who tithes his income for that purpose; but, notwithstanding my opinion, as a matter of fact my personal experience confirms the theory we have had advocated tonight.”

“I am a physician, and I started tithing my income when I commenced to practise; my tithe the first week was fifteen cents, which represented an income that would not pay my board. But I recognized the claims of God with

the little I had, and from that day to this the amount of my tithe has steadily increased, until it is now my great privilege to pay about four hundred dollars a year to God's cause. 'Bringing the tithes into the storehouse' has been a great help to me in many ways, but whether I should have been prospered as I have, if I had commenced tithing with the motive which has been appealed to this evening, I cannot say. I am inclined to doubt it. I think the better motive to which to appeal is that of love, regardless of financial benefit."

This honest and intelligent speech caused quite a ripple of excitement in our little company. However, I was greatly pleased at the interruption, for, although my opinions were not endorsed by the Doctor in his theory, still I got a better endorsement in his own experience, which was so honestly stated. I resumed my talk by saying: "I am very much obliged to our friend for the earnest words he has spoken, and I will take occasion, at some future time, to refer to the opinion expressed. One fact is worth a hundred opinions, and I am glad we have heard the statement of a fact which confirms my theory.

"I was about to say, when our friend the Doctor interrupted me, that it is possible there may be men whose faith has been tried, but God always comes to the rescue in the right time. It is not supposed that men who tithe their incomes will never have business perplexities and difficulties; but I do state, having the Bible to back me, and having all the experience which is available to confirm the Bible, that a man who tithes his income, be he rich or poor, takes God into partnership, and God becomes responsible for that man's financial success, and pledges His word that he shall be prospered with earthly or temporal advancement.

"In my talk, so far, I have referred chiefly to the personal and material results following obedience to this commandment; but there are results of very much greater importance than those to which I have hitherto referred, although these can scarcely be overestimated. As I take it, the most important result of paying tithes is, that God's cause will be abundantly provided with money for carrying on the evangelization of the world.

“The facts, as they exist to-day, demonstrate that God’s cause is greatly in need of means. How many churches, for instance, do you know which are out of debt? How many churches are there that can get along with the voluntary offerings of the people, and without doing something of a business nature to raise money? How many churches are there that care for their own poor? How many denominations are there whose missionary societies are out of debt? I can answer these questions for you, if you can tell me how many churches there are whose members give a tenth of their income. I fear many churches much resemble the Jewish Temple when Jesus made a scourge of small cords and drove out those who bought and sold oxen, and overthrew the tables of the money changers.

“When God made the requirement of the tithe, He doubtless made it upon a proper basis, and knew just how much it would require to carry on His cause and to extend His kingdom from pole to pole. I, for one, believe, that if the churches could be converted to this Bible doctrine; if they could be brought back to this primitive commandment—to this clear duty which God imposes upon them—that it would not be long until the day when ‘They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest.’ That man who personally adopts the tithing system, and who endeavors to persuade others to adopt the same system, is doing more for ushering in the millennial day of the Lord than by any other work which he could possibly do.

“The printing of Bibles, tracts, and good books to disseminate Christian knowledge, is resolved in the question of money. The education of home and foreign missionaries; the sending of missionaries into destitute places in our own cities; the sending them to Christianize our own Indians; the sending them abroad to Africa, China and Japan, is a question of money. There are plenty of men and women whose hearts God has touched, who have the goodness and ability to be missionaries of the cross of Jesus Christ, but who



GENERAL GORDON.
Killed at Khartoum, January, 1885.

Few know Chinese Gordon only as a remarkable soldier, but he equally excelled as a Christian humanitarian. While at home, his house was school, hospital, and almshouse in turn.

are doomed to stay at home and keep their message, because money is not forthcoming to send them to the fields where their talents could be utilized in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. ‘Will a man rob God?’ Yet we rob God in our tithes and offerings, and as a result, His cause goes a-begging.

“I think it can be demonstrated, that if the people would all pay tithes, the millennial day would soon be upon us. How long it will take to usher in that day with our present system of giving—which, indeed, is no system—I cannot tell. Whether ‘the kingdoms of this world’ ever shall become ‘the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ,’ on about three per cent. of the income of professed Christians, I will leave you to answer. In nature, God has adjusted the causes to the effects to be produced; the supplies of nature are equal to her demands, and it does seem to me that ‘the God of all grace’ is equally logical and consistent, and that He has made the conditions of the world’s salvation equal to the necessities of the case. If the conditions meet, the work of the case will be accomplished and not otherwise.



THE MISSIONARY.

“It is doubtful if the people are giving God as much as one-half of ten per cent. If you will just take time to reckon up your income for the past year, and take pains to figure up the exact sum you have given to religious and benevolent purposes, you will be surprised to see how small a percentage your givings have been in comparison with your income; and, if this same question could be asked of all Christian men who do not give systematically, there would be one and the same answer.

“Another result of giving tithes would, I think, be the great spiritual impulse which the cause of God would receive. Temporal prosperity, as a reward for tithing, is only the lesser blessing which God has promised, for He promises to the individual great spiritual blessings. The text, which I quoted to you in my talk last evening, is as suitable as any text I know of to illustrate this truth. God promises, in return for bringing all the tithes into the storehouse, to open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings that there shall not be room enough to receive.

“It is a singular fact that all the blessings we get, temporal and spiritual, come from the heavens. There are three heavens; one where the birds fly, or our atmosphere; another where the sun, moon and stars are; and the other where God dwells. All our temporal blessings; all our national and individual prosperity; all material wealth; in a word, all our riches come from the earth and the heavens; and, inasmuch as the yield of the earth depends wholly upon the air, the dew, the rain and sunshine of the heavens, we can say practically, that all our temporal blessings come from heaven. Now, God pledges Himself to open the windows of heaven and pour out the divinest blessings—overflowing blessings, ‘heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, running over,’ that ‘there shall not be room enough to receive it.’

“Here is God’s direct pledge for temporal blessings; and I am simple enough to believe it, and intend to comply with the conditions and risk the consequences. It is a very easy thing for God to withhold or grant temporal prosperity. Stored up in the heavens is enough wealth to make every living

man rich; and my God, whose pledge I have, can at any time open a little window and let down upon me a gentle shower of His blessings, which will provide for me and mine so long as we need temporal good. ‘Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.’ ‘He that watereth shall be watered also himself.’ ‘Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.’ These are rich and precious promises, and they will be fulfilled only when we comply with the conditions and pay our tenth to God.

“A good deal of our preaching, our thinking, and even our devotions, either vaporize or spiritualize God’s promises. Our natural unbelief tends to put off the fulfilment of them until we get to heaven, or to some time in the future. Unbelief hates literal and present tense promises. But these promises are literal and material; they are for here and now; they are to be enjoyed on earth; they challenge us to a contract or bargain with God. As stated before, He promises money for money; you pay me a tenth, says God, and I will give you earthly and material blessings. I will give your fingers skill as mechanics; I will incline employers towards you; you shall get the highest wages; strikes shall not affect you; I am with you, and will see that you are provided for.

“I will make you prosperous as business men; I will incline you where you can make good bargains; I will send the people around to you to buy; while the man next door, who neglects my cause, may become bankrupt, this curse shall not touch you. I will look out for your bills when they are coming due; I will see that your bank account is sufficiently large; in a word, I am your partner and will look out for the interests of your business.

“And to you thinkers, who earn your living by your brains, I will make your thoughts clear; I will give you the holy impulse to originate ‘thoughts which breathe, and words which burn;’ your productions shall stir men’s hearts; your work shall be in demand; I will make people buy the productions of your heart and brain; only pay me your tenth, and you shall be cared for.

“Seed time and harvest shall never fail you farmers; I will bless your crops; I will multiply your stock; the blight and the mildew shall be kept from your farms; remember, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; I will do to you as I did to them, only remember me as they did.

“I will give health to all of you; death shall not take away your little ones; they shall live to a ripe old age; I will open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. These are blessings promised by God in the Bible. Who among this company will this day pledge his tenth to God?

“As intimated just now, this wonderful blessing promised in this passage of Scripture, and in other passages of Scripture, as a reward of obedience, is more than mere temporal prosperity. Not only will God open the windows of heaven from whence comes material wealth, but He will open the windows of the upper heavens where He dwells, the centre of the universe; and from His gracious fullness He will shed down upon those who are obedient, blessings which are inexpressible and full of glory.

“There is a remarkable and, it would seem, a necessary connection between obedience and great spiritual enjoyment. Not only shall he who does the will of God know the doctrine of God, but he shall also understand the experience and bliss which comes through being in communion with Him.

“There is a good deal said in these days about consecration, and a good deal of unreal sentiment expressed about giving to God our bodies and spirits, our time and our earthly store; but it is my experience that when a man does this practically, and commences by acknowledging God’s claim to a tenth of his income, that he grows in grace, and God opens the windows of heaven and pours out upon him, day by day, rich spiritual blessings, so that he walks in the light of the Lord, and knows the mind of the Lord.

“I have stated elsewhere in these talks, that God promises material prosperity to any man who pays a tenth, regardless of that man’s character; and, while I believe this statement to be true, still, as a rule, unconverted men have not faith enough in the Bible to take the risks, and there are few of them who live up to this Biblical requirement. It has been my experience, however, that as soon as a man does begin to tithe his income it develops in him spirituality, if he had not any previously; and it wonderfully intensifies and strengthens his spirituality if he was a Christian when he first yielded obedience to this commandment.

“So far as my personal experience goes, and so far as I can get hold of the history of men who have kept this law, they are mostly devout and spiritually-minded men, and they bear universal testimony to this proposition: that by obeying God in this particular, their faith in God has been greatly increased; and the wonderful deliverances which He has brought about for them of a temporal character, have developed in them a spirit of thankfulness, as well as a holy trust and a blessed assurance. A remarkable companionship springs up between the obedient and the Lord, to which others are strangers. One thing is remarkable in the experience of those who have systematically tithed their income, and that is, though they may have commenced to do so from a sense of duty, they continue the practice from a sense of pleasure and profit, and their hearts are influenced by the noblest feelings of love to God and man.

“There may be a solitary case here and there of a man who has abandoned the practice of tithing; yet, as a rule, those who commence it persevere to the end, and have wrought into their souls an experience, which is only an experience of the lips to the average Christian, namely, ‘that it is more blessed to give than to receive,’ ‘Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,’ ‘The good and obedient shall eat the fat of the land.’ These are promises which provide for great earthly blessings, but these earthly blessings are also invariably accompanied with great spiritual comfort and enlightenment.”

At the conclusion of this talk, there was a unanimous request that I should continue the conversation the following evening. During the talk this evening, a great many came in, so that the shop was crowded with listeners, and it was proposed that we should meet the next night at the school-house. One of the school trustees who was present said there would be no objection; and, accordingly, we agreed to meet the next night at the school-house as suggested. I was thus suddenly thrust into greater notoriety than I had dreamed of, and I devoutly prayed God to keep me humble, and to make my usefulness equal to my humility. I had got very earnest on the subject in the two talks I had previously given; and a great many things occurred to my mind while I was speaking, which I thought I would like to say to my friends and acquaintances in the neighborhood before I gave up the subject.

According to agreement, we met next night in the school-house. I thought I was getting there in good time, but before I arrived the house was full. The news of the meetings we had in the blacksmith shop seems to have spread far and wide, and we had a great many on this evening from other neighborhoods, and several business men drove out from the city. A widespread interest seems to have been enlisted in the subject, and quite a few converts had been made to the doctrine of the tithe. I pressed my way to the desk; and, when everything was ready to commence, some person proposed that we have a regular and formal meeting, and, accordingly, the Doctor was voted to the chair, and he called upon the Rev. Mr. Jones to open the meeting with prayer, after which I was introduced, and commenced:

TALK NO. 3

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE TITHE AND OTHER MATTERS

“My friends, I will not take up your time by preliminary observations, although I feel wholly inadequate to the task of addressing and instructing so large and intelligent an audience upon this most important Biblical subject. I am glad to see, however, that my humble efforts to enlighten you upon this subject, and to teach you what I know concerning the Bible doctrine, is appreciated. I am also glad that so many of you are beginning to see eye to eye with me, and have commenced to tithe your incomes. I am perfectly willing to stake my reputation upon all that I have said concerning the effect that your observance of this commandment will have upon your material and spiritual prosperity. It is clear to me that the Bible most distinctly promises these blessings to those who keep this commandment, and I dare to risk all I have upon a ‘thus saith the Lord.’ I am also greatly confirmed in this from my own experience, and from the experience of all who have tested those promises of God.

“To-night, I thought I would give you a short history of the tithe during the Christian dispensation, and make some other remarks on the subject, which may be suggested by important things that may be developed in the conversation of the evening. It is most remarkable that this practice of tithing has been discovered in several heathen nations, and it has been interwoven with their religious and civil codes. There is no proof concerning the origin of this practice among them: possibly these heathen nations learned it from God’s ancient people the Jews; but, more probably, the practice is as ancient as Adam, and the Gentile nations who observed the tithe laws were keeping up a tradition from the Garden of Eden.

“We have positive proof that the practice of tithing is as ancient as Abraham, and strong presumptive evidence that the latter found it already in existence, and that when he paid tithes to Melchizedek he was performing a religious duty. No person can read the narrative without being struck with its naturalness; for, on the one hand, Abraham paid the tenth without any explanation or argument, such as would be natural if he were making a simple present, or was giving a simple token of his gratitude to Almighty God for his victory; and, on the other hand, Melchizedek accepts the tenth as a matter of course. He took it as though he expected it, or as if it belonged to him; and he there and then blessed Abraham in the name of the Lord, just as God in later years said that all the people who paid tithes should be blessed. There is enough evidence to satisfy me that the law and practice of the tithe was in existence prior to Abraham, and that God’s priests were maintained that way. If this be so, then the Canaanites, of whom Melchizedek was both king and priest, were in the habit of paying tithes.

“That some well-defined system of giving to God was practised in the days of Adam is certain, for we find that both Cain and Abel gave systematically to God, for ‘Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.’ God in some way had made known His will touching this matter. As to the proportion He required, we are not told; but the presumption is that it was a tenth, for when the proportion is first mentioned in the Bible, that is the amount specified. From these considerations the strongest inference is, that the idea and practice of tithing found in heathen nations has been handed down by tradition from Eden, the Garden of Eden.

“There is not a great deal said about tithing in the New Testament, as it did not enter particularly into the work of the Saviour and His apostles to impress this doctrine and practice upon the people. It would seem that at the advent of the Saviour the Jews critically and technically kept this law, so that Christ had to say, ‘Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of

mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.’ Hence, there was no need for Christ and His apostles to formally impress this Biblical command upon the people.

“The same thing is true of the Sabbath day, as the obligations imposed upon the Jews by these two commandments seem to have been fully realized by them, and faithfully discharged. In the present, and in the present century, it is most important that Sabbath observance should be taught, and that the people should be indoctrinated into the duty and practice of keeping holy the Sabbath day, because the tendency now is to overlook the sanctity of this day and to consider all days alike. During the Saviour’s time this was not so; and, hence, but little was said by Him or His immediate followers about the importance of keeping one day holy in seven.

“The attitude of the Jews to the tithe was precisely similar to their position in regard to the Sabbath; for the history of their nation was before them, and they knew by national, and, doubtless, many of them by individual experience, that their earthly prosperity depended, in a great measure, upon their obedience to God’s time and money requirements, and depended upon these two obligations as much as upon all other conditions besides.

“No wise teacher will spend his time in teaching that which is well known, nor will he exhort people to do what they are already noted for doing even to excess. Hence, it is only by allusion or illustration that Jesus refers to either of these important duties; but when He does so, it is always of the nature of approval, and herein is a strong argument for my present contention.



RICH PHARISEE GOING WITH HIS TITHES TO THE PRIEST.

“From the comparative silence of Jesus upon the question of tithing, a considerable argument is built by those who do not believe in it. They say that if it were of so much importance, surely the Saviour would not have omitted it from His discourse; but taking the circumstances into consideration, and the statements I have just made, I think the very thing complained of strengthens the position taken by me rather than otherwise. We find, however, in the writings of the apostles, statements and exhortations which clearly teach the law of the tithe. Paul says: ‘Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him.’ Here we have systematic giving; and I may take occasion in this or some other Talk to explain this text more fully.



LAYING ASIDE THE LORD'S PORTION.

“Paul states elsewhere that ‘God loveth a cheerful giver,’ and again, ‘If there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not

according to that he hath not,' that is to say, a man must give according to his wealth, or give a certain proportion, the poor giving a portion out of their poverty, and the rich out of their abundance. Paul in his charge to Timothy says: '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 all things richly to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willingly to communicate.' And yet another quotation, 'He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.' And Jesus says, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' Paul, in his address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus, uses this language: 'I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

"The writings of the Fathers of the Church contain abundant reference to tithing, showing that it was practised by the early Christians; but it would seem that for many years the practice of tithing was purely a form of voluntary offering for the support of the clergy, and for benevolent purposes generally. The first Christian emperors acknowledged the duty of paying tithes to support the clergy, although they did not formally enact laws making this compulsory. The council of Tours, 567 A.D., the second Council of Macon, 585 A.D., and that of Rouen, 650 A.D., also of Nantes, of Metz, and some others, distinctly sanction the law of the tithe, but it remained for Charlemagne to establish the practice in certain portions of the ancient Roman Empire. From this law and other sources, it became a duty for all persons to pay a tenth to the Church, which extended throughout western Christendom.

"The practice of tithing was first introduced into England by Offa, king of Mercia, in the close of the eighth century. Other divisions of Saxon England



ENGLISH TITHES, TWELFTH CENTURY.

took up the same usage, and it was made general all over England by Ethelwolf. All persons were required to pay tithes to the Church, but it seems to have been optional with each man as to the Church to which he should pay his tithes; and men then did as they do now, supporting the Church to which they belonged, but at that time it was distinctly required that each man should pay tithes to his own particular Church. But a decree was sent by Innocent III to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 1200 A.D., to the effect that all were to pay tithes to the clergy of their respective parish churches, that is, the State Church, and this parochial distribution of tithes has been the law in England ever since.

“It does not enter into my purpose to go into detail as to the various laws in England concerning tithing. There is a great variety of tithes, and a great many complicated laws have been enacted, at one time and another, in reference to tithing. All I wish to point out to you in this Talk is the fact, that this practice has been observed from the day Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God, until this day, and in all probability high dates back to the day of Adam. It is true that the tithing laws in England have become obnoxious to the majority of God-fearing people in that land, and the chief reason why tithing has not been practised by the Methodist and other non-conforming Churches is because the State interfered in religious matters, and made compulsory what God had placed upon each man’s individual conscience, the individual standing or falling according as he obeyed or disobeyed God’s law.

“So long as there was only one Church in England, there was no inequality, nor so long as that Church was doing God’s work, even though it were a State Church, and the people were compelled to pay tithes to her by the civil law, there would seem to be no real injustice or inequality. Certain it is, that God’s blessing came down upon the people, and England during these years showed

an unparalleled degree of prosperity; but, when that Church became corrupt and ceased to teach the doctrines of the Cross, and godly men protested against the impious practices of the clergy, and joined themselves into organizations for the purpose of worshipping God and teaching the pure Gospel, then the injustice of having to pay tithes to a State Church, and to support their own Church as well, became apparent. From that time until now, these Churches have, to a great extent, rebelled against tithing, and a great extent, rebelled against tithing, and the majority of them have not distinguished the false from the true; and, in their protestations against compulsory tithing enacted by the civil laws, they have unwittingly protested against the law of God as revealed in the Bible.

“In England the tithe laws have worked very unjustly, and have borne with great hardship upon those who were the most pious and godly, and I believe the reason why so few to-day systematically tithe their income, and why there are so many in practical ignorance of this Bible requirement, is because of the hatred which was engendered by this compulsory taxation to the support of the State Church, while these same men had to support their own Churches. It may be remarked, however, that notwithstanding this injustice and inequality, England has been blessed as no other nation; she has always been a lender of money and not a borrower. She has been to the world what the sun is to the universe, and has sent out her light and civilization the wide world over. She has furnished more missionaries than any other nation. She has done more for the enlightenment and evangelization of the world than any other nation. She has been the greatest in peace, and the mightiest in war of any nation upon the face of the earth, and I dare to think that her wealth, and power, and influence have been due, in no small measure, to the fact that the incomes of her people have been tithed for the maintenance of God’s cause.

“When the Pilgrim Fathers left England to seek a land of liberty in America, where they could worship God in their own way, they doubtless came here with a hatred to systematic giving, as the yoke had galled them so badly in the

old land. When Christian ministers and members of the non-conforming denominations came to this country, they came with similar feelings, so that the Churches in this country have been supported by the voluntary givings of the people, though these voluntary givings have been spasmodic, irregular, and unsystematic. Very few, if any, of these earlier Christians recommended the law of the tithe, although there are some distinguished exceptions to this statement, and the reason of this almost total abandonment of this Bible law, I believe, I have just given you.

“The Christianity of America and Canada has been of a most vigorous and progressive type, and the Churches have developed, in view of all circumstances, a wonderful liberality; but I believe it can be demonstrated, that if all the giving had been regulated by some well-defined system, and a certain proportion of the income of Christian people had been devoted to the cause of God, that the advancement would have been very much greater than we see to-day. I think it can be demonstrated, that if the Churches had taught and practised the doctrine of the tithe, that a larger proportion of the population of this continent would have been christianized. I am glad to see, however, that this old Bible doctrine is being revived, and that there is a widespread interest manifested in the subject of ‘Systematic Giving’ all over the continent. People are beginning to distinguish between the abuse of this doctrine and commandment, as seen in England, and the uses of it as laid down in the Bible.

“We have now reviewed chiefly the history of the tithe, and have distinctly traced it back to Abraham, demonstrating that it was practised by the ‘Father of the faithful,’ and seeing strong reasons to believe that at this ancient day it was a practice of the Canaanites. We have also proved from sacred history, that in the days of Adam there was some plan of ‘systematic giving,’ which clearly recognized God’s claim as the first claim upon a man’s earnings; and it is a legitimate supposition, from what follows in the Bible, that this claim was a tithe.

“We have followed the history of this practice through the Old and New Testaments, and have seen that what is most distinctly given in the former as a commandment is endorsed and reaffirmed in the latter. We have also historically traced this practice down from the days of Jesus until now. The historic Church is a unit in declaring that ‘the tenth is holy unto the Lord;’ and if modern Christian opinion is shown to have been more against than for this doctrine, I think I have given the reason why. Certain it is, this law of God has never been rescinded; and the overwhelming weight of evidence goes to show that it is now in force. If there had been any change it seems equally certain that the change would have demanded a larger rather than a less sum than ten per cent. If the Jews gave a tenth with their obscure light, certainly Christians are under obligation not to give a smaller amount.

“I will now talk a while to you on:

‘SOME ADVANTAGES OF MODERN TITHING.’

I shall not have time to state all the advantages, for they are legion, but I will give some which are uppermost in my mind. First, then, the tithe is the seed money of wealth; it is compared to sowing, and the more a man sows the more he has to sow. It is compared to lending money to the Lord, which He gives back with interest. It is a way of ‘laying up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.’ It guarantees the success of one’s business: ‘The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof,’ and God compels the earth to yield her products to the man who keeps this law. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts,’ and He promises to yield up these precious treasures to the man who will tithe his income.

“I do not think that the Bible means that every man who tithes shall become rich, but it does mean that each man who does so shall be well cared for; and experience proves that most of them are; and comfortable circumstances, and not a few of them are rich. It relieves a man of all anxiety as to his earthly

sustenance, for ‘the word of our God is sure,’ and He will honor those who honor Him; and he who cares for God’s cause, and appropriates to His service one-tenth of his income, will never lack a tenth to give.

“Another advantage of tithing is, that it systematizes one’s benevolence. The man who does anything without system is a weak man, and is blown about by every wind, and swayed by every feeling; but a man who has a system and then works to it, always knows what he is doing, and stands a better chance of success. Men who give without system, give according to their feelings; sometimes they feel poor and refuse aid to that which is deserving; at other times, when their feelings are touched, and when their hearts are made tender by some appeal, they are inclined to give, though they are in no better financial condition than they were when they felt poor. In such cases, a man gives from feeling rather than from principle. Such a man is like a ship without a rudder; like a mariner without a compass; but he who tithes his income sets apart a certain portion to spend in works of benevolence and for the propagation of God’s cause, and knows just what he can do.

“Another advantage of tithing is in the fact that it gives a man great strength in his business. He realizes that God is his partner; that the God of all the earth, who has the hearts of all men at His command, is interested in his business; and, in times of darkness, God is his light; in times of perplexity, God becomes his wisdom. When the arm of flesh fails him, he leans hard upon God, for the tendency of this practice is to promote dependence upon our Heavenly Father, and no man has ever yet been disappointed who thus placed confidence in Him.

“Another great advantage of tithing is, that it compels a man to keep a proper record of his financial affairs. A great many men fail in business because they do not keep proper books of account. One reason why the majority of men live beyond their income, is because they do not keep a record of their income and expenditure. I fully believe, the reason why many farmers are not more successful is because they carry on the work of their farms without any record

as to the profit of any given crop, or investment. A man who tithes his income is under obligation to know his financial standing. If he pledges a tenth to God, it is a prime necessity, in order to keep that pledge, that he should have proper books of account. This produces system and regularity; a man carries on his business with his eyes open, and knows what he is doing.

“But the *great* advantage of tithing, as intimated in my last talk in the blacksmith shop, is in obedience to God, and this draws a man nearer to God than all things beside. It causes a man to take God as companion and guide; it develops confidence in God; help after help is accorded to such a man day after day, all the days of his life, and signal business victories are given to him. He is enabled to overcome difficulties which he thought were insurmountable; he sees, in the progress of his business, God’s guiding and delivering hand, and this adds to his faith, courage and love. He approximates more and more to ‘the mind which is in Christ Jesus,’ as his intercourse becomes more and more familiar with God our Father.

“Obedience to God’s laws brings us nearer the spirit world. Our communion with God, and our fellowship with saints and angels is made more precious than by any other means whatever. If a Christian is in any measure disobedient, the heavens seem as brass, he cannot penetrate them with his prayers; but when all the tithes are brought into the storehouse, the windows of heaven are opened and rich spiritual blessings descend upon his soul.

“I strongly advise you, dear friends, to test this matter for yourselves. God distinctly challenges every one of you to make the test, saying, ‘prove me herewith.’ I would strongly advise you to commence here and now the practice of ‘Systematic Giving.’ Devote a tenth of your income to God and benevolence, and the richest blessings of heaven and earth shall be yours.

“And now, my friends, I think I have talked to you long enough for this evening; but, before we part, I shall be very glad to answer, so far as I am able, any questions you may wish to ask. I do not wish to provoke a

discussion for the sake of seeing which can produce the stronger argument; but if any among you have doubts on the main question, and are earnestly seeking the truth on this subject, I shall be glad if you will state them fully and frankly. Or, if any of you being convinced that it is your duty to tithe your incomes, and are desirous of information on any point, I shall be glad if I can be of assistance to you. I would rather have you ask me the questions publicly than privately, that others may have the benefit of the conversation.”

I no sooner took my seat than a dozen men were on their feet, each being anxious to speak and unwilling to give place to the others. They all seemed to speak words of commendation, but, with the confusion they caused, the meeting was getting rather excited, and our good village doctor, the chairman of the evening, called them to order. He said: “With the consent of the speaker, I suggest that we now dismiss the meeting, and have another meeting to-morrow evening in this school-house, or in the Baptist church up at the cross roads, if it can be secured. Most of us have had to stand to-night, and the crowd will likely be greater to-morrow. I would further suggest that all questions to be asked of the speaker, and all objections to be made, be put in writing, and handed in at the blacksmith shop by noon to-morrow, in order that such questions or objections may be answered at the night meeting.”

The pastor of the Baptist church, Rev. H. S. Waterkins, said that the church was at our disposal, as he felt the agitation now begun would doubtless do great good and increase the liberality of the people, although he took exception to some ideas advocated, but agreed with the speaker on the main question. He confessed that he had not given the subject much thought, and was astonished at the convincing arguments brought forward in support of tithing.

I accordingly accepted the kind suggestions of the chairman and the kind invitation of the Baptist minister, and agreed to be on hand the next night, to answer the objections or questions which might be brought forward.

Rev. F. Perseverance, a Presbyterian minister present, pronounced the benediction, and the meeting adjourned.

The next night when I arrived at the cross-roads, I had to elbow my way through the crowd to get even to the church door. Such an excitement had never been known in our neighborhood; it seemed that the people did nothing else but talk "Tithing." Tracts and books had been sent for; the Bible had been searched, and many an earnest discussion was held over the subject. I had made between twenty and thirty converts, and these were the most solid and godly men in our county, so that I had strong influences at work on the Bible side of this question. The wide-spread interest taken had filled the Baptist church, and there were as many people outside as in.

The pastor of the church presided, and opened the meeting with prayer and a short address. He thanked me for the blessing I had been the means of conferring upon him personally, in convincing him of the truth of the Bible doctrine of tithing. He knew that it was a law for the Jews, but did not think that it was binding upon Christians; he was now convinced of his error. His objection, suggested the night before, to the theory set forth in these meetings, was that a man who started to tithe his income because it was financially profitable, would be tempted to look upon it from that standpoint only, and thus he would be actuated by the wrong motive, which would produce spiritual leanness.

I was then introduced, and commenced:

TALK NO. 4

OBJECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

“My friends, I am glad to meet you and greet you in the name of the Lord, who requires ‘tithes of all.’ I consider that a great honor is conferred upon me in being permitted to ‘contend for the faith once delivered to the saints,’ and to do a little toward bringing back the people to God’s fundamental law of success for individuals, churches and nations.

“I would that I could excite the whole world on this question as this neighborhood seems excited, for I feel that it is the absorbing question of this generation. The speedy subjugation of this world to the Lord Jesus Christ depends upon the speedy acceptance of God’s great money law by the people. When that law is accepted, and the people ‘bring in all their tithes,’ then look out for the ‘windows of heaven’ being opened in all parts of the world, and such blessings descending that the world itself will not be large enough to contain them; ‘For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’

“But I am to answer questions and objections to-night, and I will now proceed to do so. I hold in my hand a number of them; and, after referring to the remarks of our excellent chairman, I will proceed to take them up one by one as they come. Before doing so, I may state, however, that some of the questions and objections handed in to me were anticipated in former talks; but, evidently, my arguments were either not satisfactory or have not been heard by parties who repeat them. I shall, however, endeavor to answer everything as though no previous attempt had been made.

“The difficulty which our chairman finds with my theory is the one I most frequently meet with from devout people. It is undoubtedly true that the

motive a man has in performing a given action gives it moral quality more than the outward act itself; and, hence, the men who are accustomed to look beneath the surface, and analyze motives in judging of character, rather than forming their judgment from actions, most naturally bring up this objection to my theory.

“I wish, however, to state that there are times when it is advisable to persuade men who are indulging in wrong acts, to change the mode of their lives and to practice virtue, even though the motive appealed to be simply that of self-interest. There are experiences, conditions and dispositions where a motive of self-interest is much more powerful than a higher one, and if you can induce men who have been living wrong to give up the wrong and commence on the right course, even though the motive appealed to be not the highest, the effects are salutary, and the motives often become ultimately of the purest. There is something in the practice of virtue, unless a man be a confirmed hypocrite, where the very outward act has a tendency to compel corresponding inward virtue; hence, in the training of children, we, of necessity, appeal to lower motives than we do in adults, as they have not the capacity to appreciate that which is higher. In such cases, the object is to have children commence the practice of right acts, and we consider ourselves happy to train them mechanically good, trusting to time and the grace of God to mould their motives, and develop in them moral purity and spiritual life.

“Certain it is that the Bible addresses itself to the same motive to which I have appealed in these Talks. Perhaps a full and sufficient answer to this objection will be given by quoting a passage or two of Scripture, where God appeals wholly to self-interest, and exhorts His children to give to Him with no higher incentive whatever than the promise of His giving something to them in return. God, speaking through Solomon, says, ‘Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.’ And I suppose no person will object to the words of the wise man, or find fault with

the motive to which he appealed. Jesus is yet more emphatic, if that were possible, in saying, ‘Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over shall men give into your bosom.’ I need not tell you that these words were spoken by the Saviour in connection with the giving of alms, and they directly refer to contributions of money.

“The words of Paul, although quoted on a previous evening, are most appropriate to this objection, ‘He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.’ And, to go back again to Solomon, ‘He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.’ The Holy Scriptures abound in such passages; and, if it is safe for God to appeal to such motives, it is certainly fair for me to follow the same line of argument.

“The paper I hold in my hand reads as follows:—‘Should a man take out his living expenses before tithing what he earns?’ I answer, most certainly not, for if he did so the average man would have nothing to tithe, as in the majority of cases he spends as much as he earns. The Bible declares that the ‘increase’ of a man’s business must be tithed; in other words, the net profit of one’s business or profession, and then God graciously permits that the other nine-tenths shall be given into the custody of His steward, to spend upon himself and his family.

“The next question I am to answer is as follows:—‘How can a farmer tell his net income?’ I suppose a farmer can only tell what his net earnings are by keeping proper books of account as other prudent business men do. If a man in business promiscuously takes out of his business money for his household and private needs, and keeps no record of the amount thus drawn, it is impossible for him to tell what the net profits of his business are; and if a farmer runs his farm in the same haphazard fashion, keeping no account of

his income or expenditure, it will be impossible for him to arrive at his income with any degree of certainty.



FARMER POSTING HIS BOOKS.

“I have heard of different systems being adopted by farmers in order to keep out their tenth for God, but the only correct way is for a farmer to keep proper accounts, and debit his farm with all he expends for seed, implements, labor, or any other necessary expense, and credit his farm with the produce used by his family, as well as with all the cash he receives for the produce sold; and the difference between the debit and credit is the amount of his income, and, consequently, the amount he must tithe. For instance, if the total expense of running the farm amounted to, say five hundred dollars, and if the farmer sold one thousand dollars’ worth of produce, and used in his family five hundred dollars’ worth, then the net income would be one thousand dollars, of which one hundred dollars, or ten per cent., belongs to God.

“‘How can a business man estimate his income for the purpose of tithing, so as to allow for bad debts or possible shrinkage of values?’ is the question upon this paper. This, I have no doubt, is a very perplexing question to many business men, and yet, if we would act toward God and keep our tithe account with Him upon ordinary business principles, there would be no need for asking me to solve the problem. Suppose the business man who wrote this

question had a partner, and the partnership was so arranged that his partner's share was ten per cent. of the net profits of the business, would he have any difficulty in settling with him upon a proper business basis? I think not. Then why should there be any greater difficulty in keeping God's tithe account than in keeping the account supposed?

"What I would advise a business man to do is, to tithe the money he draws out of his business weekly or monthly, as the case may be, and once a year tithe the net profits of the business during the year. If it should prove during the following year that some of the accounts or other assets which had been tithed turned out bad, then it would be proper to charge back ten per cent. of the loss to God's tithe account; and the same remark applies to shrinkage in values of any character whatsoever.

"Some person asks, upon this paper: 'What system would you advise for keeping the tithe account?' The answer is very simple, and I give it from my own method and practice. I call the account, 'The Lord's Tithe Account.' I have a debit and credit column, and I keep the account upon the same system as a Cash Account, debiting it with ten per cent. of my earnings, as I receive them, and crediting it with all I pay to the Lord's cause, specifying each item for future reference. I wish all my hearers were sufficiently advanced in their belief in this doctrine to manifest anxiety upon this question. The chief thing is for a man to have the disposition and purpose to tithe his income, and some good system of keeping the account will suggest itself to him from his own experience.

"I am glad of an opportunity to answer the following question: 'Should a minister of the Gospel pay tithes?' In one of my talks I said the Bible most distinctly taught that the priests under the Jewish dispensation were required to tithe their incomes, and I take it that what God then required of those who devoted themselves to the spiritual welfare of the people, He now requires. I refer you to Numbers xviii. 26, 27: 'Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you

from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave-offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. And this your heave-offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshingfloor, and as the fullness of the wine-press.'

"As I read the Bible, God demands ten per cent. from all men, regardless of their position or character. This sum is His tax upon the earnings of mankind the world over, and upon the produce of the earth; and, undoubtedly, it is just as profitable, from a money standpoint—to appeal to no higher motive—for a minister of the Gospel to pay his tithe as for men of any other profession.

"Some person has thought the following question of sufficient importance to present to me for answer:—'If all are under obligation to pay tithes, how can a man who handles no money whatever perform this duty?' Perhaps I can answer this question best by asking another. If God requires all men to labor, how can a man perform that duty who is not possessed of arms? Certain it is, out of nothing nothing comes.

"It is a fundamental law of God that a man shall earn his living by the sweat of his face, yet if a man is lacking either in brains to labor intelligently, or is not possessed of arms with which to perform the labor, it is impossible for him to be obedient to this general law; but in this case, as in all others, the exception proves the rule. If a man handles no money, but is a pauper upon the bounties of his fellows, it is a matter of impossibility for him to give anything to God's cause; yet if a pauper should at any time become possessed of even twenty-five cents, then a tenth of it would belong to God.

"A man who works for wages and his board, asks the following question:—'How shall a servant, who is paid so much per annum and his board, estimate his income in order that he may know how to give ten per cent. of it to the Lord?' I am glad this question has been asked, as there are a great many persons, both male and female, who are earning their living in the capacity of

servants, and it is most important that such persons should know exactly what God demands of them.

“My idea is that a person who derives his income in the way stated, should estimate what his services would be worth, providing he received the whole amount in cash and boarded himself; or, in other words, estimate what the board and other conveniences which he receives as part of his pay would cost him providing he had to pay cash for them. After reaching this conclusion, the way to do is to add his money income to the amount which he receives in the shape of board, and then ten per cent. of this total income would be the amount to pay to God.

“I am now to read to you a most practical idea, one which, I trust, is agitating the minds of many in this audience. ‘When a man is convinced that it is his duty to give a tenth to the Lord, how shall he manage with the property and money in his possession that has not been tithed?’ There is only one answer to this question; and I am sure that answer is supplied by all your minds as soon as the question is asked. I fear, however, that there are but few men who will act in harmony with the logical answer to this question without a severe struggle, except they are aided by the grace of God.

“There is no difficulty in a man rendering obedience to the dictates of his conscience in this particular, if he is possessed of but little or no property; but in proportion as he is in possession of wealth, in that proportion will it be difficult for him to obey God’s law as involved in this answer. The tenth of all you have, or ever will have, belongs to God, and whether you have one dollar in your possession or one hundred thousand dollars, which has not been tithed, ‘The tenth is holy unto the Lord,’ and the only sure way is to give God His own.

“No wonder Jesus said, ‘How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ How difficult it is for a man to give to God ten per cent. of any considerable amount of wealth is only known to those who have

passed through this experience; and I have reason to believe that, as I now speak to you, there are many among you wrestling with your consciences. Self-interest and blind prejudice, backed up by the devil, are arrayed on the one side, while God's plain declaration and your own conscience, as well as sound argument, are on the other side, and I most earnestly exhort you to render obedience to these messengers of God, and 'Bring all the tithes into the storehouse.' Do not, I beseech you, be as Ananias and Sapphira, and bring in a part of the price only.

"If duty and truth did not compel me to thus speak, I should be inclined to lower God's obligation in order to get you started in this, the way of the Lord; but, as the question has been asked of me, I must answer it in the only way it can be answered with fidelity, and I trust the convictions of your own hearts will be obeyed, and that you will trust implicitly in God for the fulfilment of His promises. Depend upon it, true self-interest is consulted only when we render willing obedience to the demands of God.

"I think there is no real need for further argument to prove the correctness of my answer to the question under consideration, but an illustration may make the truth more manifest. Suppose a man who commences tithing his income to-day should to-morrow come into possession of, say one thousand dollars; taking it for granted that God demands the tithe, on all hands we should agree that ten per cent., or one hundred dollars of this sum, would be the Lord's. Now, what is the difference between a man tithing what he had when he commenced obedience to this duty, and what he received one day after he commenced tithing? I think there is no difficulty in perceiving the logic of my answer; the only difficulty will be in getting the consent of your mind to render obedience to it, and I pray that you may be successful.

"The question I now hold in my hand is undoubtedly written by a man from the city, for he writes as follows:—'I have to pay rent for a pew in our church; I also pay for a shed in which to stand my horse. Must I reckon this on my tithe account?' This question to me is of more importance by what it suggests

to my mind, than by the direct question itself, although that may not be unimportant to the person who asks it, as well as to others similarly situated.

“In regard to the question, I give it as my opinion, that the amounts paid for the purposes stated legitimately belong to the Tithe Account, notwithstanding my opinion that pew rents are a curse to Christianity, a great injury to our Churches, and totally subversive of the plan and purpose of Jesus Christ, in propagating His Gospel. It does not enter into my plan to discuss the question of pew rents, but inasmuch as this injurious system is an invention of men to make up in some measure for their robbing God of His tithes, there may be some excuse accorded me in expressing my opinion upon the question.

“Here is a practical question:—‘Should money paid for life assurance be tithed, or must that first be taken out of a man’s income before tithing?’ If the life assurance is of a business nature, and is taken out for business purposes, to secure creditors, or for any other business reason, then the premiums so paid should be reckoned as a business expense and should not be tithed. But if the life assurance is carried for personal or family reasons, then the cost of such assurance should be tithed, as it becomes one of the items of personal or family expense.

“In answering this question, and deciding similar ones, it is only necessary to distinguish between what expenses are purely personal or family expenses, and what expenses can be legitimately charged as business expenditure. Sometimes the two interests are so intimately associated and become so lapped together, that it is a little difficult to tell where business expenses end and where family expenses commence; but, if a man is conscientious and does what he verily believes to be right, and makes the division with this spirit, there will be very little probability of his going wrong.

“I am now about to read and answer a question which may be a type of many other similar questions which will arise in the experience of a great many business men and mechanics. ‘My daughter earns small weekly wages, about

enough to clothe her: should her wages be tithed in view of the fact that I have otherwise to maintain her?’ Certainly, this sum should be tithed, providing you are under either moral or legal obligation to maintain your daughter. Suppose she lived at home and earned nothing, and you had to support her out of your own income, then such expense would be clearly a legitimate family expense, and all the money used to meet it would be tithed before so using; hence, the money she earns is simply supplementary to your own income and must be tithed as the rest of your income, no matter from what source it may be derived.

“If your daughter were of age and had clearly gone beyond your control, and there were neither natural, moral, nor legal obligations resting upon you for her maintenance, then, technically, I should answer the question in a different way. There will arise in the experience of a great many similar difficult questions, but my advice is to give the Lord at all times the benefit of the doubt, as ten per cent. is the minimum of our givings to God; and as I shall attempt to show before I get through with all I have to say upon this subject, there is abundance of arguments in favor of gifts and free-will offerings to the cause of God, over and above ‘the absolute tax of ten per cent.’ which our Maker imposes upon all mankind.

“The next is a practical question, still a little thought on the part of the person asking it would bring its solution very readily. ‘A widow, who keeps a boarding house, would like to know whether she must tithe all the money that comes into her hands for board?’ My answer is, Most decidedly not. Keeping boarders is of the nature of a business, and in order that this woman may know just what the amount of her tithe is, it will be necessary to find out exactly what her business expenses are; that is, what is the actual outlay for provisions, fuel, rent, and other necessary expenses involved in running a boarding house; then, after deducting these legitimate and necessary expenses from what is received, you have the net income, and this net income only is to

be tithed. The same principle precisely governs such a case as would govern a business man, or a farmer, or any person similarly situated.

“We have had several doctors attending these meetings, and I am glad one of them has handed in a question bearing upon the subject under discussion, and with reference to his own profession. ‘If a doctor professionally attends poor people and gives them his services gratuitously, ought he to charge the value of such services to his Tithe Account?’ I confess this position involves more complications than any question presented this evening, and I could say a good deal on both possible answers presented to this question, but after giving it careful attention I am of the opinion that it would not be fair for a doctor to charge the value of such services to his Tithe Account, for several reasons.

“First, it is *income* only that is to be tithed, and although the doctor may give a small portion of his time gratuitously, still, he has the income from his profession, and this income must be tithed no matter how much time is spent in Christian work. If the services thus rendered from principles of benevolence were paid for, there would be just so much more to go to God’s Tithe Account.

“In the next place, services given to poor people by a physician would bear the same relation to his income as bad debts do to the income of business men. I suppose there is a good deal of professional service rendered by medical men charged on their books which is not realized upon, and although many bad debts may be reckoned into the sum total of a physician’s practice, still, in order to get at his income, he first deducts these bad debts and tithes only what he actually realizes.

“Still another reason, medical services rendered to the poor are often of the nature of advertisements, and though the physician may get no pay directly, yet it has often happened that the indirect results of services given gratuitously have been very profitable. Therefore for the above reasons, and

others which could be mentioned, it is my opinion that such benevolent services should not be charged to the Tithe Account of medical men.

“I do not know whether the questions handed in to me to-day are, in all cases, questions entering into the experience of each person asking them, or whether they have been handed in for the purpose of testing my theory and seeing whether it will apply to all the possible contingencies of human experience. Whatever may be the reason actuating the next questioner, I will now answer this question: ‘Supposing a father who had tithed all he possessed should die, and the property pass into the hands of the son, who also practised tithing, should this property be tithed again when it had already been tithed?’

“In regard to this question, as well as some others, the perplexity involved is only upon the surface. To my mind there is no real difficulty in answering it. I believe that the Bible does not demand that capital should be taxed at all whether it is in the shape of land, or money, or stock, or brains, but that the income from any of these sources must be tithed. You will notice that what is capital to one, when it changes hands, becomes income to another; and although the father, in the case supposed, had tithed all his income, and so long as he lived he was under no further obligation to tithe the capital upon which the real tax had already been paid; still, as soon as he dies, and it passes into the hands of his son, then it becomes the son’s income, and he is under obligation to pay ten per cent. of it, whether the amount of property left be great or small.

“The following question is also easily answered: ‘Should the income from capital that has been tithed be subject to tithing?’ That is to say, if a man invests his money in city property, should he pay tithes upon the rent derived, or if he invests his money by loaning it upon real estate, or good security, should he tithe upon the interest thus realized? You will readily see that the profits from either of these supposed investments would be the income of the person investing, and hence this income must be tithed.

“The next question I am to present to you is a little more complicated, and it may be you will get different answers from men of equal ability and good intent: ‘Should money paid for books be tithed before being so used?’ I do not know whether the person means strictly to ask just what is expressed by his language, or whether he means to ask, ‘If money paid for books should be taken out of the Lord’s Tithe fund?’ These are two distinct ideas, and I will endeavor to answer both of them to the best of my ability. If the books are bought for purely business purposes; if, for instance, they are to furnish a lawyer with a library, or necessary legal books for his profession, or to furnish a physician with the necessary medical books, then the money invested in such books should not be tithed before being so used, as such investments are of the nature of business expense.

“Now, as to the other idea suggested by this question, whether books bought for family and personal reading—useful books bought for the purpose of improving the mind or culturing the heart, should be bought with tithe money or not, is a question capable of two answers. The money a man pays for the support of his pastor is supposed to be paid for God’s cause, and is legitimately charged to the Tithe Account. Now, if money were invested in a book of sermons, and the book were read with the same motive as a good Christian man listens to a minister of the Gospel, I do not see why such an investment should not be charged to the Tithe Account.

“There are many books bought and read, even by good Christian people, with no particular religious motive; books of travel and general interest, scientific and historical, and I think that it would not be legitimate to buy such books with tithe money. While I grant that a book purchased wholly and solely for the cultivation of spiritual life could be technically charged to the Tithe Account; still, I think it is getting rather near the line of demarcation, and I would strongly advise you not to use your money in this way, but to buy all books for personal or family use out of the nine-tenths of your income which God allows you to use on your own behalf.

“I fear that there would be danger in charging to the Tithe Account that which we purchase for our own use, or comfort, or self-interest; for once adopting such a principle, there would be a strong temptation to spend tithe money in that direction, when it could be used more for the glory of God. I believe the only safe way for a man to give his tenth is to be governed by principles of love, for ‘God loveth a cheerful giver,’ and it does not pay to be technical in giving to God who is so wondrously good and kind to us.

“I hope this next question is not asked with more of unbelief than faith: ‘If a man who practises tithing should become poor, how would it affect your faith in the proposition, that one is always better off by paying tithes?’ Well, my friends, let me ask you a question: Suppose a man was in the habit of working every day in the year, and he became converted to God and immediately commenced to rest on the Sabbath day, thus giving to God a fraction over fourteen per cent. of his time; and, after being converted and giving to God one day in seven, he should become a poor man, how would this affect your faith in the salutary influence of Christianity? particularly in the text, ‘Godliness is profitable unto all things,’ and also in the Old Testament, ‘But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.’

“Would you advise him to abandon his faith in God and Christianity, and regard with contempt God’s rest day? Or would you think it any argument against the profitableness and general salutary influence of Christianity, and the benefit of keeping holy the Sabbath day, upon men’s earthly prosperity? I think not, and therefore, please apply the same reasoning to God’s money requirements. As a matter of fact, it will be necessary for you to present such a case to me, before I could really tell you what effect it would have upon my mind in reference to the general propositions I have laid down. I have never met or heard tell of a man who has become poor on account of tithing his income. I have written extensively and advertised some, and have been in

communication with a great many, and on all hands the testimony is, that it pays in every way to 'bring all the tithes into the storehouse.'

"I do not know but that the question asked is about as wise as the following one: 'Supposing that the angles of a triangle should not be equal to two right angles, how would this affect your faith in the infallibility of geometrical law?' Or 'Supposing a man in a balloon five hundred feet from the earth should drop a cannon ball of one hundred pounds weight and it does not fall to the ground, how would this affect your faith in the unerring laws of gravitation?' If the Bible be true, the question simply means, 'Supposing that having trusted the promises of God you find them to be untrue, how would this affect your faith in God's honesty?' I think the question is inspired by unbelief, and is born of a heart, to this extent at least, full of infidelity towards God.

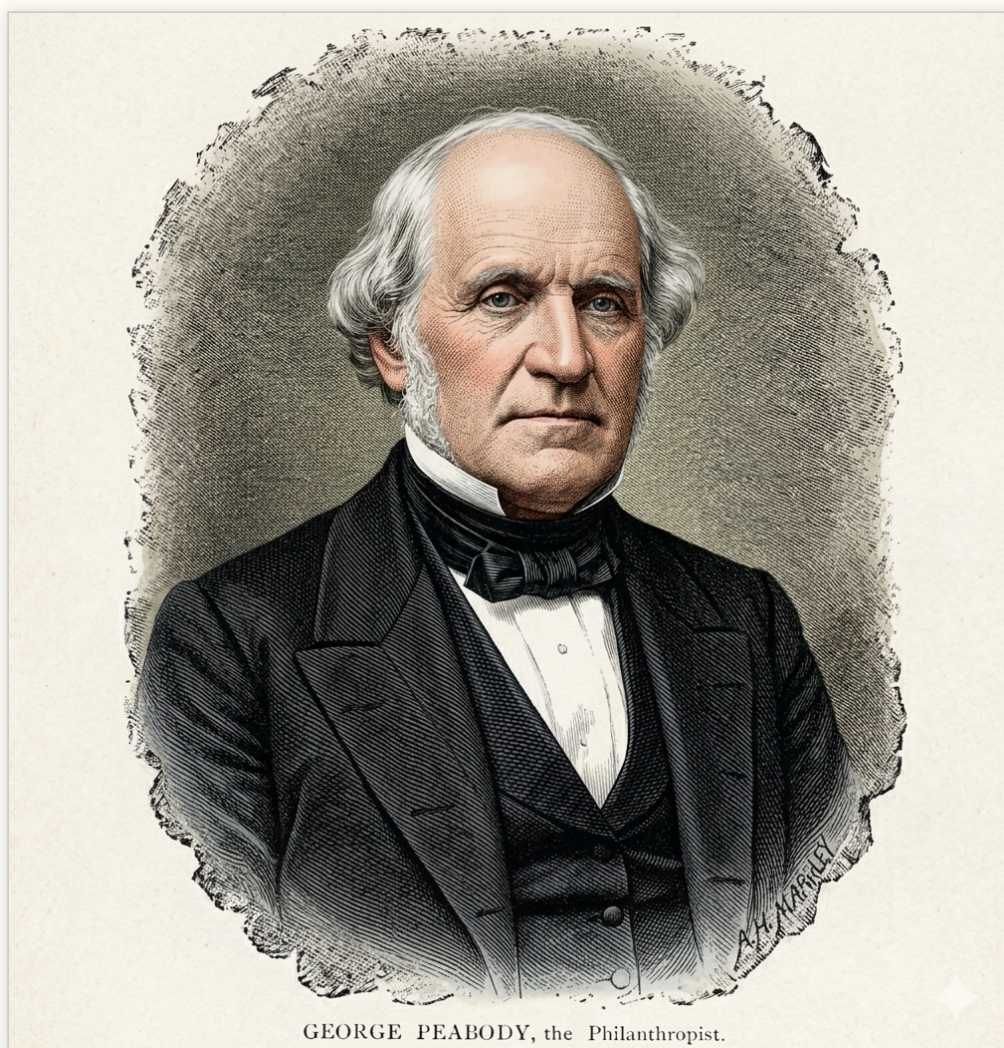
"A pious man who is so far consecrated to God as to devote one of his sons to the work of the ministry asks this question: 'Should a father who is supporting his son at college for the purpose of educating him for the ministry, charge the money thus expended to his Tithe Account?' I answer emphatically, no. If so, the father who is supporting his son at college for the purpose of making him a doctor, or the father who is graduating his son for the purpose of making him a lawyer, should also charge the cost to the Tithe Account.

"If the college education of a young man preparing for the ministry is to be charged to the Tithe Account, then there is no reason why the cost of ordinary school education should not be so charged, and if his mental education is to be charged to the Tithe Account, then why not charge his physical development or training to the same account, and thus put to the Lord's account his board, clothing, etc. I can conceive where there may be exceptions to this rule, but I certainly think that the rule for the guidance of such fathers is along the line of my remarks. A young man joining the ministry of the Christian Church in these days stands as good a chance for a

livelihood as he who enters the ranks of any other profession, and though it is a privilege fathers have of giving their sons to the holy ministry, still, I think that they have a perfect right to pay for the privilege out of the nine-tenths of their income which God graciously allows them to use for their own purposes.

“I believe there are a great many men who soothe their consciences and blind the eyes of their understanding by belief in the erroneous opinion intimated by the following question: ‘Did not the ten per cent. the Bible demands of the Jews include that which is equivalent to our municipal and other taxes?’ I have heard this question very often, and sometimes from men who ought to know better, and who ought to be ashamed to display such ignorance in regard to the teaching of the Bible. The most casual reader cannot help seeing that ten per cent. was the minimum sum required in the Bible for God’s ancient people, the Jews, as well as for all the rest of mankind.

“In addition to the annual tithe, there were a great many feasts held by the Jews to which they had to contribute of their substance. There was a special feast once in three years for the poor; in fact, these feasts were daily, weekly, monthly and yearly, and each of these feasts was supported by the voluntary offerings of the people. Then there were sacrifices of various kinds; sacrifices of burnt offerings, sin offerings, heave offerings, thank offerings, and peace offerings. Each of these offerings required the material substance of God’s people, and God states: ‘These things shall ye do unto the Lord in your set feasts, besides your vows and free-will offerings.’ I think that if a careful computation be made of the usual and ordinary givings of pious Jews, it amounted to at least twenty-five per cent. of their income; so that stingy Christian men cannot get behind their municipal taxes, and ease their consciences by supposing that these municipal taxes stand in the stead of God’s tithe laws.



GEORGE PEABODY, the Philanthropist.

*Mr. Peabody was born in Danvers, Massachusetts, U.S., February 18th, 1795, and died in London, Eng., November 4th 1869. His body was interred in Westminster Abbey, until it was carried to his native home by Her Britannic Majesty's ship **Monarch**. His vast fortune was chiefly made in London, and there he spent £60,000 (approximately \$14,000,000 in 2026 dollars) in erecting a home for the poor. His public benefactions amounted to \$8,470,000 (approximately \$361,625,000 in 2026 dollars).*

I know one wealthy man who keeps his tithe account with God in the following way. He loans considerable money and usually at large interest, and is not as careful in the matter of security as ordinary bankers, and all the bad debts he has, he charges to God's Tithe Account, holding God responsible for all the bad debts he makes, so that at the end of the year he has little or nothing to give to God's cause, having charged up to the Most High all the results of his own blunders. It requires a large amount of ingenuity to create a robe of charity large enough to cover up the inconsistencies and defects, not to say the stinginess and dishonesty, of a large proportion of professing Christians. If we are to measure a man's love for a cause by what he does for it, then the real love for God is a very small quantity in the breasts of a great many professing Christians.

“The objection upon this last paper which I intend reading to you this evening, is by no means new, and is, I believe, often stated by good honest Christian people, although to tell the truth, it displays a lamentable lack of knowledge of both the Old and New Testaments.



“‘The New Testament puts giving to God upon higher ground than the Old Testament, and appeals to our love, and in my opinion, under the dispensation of grace, Christian men are left to the promptings of their own hearts in the matter of their givings.’ Paul distinctly states, that we are to give as we have

been prospered; some can give more than the tenth, while it would be simple injustice to ask ten per cent. of others.'

"Here are several propositions in one; and, for the sake of clearness in my answer, I will analyze the statement and set out the objections it contains in order. It is stated (1) That the New Testament puts giving upon higher grounds than the Old Testament, because the former appeals to our love; (2) Under the dispensation of grace, Christian men are left to their own will in the matter of giving; (3) Paul is quoted to the effect that we are to give according as we have been prospered; and (4) Some can give more than a tenth, while it would be simple injustice to claim a tenth of others.

"Now, as to the first proposition concerning the nobler incentive of the New Testament over the Old, I certainly have no objection; for if the incentive be higher or nobler, then the results will be in proportion. We have seen, what I think no intelligent person will dispute, that the minimum sum demanded of all persons in the Old Testament is a tenth. Now, if a tenth was then paid as a tribute or tax, and a stronger incentive is now appealing to us, then surely our contributions to God's cause will be greater now than then. But, as a matter of fact, God's money law is like the laws for truth, honesty and chastity, the same under all dispensations.

"It, in all probability, started with Adam and was certainly observed by Abraham, and ran all through the Jewish dispensation; it branched out in separate streams in all directions prior to the days of Abraham, as traces of it are seen in Gentile nations. All these streams meet again under the Christian dispensation and form one mighty river. The New Testament does indeed appeal to our love, but there is no room for the exercise of love in this matter until we have paid our actual debt of ten per cent., as demanded in both Testaments. When this is done, then love can prompt us to do generous things.

“As to the second objection, that Christian men are left to their own wills, to give as much or as little as they please, it has no foundation in the teachings of Jesus or His Apostles, unless we are to assume that the will of the Christian is always in harmony with God’s will. Assuming that Christians are always thus sanctified, there can be no objections to the statement; but, unless the great majority of professing Christians are consummate hypocrites, and there be but few real Christians, this assumption cannot be correct, for Church statistics prove that the will of the majority is clearly opposed to the will of God in the matter of giving, as the results demonstrate that God’s minimum sum even is not reached, to say nothing of the display of benevolence, prompted by the nobler incentive of love. I, therefore, conclude that it is not safe to put our wills, or the promptings of our own hearts, as regulators of our duty, but rather, our wills and impulses must be formed and regulated by God’s will—‘to the law and to the testimony’ must be our appeal.

“As to the third objection, that we are to give as we have been prospered, this must be used without a proper apprehension of the meaning of the language used by Paul, for it certainly counts the other way. There can be no stronger argument for ‘Systematic Giving.’ If we give according as we get, it means giving proportionately. For instance, if last year you made five hundred dollars, God demanded fifty; if He blessed you this year with one thousand dollars, He asks at your hands one hundred dollars; if you get fifteen hundred dollars next year, His minimum demand will be one hundred and fifty dollars. If you commence giving to God according as He prospers your business, you need not be surprised if your income increases year by year, for this is just the way He honors those who honor Him.

“Concerning the last objection, that some can undoubtedly give more than a tenth, while it would be wrong to ask that much of others, I have to say, that some can undoubtedly give more than a great blessing for them to do so, just as some can spend more than one day a week in God’s service if they choose to do so, and derive great spiritual blessings in so doing; still, God’s actual

demand is a tenth in the one case and a seventh in the other, and all we give over is a free-will offering. To say that it is unjust to ask of any man ten per cent. of his earnings for the cause of God, is a statement at once narrow and untrue. Narrow, because it leaves God out of the account—the God of infinite resources, who has pledged His eternal word that he who gives a tenth shall never lack a tenth to give; and untrue, because God never demands that which is unequal or unjust, and He most certainly demands the tithe from all mankind.

“And now; my friends, I have done my best to answer the questions and objections handed in, and I must close my Talk for this evening as it is getting late. I thank you for your very kind attention, and I pray that our Heavenly Father may lead each one of us into the light, and give us glad hearts to ‘run in the way of His commandments.’”

When I took my seat there was for a moment the same marked stillness which characterized this meeting all through, and then it seemed that every man inside of the church, and those looking in at the windows, simultaneously broke out in the most boisterous applause. The chairman, after much effort, restored comparative silence, and then made a neat and complimentary speech, the sincerity of which was proved by his statement that all his objections to the doctrine of the tithe were forever silenced. Fully a score of men attempted to speak, and many were the suggestions made as to the best method of spreading this doctrine and stirring up the Churches to the importance of Systematic Giving. Two suggestions I made up my mind to adopt: the one was to have a public testimony meeting, and the other was to reproduce the conversations at all the meetings and publish them in a book.

It occurred to me that the most competent men to confirm or reject my theory were those who have tested it; and I made up my mind not to have this testimony meeting for a week, so that ample time could be given to publish it abroad, and invite men to testify who had been in the habit of paying tithes. As to publishing a book containing a full report of the meetings, it seemed the

proper thing to do; for the simple Bible truth which has caused such a stir in and around our community, and which has been productive of such good results, will equally stir the entire Christian Church, if the truths can be brought to bear on the minds of the people; and nothing in the book this age can do that as well as a book when it is well circulated. I announced for the testimony meeting one week from that evening, and told them of my determination to publish the book, and we adjourned at, I confess, a late hour.

The time for the next meeting had arrived, and I was on hand at the proper time. The crowd was much greater than on any previous occasion. We had visitors from great distances, many persons having written me of their intention to be present. From the letters received, I knew that we were to have strong testimonies, fully confirming all I had stated as to the effects of tithing upon a man's finances and upon his religious experience.

A Church of England clergyman, who had preached and practised the Bible plan of tithing for years, was present; and, without asking his consent, I called upon him to open the meeting with prayer. From the fervent prayer he offered, we learned that he was on good terms with God, and had been accustomed to address Him without the Prayer Book. Everything being ready, I announced that we would proceed with...

TALK NO. 5

TESTIMONIES AND EXPERIENCES

“Ladies and gentlemen, this meeting is the last of a series of meetings which we have been holding in this community in the interest of God’s money demand. The position taken by myself is known probably to all of you. I hold that God has distinctly told us the minimum sum He requires of us, so that no man need stand in doubt. God promises material and spiritual prosperity to those who are obedient to His demands, and a plank of prosperity is invariably underneath those who walk out upon the promises referred to. This meeting has been called for the purpose of testimonies and experiences along this line. I need not detain you with the relation of my personal experience. It will be sufficient for me to state, that everything I have stated in these informal Talks is confirmed by my experience, and, in a good degree, is born of my experience.

“I now throw the meeting open for any person to speak who has systematically practised tithing. Do not be trammelled by anything I have said, or attempt to make your statements conform to my exact theory. Let us have your experience just as it is, and it will support the truth if you are walking in the Divine order. Who will be the first to testify?”

First Witness.—“I desire to get in my word of testimony while some others may be getting ready. I am a general agent, and I have practised giving not less than one-tenth of my income to charitable, philanthropic and religious enterprises for nearly five years. I have enjoyed giving in this way more than I have enjoyed giving it; and, although I have given away a larger proportion of my income than formerly, I have always had more left to spend on myself than I had before. I believe the practice of ‘Systematic Giving’ has been a

blessing to me, both temporally and spiritually, and it is my intention to follow the practice as long as I live.”

Second Witness.—“‘Systematic Giving’ I believe to be the duty of every child of God, and none can do it so well as those who have a system. I have followed it now for over nine years; and, although my contributions have been possibly a little liberal, yet I have not missed the money. I began business nine years ago as a general merchant, and in doing so I got a small box and labelled it, ‘The Lord’s Treasury.’ Every night I count the cash taken in, and enter it in a book kept for that purpose. On Saturday night I add up the cash sales for the week, and deduct three per cent. for ‘The Treasury.’ This is my fund for the Church and benevolent purposes. For the first two or three years I gave three per cent.; then I raised it and gave five per cent., until the beginning of last year, when I was rather hard run for cash, and thought possibly that I was drawing too heavily on the business, and since then I have given three per cent., and always have funds on hand. I would like to hear from any one else who may be able to give light and encouragement on the subject, for I do not know whether it was a test of my faith or not when my funds were getting short a year or two ago.”

Leader.—“I think the brother who last spoke has missed the Scriptural idea of the tithe; besides, any given per cent. of the gross cash handled by a business man does not necessarily involve a uniform per cent. of income, as the profits on different lines of goods vary, and besides there can be no account taken of expenses in the system our brother has adopted. The Bible plan is to ‘tithe our increase’ or income. I give it as my opinion that our brother paid more than ten per cent. of his income even when he paid only three per cent.”



GOD'S TREASURY.

Third Witness.—"I am glad that some of the Lord's people are thinking of their duty in the matter of giving of their substance, or, rather, returning of some of their substance to His treasury. When I saw the notice of this meeting I thought that I would like to attend, and say a word to let the leader know that there was one more, at least, of like faith and practice with himself. As to the faith, I do not believe that under the present dispensation we are definitely commanded to give a tenth; but we are supposed to be energized by a far greater power than that of law, viz., love; and if our love does not cause us to give willingly as much as the law called for, it is not saying much for its marvellous power of which we talk so glibly. We are continually comparing our dispensation with that of the Mosaic, and thanking the Lord that it is so much better; but is there any reality in our thanksgiving if our estimation of it does not cause us to give up at least a tenth of our income?

"On this question no rule can be laid down that will apply to all parties. While for one man it would be right to give a tenth, his neighbor might be doing wrong if he did not give at least a fifth. The affair should be settled in every case with Jesus Christ. However, I could not think much of a man's honesty

towards, and love for, Jesus, if he came away from communion with Him on the subject with an idea that he should give less than a tenth. It can be done, and it will be better for the man, no matter how small the income. If it be true that both material and spiritual blessings follow the giving up of substance to the Lord's work, then, I think, it is safe to say that ninety cents is better with God's blessing than one hundred cents without it.

"But, how with those who have an abundance of this world's goods? Should they retire to enjoy themselves while they have health and strength to make more money? I do not think so. They are stewards, and in that sense own nothing, and will be brought to account for the way in which they have used their Lord's substance. Surely it is the duty of such to make all they can, not that they may use some of it even in foolish luxuries, but rather that they may give it ALL to the establishment and spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This much about my faith, now a word as to practice.

"Shortly after I was converted, about fifteen years ago, and before I was baptized, I decided to give at least a tenth of every dollar that the Lord gave me. In my new found Lord joy I wanted to give more, but in talking with the Lord about it I felt that I should not do it. I have kept the rule of taking the tenth out of the money as it came in, with the exception of about four years. During that time I gave something, but did not set apart a tenth of all the money that came in, for the simple reason that I did not think it my own. On account of my peculiar connection with a certain enterprise, and its unexpected collapse, I was suddenly thrown into debt 'head and ears.'

"I believe in a Christianity that pays one hundred cents to the dollar, so I made things point to the clearing off of debts. However, I got through safely and had about five hundred dollars over, which amount I immediately tithed. I do not now, however, think I did right; debt or no debt, I think now that I should have stuck closer to my rule. In my selling out to continue my studies at McMaster Hall, I can see several places where I lost quite heavily. It may

be that these losses would have been avoided had I been strictly true to the principle.

“However, in the meantime, it is my duty to give a tenth, and I rejoice in the privilege, and I hope to see the time when it will be my duty to give more, but that will not be until my income is greater than that of a student. Having usually a little of the Lord’s money on hand, I give not altogether as I may be urged by eloquent emotional speeches, but to the departments of work that I believe to be most needy and deserving.”

Leader.—“I regard the testimony of the young man who has just taken his seat as important, and all the more so, because he gives it without knowing anything of my particular theory, this being the first meeting he has attended. His experience fully confirms the promises of the Bible as interpreted by myself, and is a repetition, as an individual, of the Jewish national experience, for when they paid tithes they prospered, and when they did not, disaster and defeat attended them. Our brother certainly makes a mistake in expressing the opinion that the New Testament does not demand the same minimum sum as the Old Testament, and I am sure he will be convinced of his error if he digs a little deeper into the subject.

“The meeting is now open for more testimonies.”

Fourth Witness.—“I am a minister of the Gospel in a distant city, and I gladly give my experience in the ‘giving a tenth.’ In September, 1883, after having the subject brought before me in some pamphlets that were issued by a ‘layman’ in Chicago, and after earnest prayer, I concluded to set apart henceforth one-tenth of my income as the Lord’s portion. It required faith to take the step just then, for my finances were in anything but a flourishing condition, and my needs were pressing. However, from that hour, the question of giving was settled with me, and now I have pretty strong convictions on the subject of giving to the Lord’s work. I never had any real joy in giving till I set apart a tenth as the Lord’s, and then giving became an easy, delightful

service. I was at once brought into a new fellowship with Christ, and have been very much blessed in the Lord's work. The most prosperous years of my ministerial career have been since I sought thus to 'honor the Lord' with my substance.

"For a time I said nothing about my new decision, determining to watch carefully the effect upon myself and give it a fair trial before saying much about it. In a few months, however, I felt that I could speak, and, as my people know, I am now an earnest advocate of 'proportionate giving,' and think the tenth the smallest proportion that should be set apart as the Lord's.

"I may say since I adopted the tithe system I have had less worry about finances than ever before, though my salary is below the average city salary."

Leader.—"That experience is true to the Bible pattern and is a fulfilment of the promises of God. I am under great obligation to this city clergyman for his definite testimony. Now let us have another."

Fifth Witness.—"I adopted the tithing system seven years ago. My income since that time has been about quadrupled. I may say, however, that while an earnest believer in systematic beneficence, I am by no means sure that the tenth should be given by every one, regardless of their circumstances. If it is the proper proportion for the poor and the struggling then, assuredly, a larger proportion should be given by those who are in circumstances of ease or affluence. Some of the vexed and vexing questions of the day would be speedily adjusted if men generally would give as God hath prospered them."

Leader.—"The gentleman who has just spoken will pardon me if I more fully introduce him to this audience. He is a Methodist local preacher, of great acceptability; he is also a medical doctor, and, I believe, gave up a successful practice of medicine for another line of business in which he is eminently successful, and has few equals in the same line. To say the least, it is a strange

coincidence that his financial success dates from the time he commenced tithing his income. Now for another witness.”

Sixth Witness.—“My experience of the practice of tithing my income has been so limited that I cannot speak positively of its benefit to me, or otherwise. I have long believed that every one who professed to be a follower of Jesus Christ was bound, as a matter of duty as well as love to Him to contribute of his substance towards the support and extension of His cause. But while giving, as I thought, liberally, it was spasmodically and generally unsatisfactory to myself. Some years ago I thought this matter over to see if there was no definite rule of Christian giving, and came to the conclusion that every one ought to devote at least one-tenth of his income to the Lord.

“At that time I did not adopt the principle, and whether through that neglect or not I am not prepared to say, but of this I am confident, had I given a certain sum which I felt I ought to have given, and which I then had by me, I would have escaped a great (for me) financial loss. Had I given that money I would not have been in a position to have gone into the venture, which promised very great returns, but which proved a great disaster, absorbing not only the first sum put in, but many subsequent ones, which I was under obligation to pay. For the past two years I have adopted the principle of ‘systematic giving’ of at least one-tenth of my income, and so far have found no reason to regret the decision. During the latter period my financial affairs have been in the most satisfactory condition I have ever had them.”

Leader.—“As many of you know, the last witness is a leading man in financial circles in our neighboring city, as well as the manager of one of the largest loan societies. Now the gentleman who was on his feet can speak.”

Seventh Witness.—“I am a farmer, without any education, and not used to speaking in public, but I came to this meeting to give my experience as a warning to others, if for nothing else. When I was giving the tenth of all my income to God I prospered much temporally, and in spiritual experience as

well. I am sorry that I did not keep it up; one said that I was crazy, and another, it was not necessary, as I am a poor man, and I did not know myself for certain, so I gave it up.

“Since then I could tell you of a long list of failures. I commenced to give the tenth again on the 7th of April, and I intend to do so as long as I live. I cannot tell how much it will be, neither do I intend to let any one else know. I will look for the promise in Malachi, and believe what Christ says in the fifth chapter of Matthew. My desire is to be satisfied with my portion, as my life will soon be a thing of the past. God help me to be faithful to the end.”

Leader.—“You see, my friends, it is the same old story of defeat and disaster while living in disobedience, and blessed prosperity when all the tithes are brought in. Now for another witness to the truth of God.”

Eighth Witness.—“I desire to make a statement of my experience. Our family commenced, some years ago, to give, or rather to pay, to the Lord the amount which His law has set down as the minimum sum due to Him. Before we were honest towards the Lord in this way we were constantly meeting with losses, which undoubtedly we deserved for robbing Him of His dues. First, we lost by fire a house on which there was a very small insurance; then we were burned out of a rented house and shop, and lost most of our furniture and part of our stock, both of which were uninsured; shortly after that we lost one hundred dollars in cash, and one of the family took sick and the doctoring was a heavy cost, so that, in one way and another, we had much more taken out of us than we had withheld from the Lord. After these losses our eyes were opened to see our duty in this respect, and we never prospered financially so well as since we set up our tithe purse. Then, it is so pleasant when a call is made asking aid for the Church or benevolent purposes to always have money on hand for the purpose.”

A man who stood waiting for his turn to speak said:—“I have for four years past been setting aside one-tenth of my earnings, and I would not abandon it.

Instead of being worried every time I am asked for a subscription, I can always say at once what I can do, and have realized what I never did before, the ‘luxury of giving.’ I might say more, but will give way for others.”

Another said:—“I am from Nova Scotia. I have been giving one-tenth of my income to the Lord for a number of years, and have been enabled to give from sixty to one hundred dollars per year.”

Another stood up and testified:—“I am a general merchant. I beg leave to say that I adopted the plan of tithing about two years ago. I have given on system for some years, that is, I gave a certain sum, but being in debt, as business men generally are, I did not feel like giving a tenth until I read a tract on Christian giving a tenth. I then adopted the plan, and have no cause to regret it. My business has nearly doubled since I started. I can say with the Psalmist, as in the twenty-third Psalm. I have distributed a number of tracts, and others are about trying the plan.”

A young man stood and testified as follows:—“For the past few months I have been tithing my income, although I am in debt and struggling to pay up. Formerly I believed that so long as I was in debt I had no business to give to the Lord, but now I regard the debt to the Lord as the first and most important. I believe that had I always adopted this plan, I would to-day be in a better position financially. When I have withheld the tenth from God, He has taken it from me through sickness or loss of some kind. I believe that a tenth is the least that any Christian should give to the Lord, and that every one should go as far beyond that as his income and circumstances will allow.”

Leader.—“The gentleman, to whose experience you have just listened, is the Secretary of a Y. M. C. A. in one of our cities. If he will pardon me, I will say, that if the Bible is not true, and if human experience cannot be relied upon, he is acting the part of a fool to give away ten per cent. of his income while he is in debt and expect to get out of debt thereby; but if the Bible is true, and the testimonies of those who have tested its promises count for anything, then his

decision to tithe his income is the outcome of the highest wisdom, and his acts must be approved even by men who look no higher than a safe financial investment. Now we are ready for another witness.”

Thirteenth Witness.—“I hastened to enroll myself amongst those who, for many years, have carried out, and in some cases doubled, the tithe mentioned. My heart goes out to all those who are carrying out this rule, not as a matter of duty simply, but out of love and gratitude to Jesus Christ.”

Leader.—“For a leading stock broker in one of our largest cities, this experience is good, though it be short and given with characteristic modesty. Now the next.”

Fourteenth Witness.—“I am a Methodist minister in charge of a city church. I have made it a rule of my life to give one-tenth of my income to benevolent enterprises. I set aside one-tenth and then use it for the Lord to the best advantage possible. I would not abandon this practice.”

Fifteenth Witness.—“I, too, am a Methodist minister, and I beg to say that since the beginning of the year I have been keeping an account so as to prove to myself that I am giving not less than one-tenth. I think one-tenth a low proportion, but I have only this year begun ‘systematic giving.’ I am specially interested in the subject, and am doing all I can to extend the doctrine.”

Sixteenth Witness.—“I am a Baptist minister, and a returned missionary. If I take up a little more time in this meeting than the average speaker, I trust my long experience and great love for the cause will be a sufficient excuse. Some twenty-five years ago it was my privilege to introduce the Bible system of finance—a proportionate part of the income regularly and systematically devoted to God—into a feeble mission in India. Not a few of my native brethren received the teaching eagerly and obeyed it promptly. Among these was one of my native preachers—Bhelsari Naih. This man, prior to tithing his income, was always in difficulty, even complaining of the smallness of his



THE HINDOO WHO GAVE TITHES.

income (he received \$4.80 a month for a family of five adults). He began at once to tithe himself. After about three months he and I met in connection with our work among the heathen, and the following conversation occurred: ‘Well, Bhelsari, how does the tithing system work?’ ‘Capitally, sir.’ ‘Ah, how is that? you were always complaining of being hard up, and even in debt, when you used your whole income for self; now, you give one-tenth to God, you have no complaints.’ ‘Ah, sir, the nine-tenths, with God’s blessing, is better far than the ten-tenths used to be without it.’ This brother continued to pay into my hands the sum of forty-eight cents every month as long as he was associated with me in that part of the field. What he afterwards did, of course, I cannot say.

“In 1865, in the town of Brunswick, Maine, a young lady heard a sermon on this subject. She was not then a Christian. Some three months later, the minister who preached that sermon heard a lady’s voice calling to him in subdued tones on the street. He paused and entered into conversation with the lady. The substance of the conversation is given below:

“‘You have the advantage of me, Miss, you seem to know me!’ ‘Yes, sir, I heard you preach at McLellan’s Hall about three months ago, on the subject

of giving a tenth to God. I am a telegraph operator. I have a widowed mother and a younger sister to support. Your arguments struck me as being Scriptural and conclusive, and though not then a Christian, I determined to obey, out of regard for the authority of God. I paid my tenth from that time, and I have been wishing to see you for some weeks past to tell you that what you told us was proved true in my own experience. I had not tithed myself two months before my salary was raised without any hint or solicitation from me, to an amount sufficiently large to more than cover the tithe paid up to that time to God.' This young lady had been converted in the meantime.

"A young man in Calcutta, India, heard the same sermon from the same preacher in 1873, and he became convinced of his duty with reference to paying his tenth to God. He was in the Government Treasury Department on a salary of about eighty-five dollars a month. His tithe was promptly and honestly paid, hoping for nothing again. Now, mark the result; he told the preacher that within two months his salary was raised to ninety-six dollars a month without any solicitation on his part.

"In 1863, in Oxford County, a farmer who tithed himself was singularly saved from loss by the weevil. That insect came into that neighborhood in that year and ate up all before it. The crops of others all around were scarcely worth cutting. Several of his neighbors wondered at the good crops scarcely touched by the weevil which they saw on neighbor H.'s fields. They offered him four and even five acres of theirs for one of his. Here is a literal fulfilment of Malachi iii. 11. That farmer still lives, an old man of nearly eighty-seven, and can ratify the statement here made.

"In my own experience, during a period of over twenty-five years, I have clear and indubitable proof that the Lord God means what He says in the passage quoted. For several years the blessing came in the form of occasional trifling increases in regular income, and frequently in the shape of extraneous financial aid over and above income, as need required. In 1873, the income was doubled. In 1881, we began to pay one-tenth and give one-fortieth, equal

in all to one-eighth of our income, and the blessing has come in increased measure, both spiritual and temporal. In 1879, we had given, above our tithe, under pressure of circumstances, nearly one-twentieth, or about one-seventh of all, and just at that juncture were ordered out of India, our then present field of labor. We had to pay our own expenses, and were short of means, lacked nearly five hundred dollars, as we supposed. We continued giving and asked the Lord to supply our well. Just the last two weeks we were in the country, He sent us from extraneous sources, without our asking any man for help, the sum of four hundred and eight dollars, which was enough, with what we had, to pay our way home and have a little left. I could greatly multiply instances of this kind but I refrain.

“I will venture to give a recent demonstration of His faithfulness. The one-eighth is still placed in the Lord’s treasury, hoping for nothing again, giving because we love to give, would not be deprived of the privilege of giving. During the first three months of this year (1887), we were permitted to place, out of comparatively small means, twenty-three dollars in the Lord’s treasury, that is, out of our regular income. Now, mark, during the same period the Lord gave us from extraneous sources entirely, outside our regular stipend, the sum of seventy-three dollars, two hundred per cent. interest. *The Lord will allow no man to be His creditor!* Instead of putting our funds into so called insurance societies or superannuated ministers’ funds, we place it in the Bank of Heaven, the Lord pays the interest while we live, and should the husband be removed, the wife will get the principal, that is, if she personally trusts in Him. Jer. xlix. 11.”

A young man rose and said: “I belong to the Congregational Church, and I desire to say that I have practised the tenth plan of giving, for religious and charitable purposes, for two years, and the result has been to remove any doubt which may have existed in adopting it. Previous to adopting this system, I was frequently troubled as to what I should give to this or that object, but now I know at once what I can do by consulting my tenth account.

At the outset, intimate friends were almost impatient with me because I was, in their opinion, giving more than I was able; I did not feel so, and the result has been very satisfactory. It led me to look closely after my expenditures, and I have saved sufficiently in that way to, more than pay the increased amount given. Then the Lord has blessed me in greater measure during these two years in temporal matters than before; I have received, from unexpected sources, outside of my employment, larger sums than I have given. I shall adhere to the plan whether my revenues increase or decrease, because I believe it to be the right one, and because I can, in the majority of cases, give *promptly* and *cheerfully* to objects which commend themselves to my judgment.”

A young lady said, with much modesty: “I am a stenographer, and I should like to add my testimony to what others have said. It is now nearly two years since I first gave the matter any serious consideration, and after reading up the subject, and thinking it over carefully, I came to the conclusion that it was my duty to give a tenth, and that God required it of me, and once being fully convinced that that was the proper way to give, I have followed it ever since. I can truly say that I have derived more pleasure from giving in this way than ever before. Formerly, when asked to give to charitable purposes, the question would arise in my mind as to whether or not I could afford to do so, but now, knowing that I have just so much to give, I can proportion it, and thus give to many objects I would have had to refuse, were it not for this system of giving one-tenth.

“I consider the Lord’s account as sacred as any account between man and man, and regularly each month, as I draw my salary, the Lord’s share is laid aside. I certainly do not regret having adopted the system, and can truthfully say that I never miss what I give in this way.”

A clergyman testified as follows:—“I am a Minister of the Gospel, and I came here on purpose to testify in behalf of this faith. I have practised along this line for about a year and have scrupulously devoted a tenth of my income

to the service of God, and by reflection have learned to recognize several things.

“(1.) That by dividing the profits with God I realize that He is a living partner with me in my work: that He is the God of dollars and cents, as well as the God of spiritual blessings. It has enabled me to live nearer to the requirement of Scripture, which says, ‘Take no thought for the morrow,’ because, if in trouble, I can talk with God, the wiser partner, and He sets the matter right in a little time; in brief, it takes a load of worry off my shoulders.

“(2.) This last year has been the year of my life so far, for ‘outgo;’ that is, never since I entered the ministry have I had so many obligations to meet in one year, so that this year has not been a favorable one by which to test this question from a financial point of view. Yet, during the year, I have held rigorously to the principle. You may ask the question, ‘did it interfere or cripple you in your finances?’ I have only one answer to give and that is, the nine-tenths of my income met all my expenditure, and all my household expenses, and did it easier than ever the whole income did it before. This may seem strange to some, yet it is true, though I cannot explain it. It is like some other things that God does. I cannot explain them, I only know them to be facts. My experience teaches me, that if a man pays his tenth to God, that \$9 will supply his needs better than \$10 will if he robs God.

“(3.) Before adopting God’s plan I often suffered in my conscience, as any sincere person must who does likewise, about doing my duty in giving. Sometimes I thought I gave too much, and sometimes I thought I gave too little, but when my attention was called to God’s plan of giving, after a careful examination to see whether it was God’s plan, I accepted it, and now I know when I have done my duty, which knowledge greatly helps me in the Divine life. Now I am at rest, for I give as the Lord prospers me.”

Another brother said:—“I live on a farm and have practised systematic giving about three months, and find no difficulty in working it on a farm. As

to the financial aspect of the question, I have not had time to test that.”

The head master of a public school said:—“I adopted this system about a year ago, and find I have more to give to God and more for myself than ever before. It helps both ways, more for God and more for myself.”

Another testified:—“I am a shoemaker. Since I adopted this system my business is better, and I am satisfied that it is the only way of obeying God on the line of giving. I am a warm advocate of the system for the reason that it is a blessing to me, and I want others to share in it.”

A lady gave her experience next:—“I have practised tithing for more than ten years; during that time I lived on a farm, and I find it as easily worked on a farm as anywhere else. I have prospered under the system, and always have money on hand for the Lord’s cause. I do not stand in fear of being asked for money, for it is a pleasure to give, as we look upon it as not our own and have no right to withhold it.”

Another lady testified as follows:—“It is now over two years since I was convinced that God began the tenth belonged to God, and I began to pay Him this debt. Previously to this I had never given in any kind of a systematic way, and never derived any particular pleasure from giving; but since I started to tithe my income and give systematically, I have taken real enjoyment out of the little I have been able to give. I keep an exact account of what comes in, and tithe it and place it to the Lord’s credit, and I know at all times just what I can give to this or that object, and have no fears, after it is given, that I have been too hasty and have given more than I ought or could afford. I have never missed what I have given, and, in fact, I have earned more money in the past two years than ever before in my life.”

A godly minister gave the following extraordinary testimony:—“I want to bear my testimony to the privilege and luxury of giving away money for God. I am a Methodist minister, have a wife and three daughters to support, and

have never been in receipt of a large income. However, with prudence and economy, and, above all, with the blessing of God upon our limited store, we live in comfort and manage to lay aside, for benevolent and religious purposes, a proportion of our income that far exceeds one-tenth or even one-fifth of the entire amount. For the encouragement of others, and more especially for the Divine glory, I will furnish you with a few of the financial facts of my history.

“Somewhat over ten years ago, when my savings amounted to \$600, I was deeply impressed that I should contribute one-half of that sum towards the cause of Christ; and, although it had been my intention to devote my small capital for an entirely different purpose, I resolved to obey what I firmly believed to be a Divine intimation, and accordingly the sum of \$300 was presented as a thank-offering to God. The joy and rapture that filled my soul in connection with this act of consecration were more than a compensation for the bestowment of half my earthly substance for the Master’s use, teaching me these lessons: (1.) That God does not remain long in His children’s debt. (2.) That what we get from God is vastly more than what we give to God, and (3.) That it is always safe to obey the voice of the Spirit without question or debate.

“Within three days after subscribing the sum named, it was all returned to me again. This was a matter of great surprise to me, as I had expected to pay the amount in full. Shortly after this I contributed the sum of \$50 towards the erection of a church on my charge, and a few months later, when the same church was dedicated, I was led to promise the sum of \$1500 more, which, at that time, was \$900 more than all I possessed. Under ordinary circumstances, I admit that such an act would have been one of great imprudence and even fanaticism; but when God calls, the measure of our ability is never the measure of our duty. The Israelites had no ability to open up a channel through the Red Sea, yet they were commanded to go forward, and the



“THERE IS A LAD HERE WHICH HATH FIVE BARLEY LOAVES
AND TWO SMALL FISHES.” ST. JOHN VI.

disciples had but a beggarly supply of food in the five loaves and two fishes; nevertheless they were instructed to feed the hungry multitude. Verily, ‘where wit and reason end, there faith begins.’ God, by His miraculous power, cut a passage through the Red Sea for the advancing hosts of His people, and the Divine Christ multiplied the scanty provision in hand till it satisfied the craving hunger of more than five thousand people. Trust in God always comes out on the winning side. Having pledged the sum of \$1500, my soul was filled with unutterable sweetness and joy. I felt richer than ever, and also that I was a thousand leagues beyond all necessity for human sympathy and commiseration. Some sympathizing friends, however, regarding my case as pitiable, subscribed the sum of \$600 towards assisting to meet my heavy obligation. This donation the Lord would not permit me to accept, and I have never appropriated one dollar of it to this day for my own benefit; all that was paid on it has long since been handed over to the building fund of the said church.”

It was the Lord’s will that I should pay the entire amount of my subscription unaided by the kindness of my friends. By a succession of providences I was enabled to pay every dollar and part in advance, finding myself considerably better off in earthly substance, to say nothing of spiritual enrichment, than when the subscription was made. Within six weeks after the church to which I had given so largely was dedicated sixty souls were converted to God, making me feel, I can assure you, that my investment for Christ was already bearing an enormous interest.

“In the last ten years I have given away not less than \$3,500, and I cannot describe to you the satisfaction, and joy, and blessing that have come to me and my family as the result.

“This is my testimony, that the promises of God, in reference to temporal blessings, are just as reliable as those pertaining to spiritual blessings, providing the conditions of consecration are observed.

“In regard to the *tenth* principle, I recognize it as an appointment of God for the regulation of the property trust, and believe it to be of perpetual obligation. But if our hearts are imbued with the self-sacrificing love of Christ, our contributions will spontaneously overleap this minimum regulation of the Divine law, and constrain us to place our all in willing disposal at the Master’s feet; and we may rest assured that our Father in Heaven, whose generosity knows no bounds, who clothes the lily with beauty, and feeds the young ravens when they cry, will leave us amply sufficient for all our temporal needs. ‘Praise God from whom all our blessings flow.’ ‘Praise the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.’”

CLOSING REMARKS

I think we have had enough evidence presented here to-night to establish the Bible case, and I deem it unnecessary to call any more witnesses. The amount and kind of evidence we have heard, if presented in any court of law, would establish, to the satisfaction of any judge or jury, the most improbable kind of facts; but when it is considered that the evidence given is in support of what, without it, is highly probable, the proof is simply overwhelming, and if the human mind can rest with absolute certainty in anything it seems to me to be in the three general propositions which have been interwoven in all our talks and in all the evidence submitted. (a) That God demands of all mankind at least one-tenth of income. (b) That in rendering obedience to that command a man is invariably better off financially, and (c) That if a man is a Christian it

draws him nearer to God and makes his spiritual experience more real than ever before.

I need not comment upon the testimonies which have been given, as they are all clear and unmistakable. I will simply point out to any who may yet be doubters, that all the witnesses, and all the evidence, will bear the strictest tests with which legal minds weigh evidence. There has been no collusion of witnesses, they are all strangers one to the other, and one did not know what was to be the evidence of the other. There has not been a single contradiction, for while a slight variation of opinion has been expressed, yet as to the matter of fact there has been perfect unanimity. The credibility of these witnesses is beyond question, as they are the best men in the various communities in which they live. You will further notice that the evidence presented is not of the nature of an opinion, it is not simply telling us what they believe, for in this a man may be mistaken; the testimony is to *the fact* that they are better off financially since they began to tithe their incomes.

The thought occurs to me as I speak, that it is perfectly marvellous that no man can be found who has become poorer since he began to tithe his income, and yet such is the fact. This meeting was fully advertised, and no pre-arrangement made as to who should testify. Perfectly marvellous to a man of doubt, I should have said, for if one could be found who had become poorer on account of tithing his income, or since he began to do so, then God would have been found a liar, which never can be. Why should it seem a marvel that God's material promises are found to be true? What is clearer in the Bible than the fact that God promises material blessings to those who obey Him? What is more reasonable than the universal testimony that those who honor God with their substance are honored by Him in return, and in the same kind?

I have some propositions I desire to make before we close, to further strengthen the evidence for systematic giving.

1st. It is perfectly reasonable that God should demand a share of our earnings to carry on His cause in the world.

We are subjects of His government, He has put us under the fostering care of His church, and as nothing can be done in this world without money, it takes money to carry on the cause of God among men. Now who is there to pay this money but those who are benefited by it? And who are they? Surely the answer is, all who have heard the glad tidings of the Gospel; all who live in Christian lands, for what man is there who does not derive benefit from Christianity? Every man is under all reasonable obligation to pay his share to God's cause, in the same way as every man is under obligation to pay his share of the taxes of the land in which he lives. I have no hesitancy in saying that the man who cheats the municipality in which he resides, or the government under which he lives out of legal taxes, is just as honest a man as he who cheats God out of his royal tax.

2d. The demand for money from each individual is necessary. As just intimated, nothing can be done without money. It takes money to build churches; money to print and bind Bibles; money to support ministers and missionaries; money to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and give shelter to the homeless. The care of churches, lighting and heating them, and all other incidental expenses of Christian work mean an expenditure of money. This seems almost too simple a proposition to make, but for the fact that many men seem ignorant of it.

3rd. This monetary demand made upon us by God must certainly be proportionate.

He cannot expect as much from the poor as from the rich, nor can He have left it to our own whims or fancies. In all other things He is a God of law, order and system; and it is not reasonable to suppose that in this important matter there is an exception to the rule.



C. H. Spurgeon

The philanthropist is often lost sight of in this great preacher. He never gave away less than one-fifth of his income, it is said; but when we think of Stockwell Orphanage and the Pastor's College, both of which are mainly supported by him, his giving must largely exceed this proportion.

Then it would seem that God would make the proportion adequate to the needs of the case. In nature all causes are adequate to the effects to be produced, and I am of the opinion that God has established the same rule in the kingdom of grace.

From the last three propositions, which certainly appeal to reason, it would have been very strange if God, in His revealed word, had neglected to make adequate provision for funds to carry on His cause in the earth.

But the clear provision has been made in the Bible, and the demand of God is resting upon the people, and undoubtedly when the people render obedience the cause of God will make wonderful advances, and the kingdoms of this world will soon become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.

I will now close the meeting with this exhortation, which you will please take in place of a benediction:

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

PAY YOUR DEBTS

by

REV. E.C.B. HALLAM

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[image pending]

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PAY YOUR DEBTS.

We talk of giving to the cause of Christ, and most Christians think they are doing something in the way of giving of their means to the Lord. But before making much pretension as to liberality in giving, it might be well to pause and ask ourselves whether or not our just debts are paid.

The Lord Jesus does condescend to accept gifts from us—gifts prompted by love—but not until we have laid on His altar that which He claims as His own.

This claim many Christians absolutely refuse to recognize, and, therefore, never pay; and yet they have much to say about *giving to the Lord*.

It is written, in Leviticus xxvii. 30, that “... the one-tenth of all we have ‘... is the Lord’s; it is holy unto the Lord.’” That is to say, the Lord claims that proportion of our means as His portion, and requires that it be honestly set apart for His work and worship.

Now, what belongs to God certainly cannot belong to another, and no man has a shadow of right to appropriate it, or any portion thereof, to his own use. In *paying* to God one-tenth of the *all* He has given me, I am not *giving*, but paying honest debt; giving does not begin until the last fraction of the debt is paid. Suppose one man owes another ten dollars, which he refuses to pay, but instead offers him a few cents occasionally as a gift. Will he not refuse to recognize or receive the gift until the debt is acknowledged and paid? He most certainly will.



PRIEST OFFERING SACRIFICE.

It may be said that such a rule would reduce the number of *givers* to a very small minority. So much the worse for the so-called givers. Is it not God's rule? Does He not say to His people, "Pay me the tenth of all that I have given you, and then bring your free-will offerings, and I will accept them and bless you." The whole tenor of the Word, in its teachings on liberality, may be summed up in that one sentence. Not a few excuse themselves and shrink

from the paying of a tithe because, as *they* say, “Tithing was a purely Jewish institution, and it has passed away with the system of which it formed a part.”

This is only true in part. There were three tithes required of the Jews, viz.:

1. One every year for the service of the sanctuary. Num. xviii. 21: “And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, *for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.*”
2. Another tithe was demanded every year for religious festivals. Deut. xiv. 22, 23: “Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil,” etc., etc. This second tithe was to be eaten by the people themselves, “... that thou mayest learn to fear thy God always.”
3. Still another tithe was demanded, once in three years, for the poor. Deut. xiv. 28, 29: “At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee), and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied.”

This law concerning the tithe for the poor was peculiar to the Jewish polity, and passed away with that polity.

The second tithe, for religious feasts, is not now required, inasmuch as the feasts themselves have disappeared.

But the first tithe, *for the service of the sanctuary*, i.e., for the work and worship of God, has never been abolished; or if it has, the scriptural evidence of such abolition is wanting. True, the sanctuary as then served has passed

away, but the work and worship of God still remain. It was for this the tithe was required, and not for the building in which the service was rendered.

Tithing was prior to Judaism, i.e., prior to “the sanctuary,” because the work and worship of God were prior to it. Why, then, should not tithing survive Judaism, seeing that the work for which it has been paid still exists? Until the “service of the sanctuary” in every form shall cease, the necessity for its tithe exists. Until God surrenders His claim upon us for the service of His sanctuary, the “tenth is the Lord’s.”

This is God’s minimum demand—God’s alphabet of self-denial for His people. He asks, at least, one-tenth of the *all* which He has given to us, for Himself.

Surely every child of God ought to admit this claim, and feel bound by the law of love, and not by a legal enactment, as was the Jew, but by the law of love, as were the patriarchs. They felt the moral obligation to do this before any law was promulgated, and cheerfully did it. God recognized the propriety and equity of the practice by inserting a clause in His law requiring it from His people. It was, however, a law without a penalty, being left to the promptings of piety to decide as to its payment. Hebrew piety cheerfully paid it, and shall Christian piety withhold it? Every Christian knows that our obligations to God under the Gospel are commensurate with our increased privileges, and these are far superior to those of the Hebrew under his restricted economy. May it not be justly claimed, then, that Christian honesty demands the cheerful, prompt, regular and systematic payment, at least of one-tenth into God’s treasury, because “it is the Lord’s.” Others object to this practice because they “do not find any recognition of it in the New Testament.” Can they show, by clear New Testament evidence, that it has been abolished? We think not.

Besides, were such evidence forthcoming, with reference to *positive statute*, it would by no means prove that the duty is no longer binding. Do not fathers

often give positive commands to their children, the moral reasons for which the children utterly fail to comprehend? Take, for instance, the law of the consecration of the Sabbath. Christian fathers insist upon Sabbath observance in their families long before the child can understand the moral reasons for such a law. But when the child has grown up, and is no longer under the *positive* law of his father, he feels the duty of Sabbath consecration without the law, and the Sabbath is kept, not because of the father's law, now no longer binding, but for moral reasons, now thoroughly understood. May not the same have been the case with regard to tithing? Positive laws given until the obligation should be well understood, and then God's people left to the *law of love*.

Again, if the New Testament were utterly silent on this subject, it might be argued that it was silent because the principle was so thoroughly understood in New Testament times, and the practice so general that mention was not necessary. Is it not a very significant fact that New Testament writers make no mention of the abolition of this law, if it be abolished? How easy it would have been for them to mention this, in connection with other matters of whose "fulfilment" (abolition) they did write! This omission can only be accounted for on the supposition that there has been no repeal of this law.

But is the New Testament silent on the subject? Decidedly not. Read Matt. xxiii. 23: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: *these ought ye to have done, and NOT TO LEAVE THE OTHER UNDONE.*" The Lord Jesus Christ, in these words, teaches distinctly that "the weightier matters of the law" should receive our first attention; but He does not hint, even remotely, that the "tithe of mint and anise and cummin" were of no importance at all, but rather that it was a matter not to be left undone. Had He come to abrogate this law, as He did to abolish (by fulfilment) some other things in the law, this was an excellent opportunity for Him to give us an intimation of it. No such intimation is

given, but, instead, He rather enforces its authority, and the law stands unrepealed.

It seems clear, then, that the obligation to tithe himself, in love for Christ, rests upon the Christian. The duty is here asserted, incidentally it is true, but none the less emphatically, by the very highest authority, that of our beloved Master Himself.

Again, it is thought that the Apostles recognized the principle in their epistles. In I Cor. xvi. 2, Paul says: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." What does this phrase, "as God has prospered him," teach? If it teaches anything—has any force at all—it teaches that a *definite proportion* of our income should be regularly and systematically stored for God. The proportion is not here mentioned, because it was well understood. The Corinthian church, established by Paul himself, was seven years old at the time of this writing; and surely Paul had not neglected to instruct them in the precious privilege of Christian liberality! Nay, rather, but his epistles are burdened with such instruction! (See chapters viii. and ix. of II Corinthians.) Next to the great subject of Justification by Faith, there is no one thing upon which Paul has so much to say, as upon liberality.

Moses taught, "Pay a tithe of all to God for the service of the sanctuary." Paul teaches, "Store it for God every week." Paul and Moses do not disagree; nor does Paul attempt to modify or improve upon Moses' teaching; he merely ventures upon an enlargement of the precept. Moses says, "Pay proportionally;" and Paul adds, "Pay regularly and systematically." Moses' teaching was well understood, and Paul needed not to reiterate it. He only found it necessary to enforce a regular and systematic observance of it.

Paul's suggestion in regard to the *weekly* observance of the rule is a wise one.

A person may be utterly unable to pay \$26 a year in a lump, as his tithe, whereas he could, with the utmost ease, pay 50c. a week, and store it for God.

We have seen that the patriarchs practised this principle, and that just as soon as God had a separate people, He set His seal upon it by incorporating it in His law for their governance.

The reasons for this are obvious. The system is eminently just and equitable.

All must do something for God and His cause, and God places the minimum in His law, at not less than a tenth. Rich and poor alike must begin at this; and no rich man, paying his thousands, could upbraid his poor neighbor, whose payments were away down in the units. They gave in the same ratio.

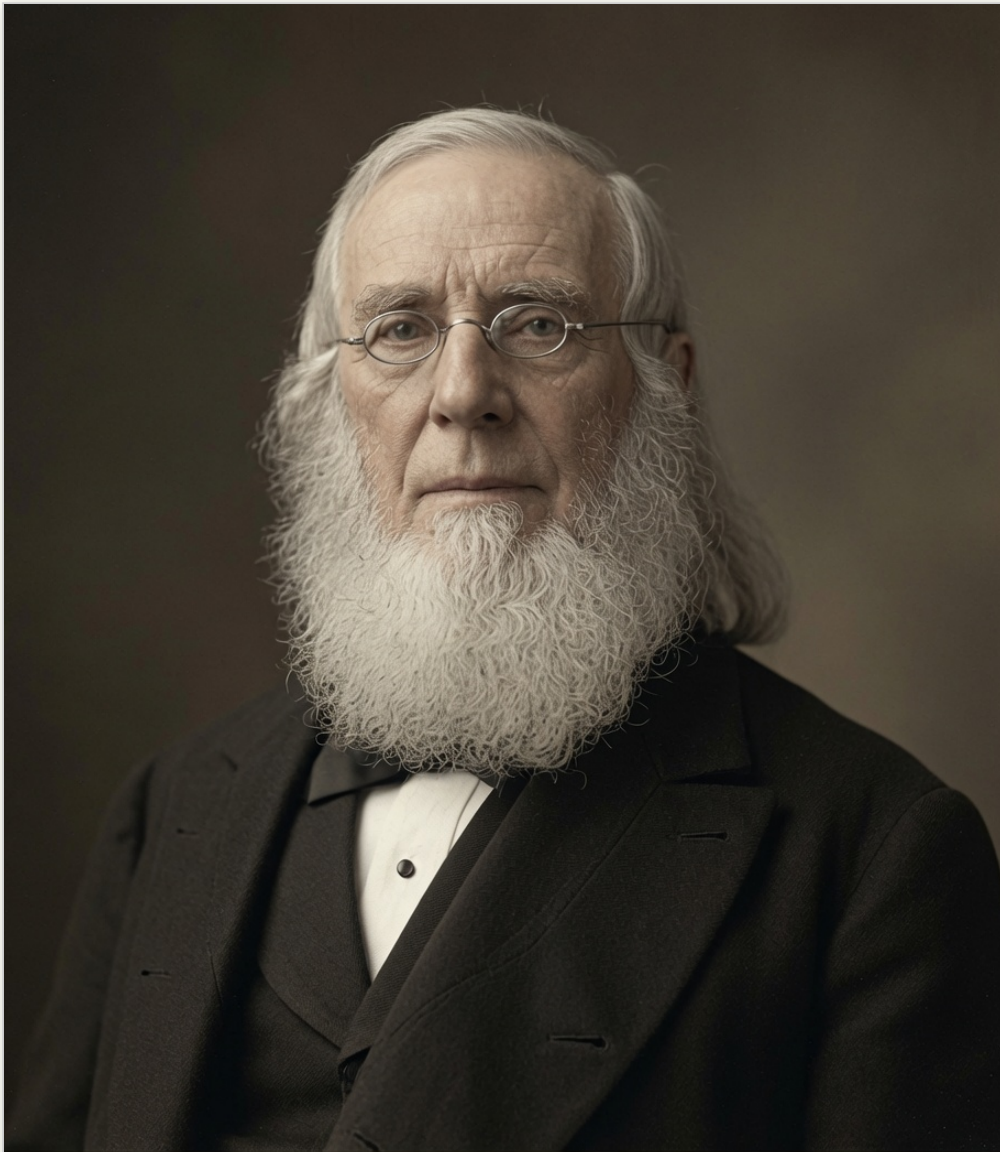
Again, this system makes it easy for all, especially for the poor man. He gives in small sums regularly, and does not find it oppressive.

Then, the larger ability of the rich man was not shut out. *All must pay a tenth*, to begin with; but any man *may give* as much more as his means will allow, and his love may prompt.

If all Christians would only adopt God's method—Bible finance—they would be amazed to find themselves paying into God's treasury many times their present meagre payments on the hap-hazard, give-as-you-please method.

It would be difficult to find a person who has once honestly tithed his means for the cause of Christ, and has wearied of it, and gone back again to the no-system way of contributing.

Would that the Church generally could be induced to adopt this principle and follow this practice! Beginning with a tenth, no man need stop at that. As his means increase, he can, after paying God the tenth He claims as His own, begin to know something of the luxury of *giving*.



PETER COOPER.

He commenced life in the City of New York in 1791, and died in the same city in 1883. By his own efforts he made an immense fortune, and spent a large part of it in public and private charities. He is the founder of the famous “Cooper Institute,” which cost him \$650,000 (approximately \$27.75 million in 2026 dollars); to which also he bequeathed \$150,000 (approximately \$6.40 million in 2026 dollars) additional, at his death.

No man is so poor that he cannot afford to do this. Every man can afford to be honest with God!

Will God permit any man to suffer in doing what He requires to be done? Read Deut. xiv. 28, 29, and note especially the last clause, "... that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand, which thou doest." A still stronger statement is made in Prov. iii. 9, 10: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine."

To the obedient a very precious promise is given in Mal. iii. 10, 11: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts." Oh, that professed believers would take the Lord at His word, honor Him with their substance, and trust Him.

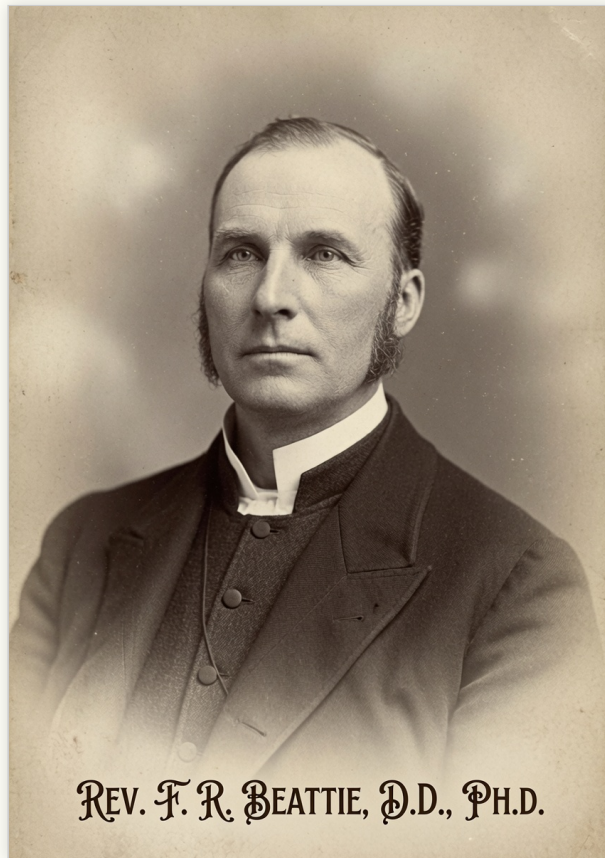
As a matter of fact, Christians cannot afford to pay less than a tenth, for they will invariably find that the remaining nine-tenths with God's blessing would be of far greater value to them than the ten-tenths without it. If God's children would pay up as God requires, and then begin to give, as God has prospered them, they would realize the preciousness of that saying of Jesus, which Paul has rescued from oblivion, "It is more blessed to give than it is to receive." They would soon learn to give, not as a mere matter of duty, but because they love to give. God is always giving. God loves to give—always gives His best gifts; and those who give, and give their best gifts, because they love to give,

are, so far, like God. WHERE THERE IS LITTLE LOVE FOR GIVING,
THERE IS VERY LITTLE LIKENESS TO GOD.

BIBLE GIVING:
ITS NATURE AND RULE.

BY

REV. F. R. BEATTIE, D.D., PH.D.



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BIBLE GIVING:

ITS NATURE AND RULE

In this paper I wish to say a few things about giving to religious and benevolent objects. What I have to say will be drawn largely from my own observation, reflection and experience, which, though by no means varied or remarkable, may yet enable me to say something useful on the subject. I shall also try to express my ideas in as plain and practical a manner as possible.

I may say that I have, of late, read a good deal on this important topic; I have recently looked more carefully than ever before into what the Bible says about giving to the support of religion; I have tried to preach several times during the past year on different aspects of this subject; and I have looked into the actual practice of the average Christian in regard to his giving to the cause of Christ. The result has been that I am more deeply impressed than ever with the importance of this subject, and at the same time I have been humbled beyond measure to find that the average Christian is sometimes content to spend more on a single luxury than he gives to the support of religion.

I have observed that the matter of Christian liberality is pressed upon us not only by the claims of the institutions of religion at home, but also in connection with the duty of the Christian Church to send the Gospel to the heathen. The people in pagan lands are not, as a rule, at first anxious to have

the Gospel preached among them. This entails expense in sending missionaries, and this expense must be met by those in Christian lands who send the missionaries. The energy with which mission work is pushed on is one of the hopeful signs of this age, for I have observed that when Christian people are most deeply concerned about others, they are most likely to be prospered themselves. I am convinced that the Bible is profoundly true when it says that “the liberal soul shall be made fat.”

This being the case, it has occurred to me that no more important matter, of a practical kind, can be brought before the minds of Christian people than that of Christian liberality. I confess that I have got over a kind of delicacy which I once had in speaking about money in connection with the preaching of the Gospel, and the exposition of the Scriptures. I am convinced that our giving to the Lord’s cause is a distinctly religious act, and our duty in regard to that act ought to be clearly understood. Christian people should never forget that they are not absolute possessors of the money or other things which they call theirs. They are only stewards of the manifold gifts of God; and, for my part, I am exceedingly anxious to learn how I can best attend to the duties of my stewardship.

Ever since I was a lad, I have been familiar with several curious methods by means of which money is raised for religious purposes. I can remember my first tea-meeting, and how I thought what a strange thing it was to eat and drink in God’s house. I have been at scores of such meetings since my childhood, and I have seen almost every kind of device brought into play, from the bazaar to the cake or cane competition, for the purpose of raising money for Church objects. Since I have grown older I have looked with some care at these things, and have become more and more convinced that for the purpose of raising money for religious objects they are all wrong in principle and injurious in practice.

It has, indeed, occurred to me that a general reform is needed in this important matter. I trust that this paper may be helpful in doing something in

this direction. I shall group my remarks on this subject under two main heads. Under the first I shall treat of the essential *nature* of Christian giving; and under the second I shall seek to discover the *rule* by which that giving should



OLD-FASHIONED TEA DRINKING.

be determined. Hence we must, in the first place, seek to get a clear and definite idea of what Christian liberality involves; then, in the second place, we must try to find a well-defined standard by means of which we may be able to know when we do our duty in regard to this important matter. Each of these topics will be considered in a separate chapter, and in as simple and conversational a manner as possible, so that ordinary readers may be the more fully informed by what is set forth.



MATTHEW VASSAR.

The Founder of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., at a cost of \$400,000 (approximately \$17.08 million in 2026 dollars). Mr. Vassar was born in England, but was taken to America when four years old. He began business as an errand boy, and ended a very wealthy man. An active member of the Baptist Church, and rich in good works.

CHAPTER I.

BIBLE GIVING: ITS NATURE

In seeking to understand the nature of Christian liberality, I wish to take the reader to the Bible at once for instruction thereon, for I am sure that every Christian will agree that the Bible is the best place to get teaching on this topic. In this, as in all other vital matters, we should be guided, not by expediency or mere human opinion, but by what God himself says in His Word. I shall, therefore, seek to find out from the Scriptures what they teach in regard to the real nature of our giving to religious objects.

I desire to get a good foundation laid for my practice, so that I shall not blunder in the exercise of the grace of Christian liberality. I shall only be satisfied when I have laid the foundation, not on the shifting sands of mere human reasoning, but on the solid rock of the Word of God. Having secured a good foundation in this way, I shall then proceed to erect a suitable and durable building thereon. In other words, having laid down the Scriptural basis or principle of our giving to God's cause, I shall proceed to make some applications of this principle to several concrete cases to be found in actual practice.

SECTION I.

THE BIBLE FOUNDATION.

I ask you now to open the Bible, and trace out with me, in a very general way, what it says about giving to the Lord. Let me ask you to turn to the beginning of the Book, for it will be of great moment to find something about gifts and offerings all through its different parts.

Turning to the fourth chapter of Genesis, I find the first brothers of the human race bringing offerings to God. “And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.” There is no need to decide, so far as our present need is concerned, why Abel’s gift was accepted and Cain’s rejected, for what we require is only to observe that these two men, of their own choice and under a sense of duty or obligation to God, brought their respective offerings to Him. I have no doubt that Abel’s spirit was better than Cain’s, but both alike brought an offering.

In regard to Noah, in the eighth chapter of Genesis, we read, that after the waters of the flood were dried up, “Noah built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.” In the life of Abraham, amongst the offerings which, from time to time, he made, we read that he was required on one occasion to make a remarkable offering. In the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, we find God speaking to Abraham in the following way: “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Here God required a very peculiar and precious offering from Abraham; and even though a substitute for his son was found in the ram caught in the

thicket, the idea of an offering to God remains. This is what we carry with us from this event.

Now, as you read through the rest of Genesis with me, you will find that the patriarchs, from time to time and in various ways, made, either by God's command or by an inward spiritual impulse, offerings to the Lord. They all illustrate the same thought of giving something which we call ours to the service of God. When we come to the age of Moses, and read on through Leviticus and Deuteronomy in particular, we find ourselves among almost endless offerings and givings required of the Jews in connection with their religious duty and service. I would like to help you to study this vast system of offerings, for the purpose of discovering, as far as possible, what is the real nature of an offering which is acceptable to God, and what should be the spirit of the person making the offering, so that it may be pleasing in His sight. I cannot go into minute details, yet I trust that some general outlines may help us to a proper knowledge of Bible teaching on the subject of giving for religious purposes.

As we read carefully through the writings of Moses, we find that all the offerings he speaks of may be divided into three general classes. In the first place, I find those offerings which were set apart for the *permanent service* of God and of the sanctuary. In the seventh chapter of Numbers we find these offerings described in connection with the setting up of the Tabernacle service. "And they brought their offering before the Lord, six covered wagons, and twelve oxen; a wagon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox; and they brought them before the Tabernacle. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take it of them, that they may be to do the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service." In the thirty-first chapter of Numbers, 50th to 52d verses, we find allusion to other offerings of a somewhat different kind, but for the same purpose. "We have therefore brought an oblation for the Lord, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains and bracelets,

rings, earrings and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the Lord. And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, even all wrought jewels. And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the Lord, of the captains of thousands, and of the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.”

In the class of offerings represented by such cases as those just referred to, we have the contributions which provided for the construction and furnishing of the sanctuary and the maintenance of religious services therein, as well as provision for the support of the persons whose duty it was to attend to those services. In this class, also, we have the type of the provision to be made in all ages for the support of religious ordinances among men. This is an abiding call for offerings to be made to God, for the duty of worship is a permanent one.

In the second place, we find a large class of offerings which were brought to God as a kind of *state tax* in support of the priests and Levites. The Jewish nation was a theocracy. Jehovah was their king, and they held their land in fee from Him. Hence certain offerings were required, as a species of tax or rent from the land. These offerings were of various kinds, and are frequently spoken of in the writings of Moses.

In Exodus, the thirteenth chapter, we read: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is mine.” Hence, as the first-born of every Jewish family, and of their flocks and herds, were spared in Egypt, so ever after God claimed these as His.

Again, in the eighteenth chapter of Numbers, we read: “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the first-fruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given thee. And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the Lord, shall be thine.” Here we have offerings from the produce of the land dedicated to God. In the

eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy we have a similar passage: “The first-fruits of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him (the priest). For the Lord thy God hath chosen him to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever.” This passage indicates the special way in which the priests were to be supported. It is very interesting to notice that the laws regarding these offerings were renewed after the captivity. Thus, in the tenth chapter of Nehemiah, we read: “And to bring the first-fruits of our ground; and the first-fruits of all the fruit of all trees year by year unto the house of the Lord: Also the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God.”

In the eighteenth of Numbers we find another curious fact in connection with the giving of what the people possessed to the service of the Lord: “And the firstlings of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem. And those that are to be redeemed, from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thy estimation, for the redemption of them be five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs. But the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy; thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar.” This passage emphasizes the distinction between things clean and unclean. Yet at the same time God makes a claim upon both—upon the clean directly, and upon the unclean by redemption.

In the third general class of offerings are included all those which were laid upon the altar, and consumed there, wholly or in part, by fire. These were usually regarded as offerings of a higher and more sacred order than those already mentioned. To enter into detail here would lead us to discuss the whole system of Jewish sacrifice, but it is not necessary for our present purpose that we should do so. In the first chapter of Leviticus we find the keynote to the peculiarity of these offerings: “And the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour

unto the Lord.” Again, “It is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.” The two things which mark this class of offerings are, first, that they were to be burned on the altar; and, secondly, that they formed a sweet savour unto Jehovah. They were to be offered to Jehovah personally, in the place where He personally promised to meet with his people to bless them.

If we look carefully at these various offerings, and seek to discover the spirit which should prompt men to make them, we shall find several important principles involved. If we can seize these and apply them a great deal will be gained.

In the first place, you will observe that in every case the offering made must be the *property* of the person making it. Many passages of Scripture confirm this statement. In the last chapter of II Samuel we read: “And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer what seemeth good unto him; behold here is oxen for burnt-sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood. All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The Lord thy God accept thee. And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

This statement is further confirmed by what we find Ezra and Nehemiah doing in their days. In the seventh chapter of Ezra we read, in connection with the return from the Captivity: “And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God, which is in Jerusalem: that thou mayest buy speedily with this money, bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.” Nehemiah’s words, in the tenth chapter of his book, are equally significant: “Also we

made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; for the shewbread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for the continual burnt-offering, of the Sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin-offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.”

These quotations of God’s Word, which we have made at length, bring out the important fact that everything brought to God as an offering must be our own property, or acquired by us in a proper and honest way.

The Jews were distinctly taught this, and in our own day we need to observe that not only must we be able to call what we give to God our own, but we must be sure also that we have come into possession of it in a perfectly honest way. God will not honor the ways of injustice, nor will He accept the fruits of dishonesty. We shall keep this in mind, for we may have occasion to refer to it again, in the course of this paper.

In the second place, you will observe that *these offerings were all dedicated to God*. They were holy gifts, and, as such, were set apart for God and appropriated to His service. It mattered not if parts of some of the offerings went to support the priests while attending to their duties, they were nevertheless all regarded as given to God. They were made as an acknowledgment of God’s greatness and goodness, and of the desire of the people to enjoy the favor and fellowship of God. In this connection it is interesting to read the thirty-eighth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus. Of the plate of pure gold, which was to be put on the mitre of the high priest, it is said: “And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.” Here it is evident that the gifts, and the people with their offerings, were to be dedicated to God, before the right to claim acceptance and favor at God’s hand was the portion of the people. The people

were not to give that they might get similar gifts in return; they were to give that they might render a service or make an offering freely and fully unto the Lord.

It is clear, therefore, that these offerings had value, not so much in themselves as in the spirit and feelings cherished by the person making the offering. The gift indeed may be of great value or of little worth in itself, yet its value in God's sight will depend on the spirit which moved the offerer in presenting his gift. It is not the gift, but the giver in his gift, which has meaning before God. It is the devout spiritual feelings which the gift expresses that make the real offering which God regards and delights in. For their own sake or value in God God can care but little for mere material gifts, but the devotion of an earnest, humble, grateful, full heart is ever a sacrifice pleasing in His sight.

There is a passage in Kurtz's "Sacrificial Worship," page 55, which expresses the truth here so well that I cannot forbear quoting it at length, as better than any words of mine could be here: "In these gifts, which were justly his acquired property, gained by the sweat of his face and the exercise of his earthly calling, he offered, in a certain sense and earthly calling, an objective portion of himself, since the sweat of his own labor adhered to it, and he had expended his own vital energy upon it, and thereby, as it were, really gave it life. In this way he gave expression to his consciousness of the absolute dependence of his whole life and activity upon the grace and blessing of God, and to his obligation to devote it entirely to God, and to divine purposes in praise, thanksgiving and prayer. He gave partially back to God what he had received entirely from God, and had wrought out and acquired through the blessing of God. And in the part he sanctified and consecrated the whole, or all that he retained and applied to the maintenance of his own life and strength, and with this his own life also, to the maintenance of which he had devoted it."

In the third place, *the offerings were to be of the first-fruits of the possessions of the offerer*. The first produce of field and flock was held sacred, and this,

not the last or poorest, was to be dedicated to the Lord. The first-born, both of man and beast, were claimed by God, and these had either to be redeemed, that their price might be set apart for religious purposes, or they had actually to be given to the Lord and His service.

There are so many passages of Scripture which bring this out, that we need only quote a few, as samples of the strong Bible basis there is for giving God the first and the best of our possessions to God's service. In the twenty-second chapter of Exodus we read: "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors; the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thy oxen, and with thy sheep."



In the twenty-third chapter of Exodus we read: "The first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God."

In the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus we read: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest.”

Similar passages might be quoted in great numbers from Numbers and Deuteronomy.

In later times we find the principle of the first-fruits enjoined. In the days of Solomon we find in the Book of Proverbs the following: “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of thine increase.”

In the tenth chapter of Nehemiah, and at the time of the exile, we read: “And to bring the first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees year by year unto the house of the Lord; also the first-born of our sons and of our cattle, . . . and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God.”

From these and scores of similar passages, we learn the very important truth that the first-born of man and beast, the first-fruits of forest and field, were claimed by God, and that neglect to render to Him His dues was really sinful. Not only were the first-fruits to be rendered in a collective way by the congregation as a whole, but they were to be rendered by each of the families of the people out of the yearly produce which God might give them. No fixed quantity was required as the proper discharge of the duty. Each person was left to the promptings of his own religious feelings in this respect, as no doubt God regarded the spirit in which the first-fruits were brought as of more value than the amount of the gifts in themselves. In the Talmud there are many curious rules given regarding the presentation of the first-fruits. It states that the sixtieth was the least part that could be given; while a fortieth or a thirtieth was to be regarded as the proof of a willing mind. In later times the first-fruits

were often turned into money by the more distant Jews, and the money sent in instead of the first-fruits themselves.

It is interesting to note in this connection that the offerings of first-fruits was by no means peculiar to the Jews. It prevailed in many of the leading pagan nations of ancient times. Spencer presents many interesting facts in regard to this practice among other nations than the Jews. His quotations from ancient writers go to show that there seems to have been at the basis of this practice, a conviction that the portions of the fruits which were first ripe were the best, and that these belonged specially to the gods, as a token of gratitude, and as a ground of security for future years. It was man's nature gift to nature's God.

From these facts in and out of the Bible, it is evident that the feeling which prompted the giving of the first and best of all kinds of produce was a deeply rooted conviction in the minds of men.

The Talmud gives extended directions in regard to the way in which the first-fruits should be presented. When the offerer came near to the sanctuary, we have the following description: "When they were come thither, they took every man his basket on his shoulder, and said, 'Hallelujah, praise God in His sanctuary!' and they went thus out and sang till they came to the courtyard. When they were come thither, the Levites sang, 'I will exalt thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up.' The owner of the basket, while it was still upon his shoulder, made the declaration, 'I profess this day unto Jehovah, thy God, that I am come into the land which Jehovah sware unto our fathers to give it unto us.' Then he let down the basket from his shoulder, and the priest put his hand under it, and waved it, and he said, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father.' And he left it at the altar's side, at the south-west horn, on the south side of the horn, and bowed himself down, and went out." According to this account the presentation of the first-fruits was a distinctly religious act.

The fourth principle involved in these various offerings is, that *they were presented as voluntary or freewill gifts*. We have here to note that certain

offerings were called “freewill offerings,” and were in some respects peculiar in their nature. In the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy we read: “And thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and your heave-offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks.” In the twenty-second chapter of Leviticus we read: “And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the Lord to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.” In these and like passages we have a special kind of offerings alluded to, and directions given concerning them.

It is not so much to these passages, or to the particular offerings called freewill offerings, that our attention is turned by the voluntary or freewill principle. This principle applies alike to all kinds of gifts and offerings to the Lord. It requires that these shall be rendered cheerfully and willingly to God. This principle is found in such passages as the following:—In the twenty-fifth of Exodus we read: “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they may bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” Here we learn that only those gifts were to be accepted which were given willingly with the heart. In connection with the preparations made by David for the building of the Temple, we have a striking example of this principle. In the last chapter of I Chronicles we read: “Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.” The rulers and the people alike made their gifts with great alacrity and willingness. In this fact lies the chief value of the offering made. In itself it may be much or little, but in the spirit in which it is offered there must be a willing surrender of the gift to the Lord. We shall see the import of this a little further on.

In the fifth place, the principle of *representation* comes into view in connection with all the offerings before us. The offering represents the

offerer, or his possessions, before God. This principle is of deep and profound import in understanding the real purport of these offerings the people were required to make. A few passages will suffice here. In the twenty-ninth of Exodus we read: "This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there will I meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." In the thirtieth of Exodus we read: "And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls." In the first of Leviticus we also read, concerning the sacrifices the people were to bring: "If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd . . . he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the Lord. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering: and it shall be accepted for him, to make an atonement for him." In these passages we observe that the offering represents the offerer. This is clearly evident when the life of the victim is offered in place of the life of him who offers it. In many other offerings we have the feelings of reverence and gratitude on the part of the offerer represented. These offerings were part of his own property, and, in a sense, they are part of himself. When he makes the offering, his spiritual feelings are really represented by the gift made.

Then it may be added, that the principle of the first-fruits and first-born really involves the principle of representation. The first-fruits represented the whole harvest, and the first-born represents the whole family or flock. In the giving of a part to the Lord, the whole was dedicated to His service. The part represents the whole, and at the same time sanctifies it.

From the Old Testament we have obtained five very important principles regarding giving to the Lord. First, what a man gives must be his own

property, honestly acquired. Dishonest gain, or wealth gotten in wicked ways, cannot be acceptable to God. Secondly, the offering must be distinctly dedicated to God. It is not to be given to a good cause in order to make a good name, or get gain. Thirdly, the giving must be of the nature of a freewill offering. It is not to be regarded as a tax imposed; it is rather a privilege to be enjoyed. The spirit must be entirely voluntary. Fourthly, the offering must consist of the first-born and first-fruits. The first and best, not the last and worst, are the Lord's. Fifthly, the offering represents the offerer, and should express his spiritual feelings. The gift may be of little value or much; the main import of the offering is in the spirit which prompts the giver to make his offering.

In order to make the Bible basis of our views of giving to the Lord broad and stable, we require to look at the teaching of the New Testament on this subject. If we find that its teaching agrees with that of the Old Testament, then the Bible basis for right views of giving to Christ's cause is understood.

At the outset here we must keep in mind, that while many things in the Law of Moses were for Jews only, and were fulfilled when Christ came, there are many things also enjoined in the Mosaic Code which, on the grounds of natural religion as well as revealed, are always binding on men. Among those things permanently binding on men in all ages, is the duty of supporting the institutions of religion in their midst. It by no means follows that because men under the Gospel dispensation are not required to bring animals of various kinds for sacrifice, therefore they are not now under obligation to give of their means to support Christian ordinances, and to send the Gospel to others in heathen lands. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." "They that preach the Gospel shall live by the Gospel."

Again, it must not be forgotten that, in understanding the connection between the Old Testament and the New, we have to observe that what is not fulfilled in nor repealed by the New Testament, is still binding on Christians. Thus the ten commandments, and the Sabbath law in particular, are still obligatory.

They are enjoined in the Old Testament, and were binding on the Jews. They stand unrepealed, and are, indeed, emphasized and expanded in meaning in the New Testament, and Christians are under obligation to observe such laws. The sacrifices, on the other hand, were fulfilled in Christ, and circumcision was no longer enjoined, and so Christians are not required to submit to the latter nor bring the former.

Now, if we look at the permanent offerings of which we have already spoken, and which were for the continuous support of the institutions and ordinances of religion, and of those who had charge of these institutions and ordinances, we find that they were not abrogated, or done away with.

We feel justified in concluding, therefore, that the obligation to support the ordinances of religion is still resting on men under the Christian dispensation. The relation between God and man, as Creator and creature, is an abiding one. It exists in the very nature of things. Out of this relation springs the duty and privilege of worship. This worship must be maintained and properly supported. To do this, requires men to bring in their gifts and offerings. The Old Testament gives injunctions and directions in regard to these things. These have not been repealed, nor fulfilled, in what the New Testament teaches; nor have the circumstances of worship so changed, as to render gifts and offerings of no use. Hence we assume that the obligation rests on the Christian Church to maintain and support her ordinances.

Now let us look at the New Testament, with the view of finding out whether the five principles discovered in the Old are implied or set forth in the New.

In regard to the first, that the gift presented to the Lord's cause must be our own property honestly acquired, it is self-evident that this principle must apply to the New Testament and to the givings of Christian people to the support of religious ordinances. But we find distinct recognition of this principle in several passages of the New Testament. In the fourth chapter of the Acts we read: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the

resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of houses or lands sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles' feet." Here we see that the gifts offered were the possessions of those making them. The property was turned into money, and the money was given.

The case of Ananias and Sapphira, recorded in the fifth chapter of Acts, involves the same principle. Concerning it we read: "Whilst it remained, was it not their own? and after it was sold, was it not in their own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God." Here we find ownership emphasized, and the mistake Ananias made was in professing to sell and give all the proceeds of his property to the apostles, and at the same time he was keeping back part of it secretly. But the property was his own, and from this he was making a partial offering when he should have given the whole.

In II Corinthians, the eighth chapter, we find the Christian liberality of one place helping the need of the Christians in another place. "For to their power, I bear record, yea and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." The gift here spoken of was no doubt from the property of those making it, so that from the abundance of some the need of others might be supplied.

We have thus shown with some little care that the principle of ownership which seems so simple and self-evident, is clearly implied in the New Testament. The reason why we have emphasized this point is, that it condemns many modern methods of raising money for religious purposes. The aim of many of these methods seems to be to get as much money as possible from outsiders, and thus save the purses of the church members. These methods are rather schemes by which others may be led to give, and thus what is given is not our property, and has not the stamp of ownership

upon it. This point will come before us again, and we leave it with this mere hint now.

In regard to the second principle, that all offerings are to be dedicated directly or indirectly to God, we need only say, that it is as clearly involved in the New Testament as in the Old. It, too, may be taken to be self-evident, yet it will do no harm to recite a few passages which enjoin this truth. The New Testament basis of this principle will then be unquestioned. We have Christ's remarkable words in the twelfth chapter of Mark: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Here we have the principle involved, that religious offerings are not a mere transaction between man and man, but an act of consecrating the gift and service to God. In II Corinthians, ninth chapter, we read in the same line: "Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; while, by the experiment of this ministration, they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men." Here the givings of Christians to relieve the need of their suffering brethren is regarded as an offering to God, producing thanksgiving and bringing glory to Him. Our eating and drinking, our glorying and giving, should all be done unto God and for His glory.

In the last chapter of Philippians we see how Paul regarded certain offerings which one of his friends and fellow-laborers brought him, when he says: "But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." Here what the Christian people gave Paul was regarded by him as an offering to God. In like manner, what was given to support the laborer in the great gospel harvest field is to be regarded as an offering to the Lord. "They that preach the gospel are to live by the gospel,"

and that living is a sacred gift, and not merely a simple financial transaction. The Old Testament and New, we believe, are at one on this point. The institutions of religion must be supported by the Christian community, and that support is to be regarded not simply as pay given to certain men, but as an offering made to God for the support of gospel ordinances in their midst.

In reference to the third principle, that these offerings should be of the first-fruits, we find New Testament teaching clear and frequent, so that the Christian as well as the Jew is bound to give the first and best to the Lord. In the New Testament there was not the same scope for this principle as in the Old. In the Old many different kinds of sacrifices and offerings were required. These were to consist in the first-fruits and first-born. They were to indicate in this way that the best of man's produce and of his service was to be set apart to God.

The Christian presents himself and his possessions to God. Thus, in the eighth chapter of II Corinthians, we read: "Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Here the Macedonian Christians are said to have first given themselves to God, and then to have given their property, and particularly the collection for the poor brethren at Jerusalem. In giving themselves, they gave the best that was theirs.

This principle, which was very prominent in the Old Testament, stands unrepealed in the New, and hence it is binding also on the Christian. This principle runs all through our Lord's teaching, and it reappears in the writings of the Apostles. It also condemns the practice of some outwardly respectable Christians, who give as if the last fruits rather than the first fruits are the Lord's. Such people, when their income falls below the average, begin curtailing outlay. The very first place where they begin to curtail is in regard to that which is to be given to the Lord and His cause. The first fruit is the Lord's, and should go to Him in every case.



The fourth principle, that the spirit in which the offering is to be made must be voluntary—freewill—is on the very surface of the New Testament—is in our Lord’s words of commendation concerning the two mites which the poor widow cast into the treasury, we see that He valued the spirit in which the gift was made, rather than the real amount of the gift made. The element of freewill and even voluntary self-sacrifice, is that which enriches the gift in the sight of God.

In the eighth chapter of II Corinthians, we read: “For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” In these words the apostle brings out our Lord’s teaching into clear and practical effect, in the case of the givings of Christian people. In the ninth chapter of the same epistle, we find it written: “Every man according as he hath purposed in his heart so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.” Many other passages might be quoted from the New Testament in support of this principle, hence we conclude without further discussion that all our gifts to God and all our givings to His cause, should be distinctly freewill offerings. That which is given with a grudge is of little value in God’s sight, while that which is freely and cheerfully given, even though it involve sacrifice, is of very great value in His eyes.

In regard to the last principle mentioned, that of representation, little need be said concerning its New Testament basis. Our gifts should all represent our possessions on the one hand and our feelings on the other. The offering, to have any meaning, must be the expression of the devout and reverent feelings which exist in the heart of the offerer. Here, all those passages which speak of Christians as stewards of God’s mercies, temporal and spiritual, come into view.

Concerning the good servant, in the parable of the talents, we read: “His lord saith unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou

into the joy of thy lord.” Here the use made of the talents represented the real spirit of fidelity on the part of the faithful servant; while the man who hid the talent in the earth, by the use he made of his gift, displayed the opposite spirit. In the New Testament, as in the Old, we find that the gift should represent all our property, which we hold in stewardship at God’s hand; and it should also represent our feelings, and express them in suitable outward form. If you read carefully the eighth and ninth chapters of II Corinthians, you will find running all through them the same twofold application of the principle of representation. We need not, however, dwell longer upon it just now; we will have something more to say about it further on in our discussion.

We have thus sought to lay down what seems to us to be the Bible foundation of our giving to the Lord and his cause. The five important principles found in the Old Testament have also their place in the New, and thus the true Scriptural nature of Bible Giving has been unfolded. For the permanent support of the institutions of religion we get, in these principles, the key as to the manner in which these institutions should be provided for. In further treating of this subject we shall endeavor to see how far these principles now rule in the methods employed by the Christian Church to raise money to support ordinances in the community. We, no doubt, will find ourselves called upon to examine some of the ways by which religion now-a-days is supported, and perhaps some of these will be condemned. In our examination we shall be careful to apply the test of God’s Word as expressed in the principles of ownership, of consecration, of first-fruits, of freewill, and of representation. To this task we now proceed.

SECTION II.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

In making some practical applications of the principles which form the basis of Bible Giving, we intend to look at the condition of affairs in any average Christian community, and try to discover how near we are keeping to Bible teaching in our actual practice and methods of raising money generally for the Lord's cause. This will include the raising of money to build churches, and pay the general running expenses of maintaining divine service and religious ordinances. It will also include all contributions to the support of colleges to educate the ministry of the Church; and it will also cover all money given to the cause of missions to the heathen. These are the chief items pertaining to the support of the permanent institutions of religion, and we now wish to get at the Bible method by which these are to be kept up.

It is, of course, taken for granted that these ordinances of religion are of permanent obligation upon men. They are not matters which men or nations dare neglect save at their great peril. It is also taken for granted that the Scriptures make provision for the support of duly authorized teachers in connection with religion. In the Old Testament we find that the priests and Levites were to be supported by the people. In the New Testament the ministry of the Christian Church is to be supported by the liberality of the people to whom they minister. In return for the spiritual things which this ministry gives the people, the people are to give their carnal things. They that devote their lives to preaching the Gospel are to get that which they need to support them from the people. The ox which was used to tread out the corn in the olden threshing floor was not to be muzzled, but was to be allowed to eat what it liked; so in the Gospel harvest-field the laborer therein is to have his hire in the form of suitable maintenance. Now for some practical applications.

First, let us look at the matter of *church building*. In early times the Jews had the Tabernacle and Temple as the places of worship; and in the days which followed the captivity they had their synagogues all over the land. At the time of Christ, and in the early days of Christianity, we find that the Gospel was preached in the synagogue and in private houses or rooms hired for the purpose. By degrees, as Christianity gained strength and separated itself from Judaism, it was found necessary to have suitable meeting places provided. This was especially the case when Christianity extended among the pagan nations, where there was no synagogue that might become the home of the Christian Church.

During the dark middle ages it is very interesting to observe, that when spiritual life seemed to be at a very low ebb, church building and architecture appears to have reached its highest excellence. It was then that those cathedrals were reared, which to-day, whether in ruins or repair, are the admiration of all who look upon them. The mechanical skill and architectural genius displayed in many of these mediæval piles are still a standing wonder to the world; while the amount of money necessary for such structures must have been very great, at a time, too, when money was scarce.

In our own day, we find church edifices of all sorts and sizes, from the plain little chapel to the vast modern cathedral. No particular style prevails, but people build according to their taste and means, unless they do what we fear is sometimes done, go beyond their means. The question before us now is, how should the money needed to erect the church building be raised? Along with this question, others closely related to it arise. Should all the money be in hand before the building is begun? Should the present generation pay all, or is it justified in leaving a debt as a legacy to future generations? Can money used to pay interest on such debts be regarded as given to the Lord at all? Is there no danger of extravagance in some of our modern luxurious church buildings?

No exhaustive discussion of these questions is here possible, yet the principles of Bible giving already set forth will help us to at least a partial answer to some of them. It is admitted that God's service should have our best, even in regard to the matter of church building. When people were living in log houses it was all right to worship in log buildings; but when people became better off, and live in houses of brick and stone, it is fitting that they should have edifices at least as good to worship God in. At the same time there is danger of needless luxury, and needless expense in our modern church buildings. In their furnishings especially, they are so rich and expensive that plain people do not feel at home in them, and poor people cannot pay what is requisite to keep them up.

The consequences are already seen in our large towns and cities. Many of the laboring and mechanic classes have drifted away from the regular churches, and are to be numbered among the non-church goers. To bring the Gospel to these we find the mission hall erected, and earnest evangelistic work undertaken. This is good so far, yet I am persuaded that it will not turn out best in the end. The result will be that in the fine church we will find the rich, and in the mission hall we will find the poor. This brings class distinction where it should never be found, for in divine worship and religious instruction the rich and poor should meet together, for "the Lord is the maker of them all."

In regard to church debts, I have no hesitation in saying that *they are bad*, and that *continually*. They are a constant drain upon the resources of Christian people in paying interest, and they paralyze the liberality of the people in almost every respect. The existence of a debt will keep people from joining any congregation thus burdened, and by the people of the congregation, the fact of their having a debt will be made a standing excuse why they should not give to mission and other deserving schemes. Any one who has had any experience in this matter will endorse what I have just said. People naturally feel that paying interest on church debts is like putting money into a sink-

hole. It is not even the same in some respects as paying interest on money borrowed to invest in business. In the latter case, the profit made may be sufficient to pay the interest and leave a margin of profit, but in the case of church debts, they seem to make constant demands, but give no return. Of all debts, therefore, church debts are the worst.

It is always best to have no debt in view when church building is undertaken. Church boards and building committees should exercise the utmost care in regard to the financial burdens they incur for themselves and others, and Christian people should open a liberal hand to provide cheerfully and promptly suitable church accommodation for themselves and those who meet with them. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that new churches should not be built where people are selfish and mean in their giving to the Lord. In such cases, the great thing is that these illiberal people should be stirred up to a sense of their duty; and then, according to their ability, let them rise and build, paying for all as they go. It is poor policy for a man to build a large house for himself and family to live in with borrowed money, so it is exceedingly improper to have a debt on the house in which we worship God.

The example of the Jews in preparing to construct the Tabernacle and in building the Temple, is full of instruction in this connection. In the case of the Tabernacle, in the thirty-fifth chapter of Exodus we read: "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the Tabernacle of the congregation, and for all His service, and for the holy garments." Further on in the same chapter, we find it written: "And the children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring, for all manner of work which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses." Here we have the proper spirit and manner of giving to the Lord for the purpose of making a place of worship.

In the following chapter of Exodus we find the result of this spirit and method of giving brought out in a very striking way: "And all the wise men, that



wrought all the work of the Sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; and they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the Sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.” Would that we might see something like this spirit among Christian people at the present day! Alas, that under the full light of Gospel truth, we have so often to be urged and pressed to do what is only simple duty, in giving for the erection of places of worship! When will we reach the ideal the old Jews have put before us in connection with this very matter? Shall we ever have to say, stop, friends, we have more than enough? In order to reach this position we must get nearer the Bible basis of giving; and by working out the principles of Bible giving already set forth I believe that we may yet see like liberality among Christians. May the Lord hasten that happy day!

In connection with the building of the Temple we find the same spirit exercised in the last chapter of the book of I Chronicles. The account runs all through the chapter, but is summarized in David’s own words: “As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.” Here all the money and material were ready before the work was undertaken, giving us the hint that we should have the funds ready before we go on to build our churches, and showing unto us that if we have the right spirit the money will be forthcoming. If this be attained, then debts on church buildings would be unknown, and the willing liberality of the people would be amply sufficient to supply every need. Many questionable methods of raising money for church building purposes must stand

condemned by these principles, but of these we shall speak at length further on.

In the second place, we proceed to apply these principles of Bible Giving to the *Pew Rent system*. Concerning this system there is little or nothing directly set forth in Scripture. Neither in Tabernacle nor Temple service had the custom of paying for a particular place any existence. Nor do we read of any such method of raising money in the early history of the Church, contained in the Acts and hinted at in the Epistles. If we were disposed to be very critical in regard to the modern pew rent system we might justly say that it is unscriptural, in the sense at least that the Bible says nothing whatever about it. To take this position, however, would not serve any useful purpose in this discussion.

We shall rather seek to find out how far the pew rent system agrees with the principles of Bible Giving which have been already set forth, in order to discover thereby whether it is expedient for the Christian Church to adopt it. If, after examination, it is found that the pew rent system is not consistent with these principles, then it will be a proper thing to enquire what system should be adopted.

It would lead us away from our subject too far to give any extended history of the custom of renting pews in churches, though such a history would be of very great interest. We find the custom existing as a fact, and that is really all we need for our present purpose. We find it existing in various forms. Sometimes it consists in a kind of ownership or endowment. This arises in certain cases when the church is built as the result of large subscriptions or bequests made for the purpose of its erection. Thus a person giving such bequests sometimes or is granted a right for himself, and sometimes for his heirs after him, a kind of vested or property right to a certain pew in the Lord's house. There are many instances of this in Britain, some in the United States, and a few even in Canada.

Again, we find the pew rent system in the form of a mere rental, with no real proprietorship in it. This plan of working the system takes different forms, some much more objectionable than others. In some cases it is a simple fixed rate, where so much is charged for the sittings, and these singly or as whole pews are let out to the applicants for them. Then, under this plan in certain cases the front or best pews will be held at a higher rental than the rear ones or than those in the gallery. The applicant then has the choice of the high-priced or the low-priced location in the house of God as he pleases or prefers.

In connection with the renting of the pews the services of the auctioneer are sometimes called for. This usually takes place in cities, and in connection with the financial management of large and fashionable churches with popular pastors. We need not specify names or places here, but no doubt most of the readers of these pages have heard about these auction sales of pews. According to this plan of working the system, the choice pews will



sometimes be run up to a high figure under the pressure of keen competition, and we often hear of incidents taking place in connection with these pew sales which are not creditable to religion.

Now, in all these cases we have the same principles more or less distinctly involved. In some of the cases cited the system is more objectionable than in others, but we do not hesitate to affirm that in every form the pew rent system is inconsistent with, and entirely opposed to the principles of Bible Giving which we have already deduced from Scripture. We may admit, that as managed in certain cases, when prudent Christian men have charge of it, and where the people are all or nearly all in circumstances of comparative comfort, its evil results may not be very apparent. But if it be unscriptural, and hence wrong in principle, it must be inexpedient and often injurious in practice. As nothing is said about it in the Bible, it cannot be argued that the system has scriptural authority. What we assert, however, concerning it is that, though nothing is forbidden or enjoined concerning it in Scripture, yet it is opposed to plain inferences from Scripture, and that its results, in very many cases, are very hurtful to the best interests of religion among all classes of a mixed community. To show this we now proceed.

In the first place, *the system of renting pews is inconsistent with the fulness and freeness of the Gospel*. The Bible states distinctly that the Gospel message is to be declared to all classes of the people, and specially to the poor. That the poor had the Gospel preached to them, is adduced by our Lord as one of the proofs of His Messiahship, in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. If, therefore, the churches, by means of a fixed pew rent, whether low or high, render it difficult, if not impossible, for a number of poor people, to whom the Gospel message is to be brought as well as to the rich, to attend regularly the places where that message is declared, then the system that does this in any measure is not in harmony with the very spirit of the Gospel.

That such is the effect of pew rents there can be no doubt. Ten years' experience in the pastorate has brought many cases of this kind before my

notice. People are poor and do not attend church. Ask them why, and, rightly or wrongly, in many cases the answer given is that they are not able to pay the required seat rent; and, rather than to go to God's house as paupers, however welcomed by the people of the church, they prefer to remain away. In many cases of this kind, any little regard which such poor people may have had for religion soon dies out. The children grow up neglected, and go too often to swell the ranks of the lapsed masses, which in large cities present such a difficult problem alike to the statesman and the philanthropist. I feel that I cannot emphasize too strongly this important point in its bearing on the pew rent system. Woe to the system which in any way contravenes the spirit of the Gospel, or narrows the scope of its application!

In the second place, *the pew rent system is not in harmony with the Bible principles of freewill and representation*, as already set forth. The payment of a stated sum in a certain way, and for a certain purpose, renders it difficult for the person making the payment to look upon what he gives for pew rent as a freewill offering. It comes upon him in the form of pecuniary obligation, rather than from him as a voluntary offering. It is not denied but in some cases the pew renter may be able to look upon his dues as such an offering, but it does seem natural to conclude that it will always require more than an ordinary amount of divine light and grace to look upon such payment in that way. In the majority of cases, it is to be feared that the pew rent is regarded as a kind of debt owed to the Board of Management, rather than as an offering to God. Hence, the idea of dedicating the amount to God is not so present as it ought to be, and as it is possible to have it. The feeling will lurk in the mind, that the pew rent simply means so much money for so much room in church; and the conviction that all we give for the support of the permanent institutions of religion, is a gift consecrated to God, will be further removed from the mind than it should be. The effect of this upon the spiritual life of the person making the payment will be far from helpful.

It follows from what has just been said, that the principle of representation cannot have, under the pew rent system, such a large place as the Bible gives it. If a man pays his pew rent as a mere financial transaction, the money paid cannot represent so fully as is desirable the devout and earnest feelings of the very soul of the giver. As we have already seen, the gifts we make to the Lord have value in proportion as those feelings are imported into the gifts, and expressed by them. A man may pay a large sum as pew rent, but if he pays it with a kind of grudge, there is then no proper and acceptable feelings represented by the payment. It is these suitable feelings, rather than the mere material wealth as such, that God is pleased with; and our gifts, to have value in the treasury of heaven, must represent such feelings. This again will have an effect upon our spiritual life. In proportion as a man feels that his very heart is represented in his gifts, will he grow in grace.

In the third place, *the pew rent system introduces an unscriptural distinction between the rich and poor*. The rich man can pay for the best pew, and the poor man must be content with the inferior location in church. The consequence is that all the wealthier people are gathered together in one place, and those not so well off are grouped together in another. The result is sure to be that the richer people will tend to despise the poorer, and the poorer people will incline to envy the richer in the house of God. This separation between the two classes—found more or less in every congregation—will be carried out into everything connected with church work and Christian fellowship, and many churches to-day lament what they say they cannot help, and what we believe to be due in some measure to the pew rent system. If these evil effects follow the working of that system, and if the money needed for church purposes can be raised in other ways, as we believe it can, then there is good reason for abolishing the system.

While we advocate this position, we do not shut our eyes to the fact that in the nature of things there are distinctions in society, and various classes among men; but we do maintain that the place, of all others, where these worldly

distinctions should least obtain, is the place of divine worship and religious ordinance. The rich and poor are to meet together here, and on common ground; and as needy men and women before God are they to assemble themselves together for worship and instruction. The rich man is not to pride himself in his worldly goods, and despise the poor man; nor should the poor man be envious or jealous of the rich man. Stripped of all earthly distinctions they should both seek to appear before God as men, and as sinful, needy men sensible of common wants.

It is to be feared that churches sometimes unconsciously foster this spirit which we are condemning, by paying a little more attention to, and making a little more of, a rich man and his family than of a poor man and his family. If any are to have special attention shown and interest taken in them, it should surely be the poor rather than the rich; and, if ministers and churches forget this or act in the opposite way, the lines of distinction already naturally existing will be made all the more painfully manifest. No church should “have men’s persons in admiration because of advantage,” and special care should be taken to avoid treating lightly “the poor of this world who are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him.”

The Apostle James in the second chapter of his Epistle clearly has this in view when he says: “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect unto him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool.” It is to be feared that too often this striking description is fulfilled to the letter almost in some of our modern churches, and that the evil here spoken of is due in some measure at least to the system of renting pews. To avoid any danger in this respect, it is far better to have the pews all free, with no fixed rental and no permanent ownership. If class

distinctions do arise, then the churches by their mode of raising money will not be to blame for it. No one will complain of unfair treatment, and no excuse will be left to any man for not attending religious services.

In the last place, *the pew rent system is unequal or unfair in its operation.* According to this system a certain sum of money is expected for a certain amount of room in the sanctuary. Now, suppose there are two men possessed of the same means, and able to pay the same sum for the support of religious ordinances; and suppose further, that the one has no family, and the other has a large family. The one may need only two sittings, and the other six, or a whole pew, perhaps. In the working out of the pew rent system, the one is required to pay only one-third the amount of the other, while they are of equal financial ability. If they should seek to harmonize matters by each taking and paying for four sittings, then the man with no family would be appropriating room which he did not require, and the man with the large family would not have sufficient room for all his household. In my experience I have often found the latter to be the case. Good sensitive people, who shrink from occupying any more room in church than they can pay for, where the pew rent is in vogue, are compelled to leave certain members of the family at home every day, and the result is irregular attendance, and all the evils arising therefrom.

If the seats on the other hand are free, in the sense that whether a man is able to pay a large or small sum, he shall have enough room for himself and all his family, all difficulty on this score is avoided. And the rich man, too, whether he need one sitting only or a whole pew, is then free to give according to his ability; and, in doing so, it may be that he will give what would be equal to the rental of two whole pews. In this way equality and fairness would be secured to a far greater extent than is possible under the ordinary pew rent plan.

The effort which some churches make to overcome these difficulties by having, in the gallery or in some corner, certain seats marked “free,” cannot

be called a success. Nor does it deserve to be a success. No person with any independent spirit, no matter how poor he may be, cares to have his poverty declared openly, by being put away in the pews “free for the poor.” It is surely better far to make the room all really free in God’s house, and have all the money needed raised by voluntary offerings. This is now generally done in the case of missionary money, and why not adopt the same method for the ordinary revenue to support religious ordinances? By doing so there is little doubt that more money would be forthcoming, and that people would feel their giving to be less burdensome because properly equalized; and above all the people would feel that whether they gave much or little they were giving not to a Church Board, or for so much sitting room, but for the support of religious ordinances, and as an offering to God.

We cannot in the limits of this paper pursue this very important topic further, though many other points might be profitably considered. We conclude that the pew rent system should be abolished as a means of raising money for the maintenance of Gospel ordinances in the congregation. The reasons we have adduced are amply sufficient, we believe, to show that the system is not in harmony with the spirit of the Gospel, nor consistent with the principles of Bible Giving as already set forth. There is, we believe, “a more excellent way” of raising the money needed.

In the third place, we proceed to consider *the various indirect methods*, by means of which money is raised for religious purposes. In the later ages of Christianity there has grown up a great system, which may be called the *commercial*, or *quid pro quo* system of getting money for Church purposes. We find this system ready to adapt itself to almost any circumstances, and prepared to invent any and every expedient by which money may be obtained from saint and sinner alike. The devices of this system are ingenious, and sometimes quite sensational. It is to be feared also, that the methods by which it works will sometimes not bear careful scrutiny, nor stand the test of even honest business transactions. It is time the Christian Church was thoroughly

aroused on this subject, and brought back to the Bible method of giving for the cause of religion. There are signs of awakening in some quarters already, and we trust that the movement against this system of indirect giving may go on until it is banished from the Christian Church entirely.

To make plain what we mean, it may be necessary to describe some of the main forms this system assumes, and then we shall examine these in the light of the principles of Bible Giving already unfolded.

In describing some of these indirect methods in order, we may first mention the *bazaar*, which is usually regarded as a somewhat respectable institution, and even capable of being used in a very proper way to raise money for religious objects. The bazaar appears in many forms; some very simple and unadorned, others elaborate and imposing in their nature. The idea of the bazaar in general is, that there will be made a great variety of articles, useful and ornamental, and these will be exposed for sale at a certain time and place. These articles are usually in charge of some energetic ladies, who seek to make the best possible sale of them, and thus realize as much money as possible for the good object in view.

To enumerate all the species of the bazaar race, would be out of the question. We have the bazaar in general, and the special bazaar. The special bazaar may be an apron bazaar, a necktie bazaar, or a doll bazaar. Along with the bazaar, as a kind of adopted child, we sometimes find the autograph quilt, with so much charged for having one's name put in it, and then the whole sold for a handsome price. In this way a sort of double price is obtained from it.

Then we may next mention the *Soiree*, or *Tea-meeting*. In connection with it the people come together to eat and drink, and to be entertained with music and addresses. Sometimes the provisions are all bought for the meal provided; in other cases the people provide all or nearly all the supplies. For days before, there will be baking and cooking, boiling and roasting to no end. On the occasion of the tea-meeting, the crowd will gather from all quarters, and

Jew and Gentile will mingle together, and for a time the sanctuary of the Lord is turned into a place of feasting and merriment. I need not describe this institution at length, for every reader has had opportunity, no doubt, of beholding it in full force in his community. The idea of the tea-meeting is to raise money, and to get a social hour together; but the financial element is usually so prominent, that the social is largely overlooked.

Then we have, next, the *Church Social*, or *Sociable*. This is a kind of minor, or half-grown tea-meeting. It is sometimes held in the house as a parlor social, and it sometimes goes to the church and invades the sacred place of worship. Every conceivable kind of refreshment and amusement, and many methods of raising money are pressed into service. Money is too often obtained in very strange ways, which need not be here enumerated.

Then the *Concert* and *Lecture*, though in many respects much better than the institutions already named, must after all be mentioned in the same category, if used to raise money. Thus, if a church wishes to raise money, it will get some celebrated lecturer, or musical troupe, and pay for their service a large fee perhaps, relying on the good fortune which may give them a balance, after paying all expenses, to go into the treasury of the Lord's cause.

Then, worst of all, we have the *Church Lottery*. This worldly and wicked affair sometimes puts on the garb of religion, and endeavors to pass itself off as a proper method of raising money for the Lord's cause. Along with the lottery we couple the cake and cane competitions. A fine cake is made; two young ladies are set up, and votes at a fixed price for each are called for and taken, as long as people are found who are willing to buy the votes. The cake then goes to the lady who has the most votes, and the money is dedicated to some religious object. In the other case a handsome cane is procured, and two public men, usually on opposite sides of politics, are named, and votes are taken at a certain price for each as long as one is found willing to take and pay for a vote. The successful politician gets the cane, and the church treasury is swelled by the money thus gotten.



This very brief sketch will bring before the reader the general outline of the *indirect* methods of raising money for the purposes of religion. We must now enquire whether these methods are consistent with the principles of Bible Giving. We are satisfied that a little careful consideration will show that all these methods are unscriptural ways of raising money to support the ordinances of religion, and to carry on the Lord's work. A few brief remarks may suffice to show this.

In the first place, they are all *indirect*, not *direct* ways of giving. From the side of the giver, he may often never give one thought of the object towards which his money is to go. One buys his bazaar article perhaps at double its real value, and that ends the matter so far as he is concerned. Another gets his

supper, hears the music, or pays for his vote, and goes his way with not another thought of a religious nature ever in his mind. We maintain that the principles of Bible Giving require us to give directly to the Lord. All our givings, to have religious meaning so far as the giver is concerned, must be given or dedicated to the Lord. They must be gifts made intentionally to Him, and we maintain that all indirect methods of giving render this almost impossible.

On the part of the church receiving money made in this way, it may be admitted that such money will do some good. If the financial transaction was an honest business one, and if the money obtained is dedicated in a proper way by the church getting it, that money may do good. But at the same time, the church adopting these indirect methods, even the very best of them, is educating her own people and outsiders in a wrong way of supporting the interests of religion. Such being the case, it is far better for the church to abolish all such methods, and seek to have all giving direct in its nature. Then the teaching effect on the people will be good, and the offering can be made more readily as an offering unto the Lord, to come up as a sweet smelling savour before Him.

In the second place, all these methods are *inconsistent with the freewill principle*, which should mark all offerings made for religious purposes. On the part of the person who gives money at a bazaar, soiree, social or concert, it is a 'mere business transaction. He gives so much, and gets so much in return. It is a transaction between man and man, and nothing more. Then, on the part of the church obtaining such money, the freewill element cannot be present in the same way as if the people gave freely and spontaneously. It may even be doubted whether the church is justified in going outside of her own people to get money for religious purposes. Some excellent people are inclined to favor this view. But leaving this aside, we are convinced that the freewill element in our offerings is destroyed by these methods, and therefore they are unscriptural in their character. It is said, of course, that money is



REJECTING MEAT OFFERED TO IDOLS. 1 COR. VIII.

obtained in this way which would not be secured in any other; but if the money is drawn from the people in any indirect way, the Bible ideal is not reached, and the offering can in no sense be termed a freewill offering. This is a very important point, and it condemns all these modes of getting money.

In the third place, *some of these methods are in themselves wrong*, and should never be mentioned in connection with religion or the sanctuary. In this category we must place all kinds of church lottery, no matter how refined and seemingly pious the method may be. All sorts of raffle sales, where fancy prices are often extorted by schemes nothing less than immoral, are likewise to be classed here. Every species of cake and cane competition, where money is taken without scruple, and no proper value given in return, comes under condemnation here.

In regard to these and all kindred methods we need only say, that, if they are wrong in themselves, then their use to raise money for church purposes must be wrong. To use them under the garb of religion can never sanctify those things which, in their very nature, are inherently wrong, or essentially unholy. It is one of the everlasting disgraces of the Christian Church that she will tolerate schemes of raising money which the ordinary business morality of the world will utterly condemn. Surely this should be remedied without delay, for there can be no doubt that great harm has been done to the interests of religion by the very methods we are now denouncing. Let every lover of Christ's cause seek to keep unsullied the pure morality which He inculcates; and specially in all plans for raising money in support of His cause, let every church by her plans, and every Christian by his actions, keep up the standard of the morality of the Gospel, and of Christian conduct.

In the fourth place, these methods of indirect giving are in danger of leading people to think that *the end justifies the means*. These various plans, having in view raising money for a good object, tend to lead people to overlook, or to try to justify, the means taken to get the money. Money is needed, sometimes

very much needed, and the people are niggardly in giving, so that some scheme, more or less doubtful in its morality and as novel as possible, is set on foot to secure the money. If the money comes, by fair means or foul, people will shut their eyes to the real nature of the means, and rest satisfied that, as they think, the end has been secured.

We need not spend many words in exposing this vicious principle, which, alike in ethics and theology, has had too often a place and an influence in the councils of Christian people. If a thing is wrong or unholy in itself, no purpose—good or bad—for which it is used, can make it right or holy. If the opposite were true, then all sorts of crimes might be justified in the name of religion, and even murder might be considered a divine service. In the case of these indirect methods of getting money for religious purposes at church fairs and in other ways, there is great danger that this false view of the relation between means and end, which we now condemn, is put before the minds of the people. This danger constitutes a strong objection to them all.

In the fifth place, *these methods tend to check the free and spontaneous liberality of the people*. If money is needed for any religious object, instead of giving the sum directly, the people say, Come now, let us get up a church fair, a bazaar, or a tea-meeting, or something else! Let us get all the money we can, even from people outside the church! Let us do something that will draw the crowds, and enable us to draw their money! Let us also take good care that our own purses do not suffer! If we can get all we need from others, we may just as well save our own money for some other purpose! Who has not heard talk like this?

It is easy to see that the result of this is to dry up the springs of liberality in the people themselves; and the longer this is allowed to go on, the less liberal people will become, until we find the meanest people in the world in the Church, which surely is the last place on earth to look for the meanest man. Many a church is suffering to-day on account of this very thing, and it often takes many years, and much earnest teaching, to again develop the spirit of

spontaneous Christian liberality, and turn its streams into the proper channels. If we would guard against these evil consequences, let us away with all these indirect ways of raising money, and let us seek to cultivate, in ourselves and others, the spirit of hearty and cheerful giving directly unto the Lord, and to the support of religious ordinances and mission work.

In the last place, it may be seriously doubted whether, after all, *these methods are really the cheapest in the end*. Take a church fair or a bazaar, and count carefully the material used, the work put on that material, and the time occupied in connection with the making and sale of the various articles prepared for sale, and I doubt very much if the amount would not be more than is actually realized from their actual sale. In like manner, let the cost of the provisions prepared for a tea-meeting, together with all the various items of time and expense, be reckoned up, and I venture to think that in most cases it would have been cheaper to have given the money directly to the good cause at first. It does seem a curious thing to do, for people first to give the provisions, and then go some distance to God's house and there pay to eat it. Better, surely, to eat the provisions at home, and give the money without further trouble to the Lord's cause.

If people wish to give the result of their work, or anything else, to the Lord for religious purposes, it is far best to convert that result into money, and give that money for the good object in view, whatever it may be. Let people make the articles they prepare for the church fair or bazaar, and sell them at the market price in a purely business way. The money thus obtained would then be the property of those who sold the articles, and could be given as their property freely, directly and unreservedly to the support of any good cause. This would also secure the very desirable result that buying and selling, eating and drinking, would not be carried on in or about the sanctuary, and all danger of our deserving the treatment which Christ meted out to the money changers and dove sellers in the Temple will then be averted.

Every one who has a tender regard towards the place of worship, where God has put His name and has promised to meet with His people, will surely lend a helping hand to bring about this condition of affairs; and all who cherish a spirit of sincere reverence towards the place where their minds are occupied with holy thoughts, and their hearts stirred with devout emotions, will do all in their power to remove everything which is not in keeping with the proper sanctity of that place.

It only remains to be added, that in all I have said, I do not wish to be understood as saying a single word against the careful development of the social element in connection with our church life and work. It must be confessed that there is often a lack of this in many congregations. Strangers are not made to feel at home, no great interest is taken in those who are in trouble, and the stream of warm Christian sympathy is not allowed to flow freely in its rightful channels. Religion has perhaps suffered not a little from the coldness and indifference of its professors.

To secure this social and friendly intercourse, and to give the members of a congregation an opportunity of getting acquainted with each other—and getting acquainted with new comers—a pleasant gathering at the church, and in the lecture room there, held from time to time, is of the utmost importance and value. At such meetings a little light refreshment might be served, and the meeting given almost entirely to making acquaintanceships, and interchange of friendly Christian feeling. This can be secured far best when not a word is said about money, and when it is no part of the object of the meeting to raise money. The effort to combine the two things—social intercourse and money raising—is usually a failure, so far at least as the members of the congregation are concerned. Let the money required for church purposes be given in accordance with the principles of Bible Giving already obtained from Scripture, and let care be taken to develop the warm sympathetic social life of the congregation, and we venture to say that a far healthier state of matters will soon exist in regard to everything pertaining to religion and philanthropy.

CHAPTER II.

BIBLE GIVING: ITS RULE

INTRODUCTORY

I now come to the second part of the discussion, in which, at no great length, I shall make an attempt to unfold the *Rule*, according to which our giving to religious and other kindred objects should be regulated. This is a very necessary thing to have settled; for a person may have a very clear knowledge of the *Nature* of Christian Giving, and be possessed with an earnest desire to do what was right in regard thereto; and yet, if ignorant of the *Rule* by which his giving should be regulated, he will be at a loss to know when he has really discharged his duty properly in this matter. In a few brief pages we now endeavor to give some directions on this point.

And here, as in the former case, I shall take the reader to the Bible, and try to gather its general teaching on the subject of the Rule of Bible Giving. Much of our giving is in the dark, and often good people give without any kind of rule or system to guide them. They are often moved by circumstances rather than by intelligence, and sometimes they are affected by personal considerations rather than by the teaching of God's Word. The result is, that the real giving power of God's people is never brought out, and the burden too often falls on the few, instead of being distributed over the many.

Many questions arise in connection with this subject, but we can only take up the three main ones. These are: First, how much income should be given—

what proportion of our income? Secondly, where should we give—at any particular place? Thirdly, when should we give—at any definite time? To these three questions we now turn the attention of the reader, and we will consider each in a separate section.

SECTION I.

THE RULE OF GIVING : HOW MUCH?

From a practical point of view, this is one of the most important questions which come before us in this paper. The giving power of the Christian Church has never yet been at all fully developed, and much of the giving is very unintelligent and desultory. At the same time there are some good men who are giving largely to the Lord's cause, and yet the total result is very meagre indeed, when we reckon what it is per head, even of professing Christians. Sometimes only a dollar or two is given for the support of religion at home, and merely a few cents to send the Gospel to the heathen. For one dollar spent on religion, we often find even Christian people spending ten on selfish indulgence.

We are satisfied that if the rule and system could be fully introduced into the mode of our Christian giving, much more money would be raised, and no one would feel that he was more burdened, than under the existing condition of things. One great need of the Church is greater system in the method of her liberality. The general spirit of the Christian community may be in a measure alive to the importance of the grace of liberality; yet, either through imperfect information as to the need, or through defective plan in regard to the way of opening up the channel for this liberality to flow freely, this spirit does not manifest itself as it otherwise might. What is needed, therefore, is the diffusion of information regarding the spiritual need of the world, and a good system or definite rule for getting the money required for religious purposes.

In setting forth a few things on the rule of Christian Giving, there are two points which call for special attention. The first relates to the propriety of all giving proportionately according as the Lord sends worldly prosperity. The second refers to the precise proportion of income which should be given, and

raises the important topic of *tithing*, or giving at least one-tenth of our income.

In regard to the first of these points, only a few brief remarks may be made. One of the great weaknesses in our Christian liberality meets us here. In almost every congregation we find that a comparatively small number give the larger part of the money which is contributed for religious purposes. This is specially true of what is given to the support of missions at home and abroad. Take almost any subscription list to missions, and you will find that perhaps one-tenth of the contributors give over one-half of the amount given, while perhaps one-half of the contributors give so little that it is not worth while taking it into account, when their means and ability are considered.

And it is not always the richest that give the most. Sometimes, in some places often, we find those who are in the medium circumstances of life giving the highest average, while in not a few cases the working man gives far more than his wealthy employer, in proportion to their respective abilities. The introduction of some good system, by means of which the stream of voluntary liberality might have opportunity to flow in from every source, large and small, in the Christian community, would be a great boon.

The second, and main point of which we wish to speak here, when dealing with this phase of the rule of Christian Giving, is the *Tithing System*. The adoption of this system would do a great deal, we believe, to remedy the evils just alluded to, and it is surely worthy of serious consideration by Christians who sincerely desire to do what is right in the matter of liberality.

This system is often alluded to in the Bible; and, in so far as any definite rule is laid down in Scripture, in regard to the proportion to be given to religious objects, is concerned, we have this in the tithe. It has, therefore, general scriptural authority; and, if not absolutely binding as a positive law, it is of great use in giving to each individual Christian conscience the proper rule to follow. The fact that it is enjoined in the Old Testament and not repealed in

the New, is also of significance, and we cannot lightly set aside the tithing system, which consists in giving the tenth of our income to the Lord, as in no way related to the duty of a man in regard to giving under the Christian dispensation.

It is worthy of special remark, for we cannot speak at length of this subject, that the giving of a tenth in connection with the institutions of religion is a custom much older than the Mosaic Law. It comes before us in the days of Abraham, when Melchizedek offered him tithes of all the spoil. From the way in which this is spoken of, it seems to have been a custom well understood at that time. When the Law was given by Moses, this tithing system was incorporated with the Mosaic Code, and given a larger scope therein. Then, during the history of the Jews, down even to the days of Malachi, when they declined in their religious life, one of the things which they were condemned for neglecting was the giving of tithes to the Lord. In the New Testament, when the Apostle is enjoining systematic giving, it seems reasonable to suppose that the people were so familiar with this rule, that there was no need of such special reference to it as we would naturally expect there would be, if it were an entirely new thing in the Christian Church.

We also find hints of the same rule of giving in the religious customs of heathen nations. Amongst the religious Arabians and early Phœnicians this custom prevailed. The rule amongst the Egyptians was one-fifth, or a double tithe. How are we to regard these customs? It seems at least reasonable to suppose that these heathen customs have come down from early times, when, perhaps as the result of a very early revelation, God made this rule known to men. They are thus the shadows of a great reality, or the echoes, as the sacrifices are, of a very early voice, which spoke from heaven a great fact, and found in man's need a ready response thereto.

These two considerations, one from Scripture and the other from the pagan religions, justify us, we believe, in putting the tithing requirement on the grounds of natural, as distinct from positive religion. By this is meant, that the

giving of the tenth of one's income is a duty which springs out of the very relation which exists, in the nature of the case, between God as Creator, and man as creature. If this be so, the tithe is really independent of, and antecedent to, the Mosaic Law, and is, binding universally upon men, and thus the Christian is living under this rule. It must be his duty, therefore, to conform his voluntary giving to this rule, and in all his freewill offerings he should never forget that the tenth is the minimum which it is to be expected that he should give.

Of course we do not advocate the tithe as a tax, which the State may levy as a rate upon the people for religious purposes, in the same way as our municipal and other direct taxes are levied upon us. This would be inconsistent with the principles of Bible Giving as already laid down, and would be sure to lead to confusion and difficulty. We simply present it as the rule by which the liberality of the Christian may be intelligently directed.

It means that a man with an income of one thousand dollars shall pay one hundred for the support of religion. It means that a congregation of one hundred and fifty families, with an average income of five hundred dollars each, and having thus an aggregate income of seventy-five thousand dollars, would give seven thousand five hundred dollars to the Lord's cause. How many come up to this proportion, I wonder? and yet this is only the minimum of what I believe we should give.

The benefits arising from the adoption of the tithing system are very many, but we have not time to set them forth at length. We may merely mention some which, I trust, will commend this rule of giving to the earnest and prayerful consideration of the reader.

In the first place, *it would secure system in our giving*. The poor man, with his limited income, would give his tenth; and the rich man, with his large income, will give his also.

In the second place, *the giver will be able to act intelligently in making his offerings*. He will know what he ought to give, and will not be troubled debating the subject of the amount he should give every time he makes a contribution.

In the third place, *it will put at our disposal such an increased sum of money*, that the treasury of the Lord's cause will be much better filled than it now is. I am sure I am quite within the mark when I say that the amount would be more than doubled. Our religious institutions would be much better supported at home, and we could do far more in mission work. The tithe would revolutionize matters in this connection.

In the fourth place, *the experience of those who have tried it is that it is a blessing*. To scores of testimonies that might be quoted here, I can add my own, to the effect that ever since I adopted this rule of giving, my income has increased. Surely it is true in this connection, that "there is which scattereth and yet increaseth." Never has one confessed that his temporal affairs were injured by adopting the tithing system as the Christian rule.

In the last place, the experience of those who give the tenth is that *they are benefited spiritually*, and enjoy giving as they never did before. This is one of the best tests of its excellence. Anything which advances our spiritual interests is surely, by that very fact, stamped as having divine approval and sanction. We do, therefore, put in a strong plea for the tithing system, and will rejoice to see many of God's people adopting it.

SECTION II.

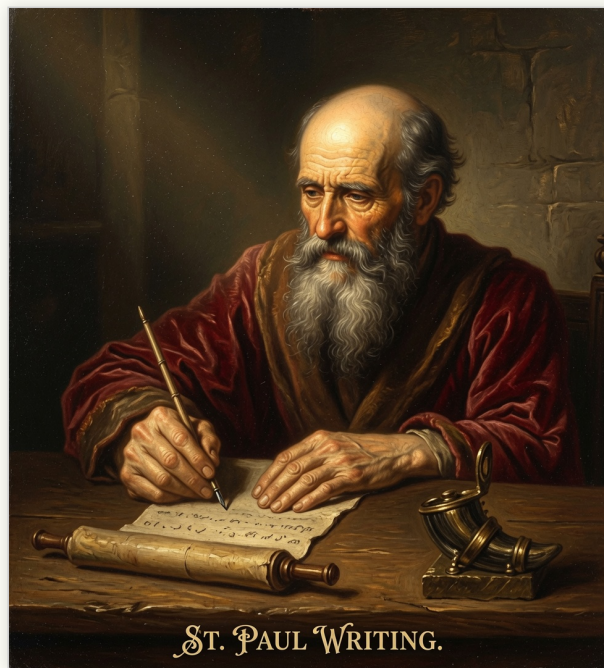
THE RULE OF GIVING : WHERE?

This question need not detain us very long, yet it is worthy of serious consideration. The answer to this question will in a measure determine what the nature of the act of giving really is, while a proper understanding of the nature of giving for religious purposes will help us to understand the proper place to make our offering. Is giving for such purposes a religious act? Is it an act of worship? If it be, then the proper place to perform that act is in connection with the services of God's house, and we should regard it as an act of worship. The paying of pew rent as a kind of business transaction during the week, or even the giving of missionary money to collectors, effective as this latter plan may be, does not lift up our giving to its proper place as an act of worship. It is evident, also, that all the various methods of indirect giving, such as church fairs and similar institutions involve, can scarcely, in the nature of the case, be made acts of worship, and hence these stand condemned on this ground, as well as on the other grounds already mentioned.

Brief reference to the Mosaic Law confirms the opinion that our giving for religious purposes is an act of worship. This is involved in the general fact, that all gifts made by the Jews were to be laid down by the altar and consecrated to God. The altar was the way to God for sinful man to present himself and his gifts unto God, and it was thus the central point for worship. All offerings made there were sacred, and the act involved in presenting the gifts was an act of worship.

In later times among the Jews, we find the Temple the great centre round which the worship of the people was gathered, and all the gifts for religious and benevolent purposes were to be brought to the Temple, and dedicated to the Lord there. What was given for the support of the priests was brought

there, and consecrated to the Lord first of all. This gives the hint that what is given for the support of the Gospel ministry should be regarded as a gift to God, for the maintenance of the permanent institutions of religion. Even what was given for the relief of the poor and needy was also brought to the temple, and given to the Lord, as it were, for the purposes of benevolence. This gives us the hint that charity is also a religious act, and should be so regarded in relation to the Lord's deserving poor.



In the New Testament, we find collections of various kinds spoken of, and you will observe that they all have close connection with religion and the place of worship. In the opening verses of the sixteenth chapter of I Corinthians, we read: “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 gathering when I come. And when I am come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem.” In this passage it is clear that the offerings were to be made on the Christian Sabbath, here called the first day of the week. It is altogether likely that, as the early Christians met for worship and religious edification

that day, the offerings would be made in connection with these services. It is also hinted that the matter of giving should be attended to with careful forethought, and not left to mere chance, nor to the hurried subscription list.

From these considerations it follows that the proper place to make all offerings for the purposes of religion is the sanctuary, and at a religious service. Here, not at some man's office or house, should all that is needed to pay the minister's salary and to provide for the running expenses of the church and Sabbath school be given. Here, rather than by missionary collectors, should all money given for missions be contributed. In this way, we are satisfied our giving would be looked upon, not simply as a mere business transaction, but would be regarded as an act of worship. The exercise of the grace of liberality in this way would be a far nobler and more spiritual act than it is often considered to be, and in proportion as it is regarded as an act of worship will our suitable feelings be expressed by that act, and in turn we will find benefit and derive pleasure from our giving to every religious object. It is important that congregations, by the methods they adopt for raising their money for various purposes, should keep in view the great truth we are now setting forth. In no case should they do anything to encourage the merely commercial spirit in the method in which the contributions are made. But we cannot dwell longer on this practical topic, and would close by commending it to the careful and prayerful consideration of the Christian community.

SECTION III.

THE RULE OF GIVING : WHEN?

The only question which now remains is as to the time at which, and frequency with which, the offerings should be made. From the general references to the offering of gifts in the Old Testament, it would appear that no religious service was unaccompanied with offerings of some kind. The Jewish ritual clearly involved this. In the Book of Psalms we find it written more than once: "Bring an offering, and come into His courts." Such passages clearly imply that, when the people came on the Sabbath, at the annual feasts and at other sacred times, they were to come with devotion in their hearts and an offering in their hands.

In like manner, in the New Testament, the passage already quoted in the preceding section exhorts Christian people to make their offerings on the first day of the week, which is the Lord's day or the Christian Sabbath. The inference, further, is that this should be done every Lord's day, and at all religious services, and that everything so given should be dedicated to the Lord in this way. Whether it be money to build a church, pay the pastor, or support colleges and missionaries, I am convinced that it should all be made as a voluntary offering at the sanctuary, and consecrated to the Lord thereby.

What emerges in this connection, as the reader may already perceive, is the system of Weekly Offerings. By this system we believe the spirit of Christian liberality can be best fostered, and the Bible Rule of giving will be best followed. Equality and system will be secured in the givings of the people, and they in turn will feel the amount to be less and more easily given than under any system yet adopted. I am fully convinced that all our giving for the support of Christ's cause at home and abroad should be given in weekly instalments, and at the public services of the sanctuary.

I need not enter into a discussion as to the details of working out this system. It abolishes pew rents and makes all offerings purely free-will in their nature. If one man can give twenty cents a week, and needs five sittings in church, let this be his portion; if another can give a dollar a week, and needs but three sittings, let that be the arrangement for him.

And in regard to missions, let each one reckon carefully what he can give per week, and let this be laid aside and given every week, and the result at the end of the year will be an astonishment to everybody.



THE ENVELOPE SYSTEM.

The use of envelopes, one set for ordinary purposes and another for missionary money, makes the system simple and easily worked, and the uniform experience of those who have tried this plan is that it is far the best from every point of view. Even if there were no such Scripture as there is in its favor, we are sure that expediency would indicate that this is the best method of raising money. I am aware that there are prejudices against it in certain quarters, yet I am sure that, when it is universally adopted by the churches, a great advance will be made in the matter of Christian liberality. My space only permits me to commend the envelope or weekly offering

system to the earnest consideration of Christian people. If rightly managed, I am satisfied from experience that it will commend itself wherever adopted.

CONCLUSION.

We need only add a line or two in conclusion. We have tried to set forth the teaching of Scripture in regard to the important duty and privilege of giving of our means to the Lord for the support of His cause. We have entitled this paper “Bible Giving,” and have dealt with its essential *nature*, and have unfolded its proper *rule*.

In regard to its nature, we have found in the Old Testament and New five important principles. These are the following: *ownership* of our gifts, *dedication* to God in the act of giving, *freewill* in the spirit in which we give, *first-fruits* in regard to that which is given, and *representation* in regard to the real meaning of the gift. In the application of these principles to several modern customs in regard to giving to the Lord’s cause, we deal with church debts, the pew rent system, and the various methods of indirect giving. It was seen that church debts are a very bad thing, that pew rents should be abolished, and that all indirect methods of raising money should be given up. All giving should be a freewill offering, made of our best gifts to the Lord, as an expression of our devout feelings towards Him and His cause.

In the second part of the paper we treated of the Rule of Bible giving, and took up three points in regard to it. First, the *amount* to be given; secondly, the *place* where the gift should be made; and, thirdly, the *time* when the offerings should be presented. In reply to the first question, we set forth the tithing system as the rule for the amount; in answer to the second, we unfolded the idea that giving should be an act of worship performed at God’s house; and in response to the third, we advocated the weekly offering system as the best and most scriptural rule in this regard.



MISS ANGELA GEORGINA BURDETT COUTTS.

A Christian lady, who inherited a fortune of between two and three million pounds sterling (roughly equivalent to \$400–620 million in 2026 USD). She has spent this enormous sum in works of charity, and for the extension of Christ's kingdom, and is the founder and supporter of several diocesan missions. She was born in England in 1814, and is still living.¹

In closing the paper, we would remind ourselves that all power and blessing in Christian work and liberality is from the Lord. We may have our plans and machinery perfect, and yet if God's Spirit does not rest on these in answer to our earnestest prayers, little will be done. As in the storming of a fortress, the assailants may have the munitions of war all ready. The cannon may be there, the powder may be in its place, and the shot and shell also; but, unless the match be touched, there will be no damage done to the fortress. But let the match be set to the powder, then there is the flash, the crash, the dismantled fortress, and the victorious army. So in the conflict with the evil which abounds in the world. We may have all our church machinery in excellent order and well arranged, but unless God's power rests on these there will be no real blessing. We may even have all our plans and arrangements about giving in the best possible order, and yet, unless God's Spirit—as with a live coal from the altar above—touches the whole, there will be no real headway made against evil in the world. We must never forget, that it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, that we can do His work and gain the victory in the end.

¹ **Editor's Note:** Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1st Baroness Burdett-Coutts, passed away on 30 December 1906.

[Wikipedia — Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1st Baroness Burdett-Coutts](#)

THE PROPERTY TRUST.

BY

REV. R.W. WOODSWORTH.

[image pending]

THE PROPERTY TRUST.

CHAPTER I.

Out of the free and abundant gifts of God to us arise obligations on our part of the most sacred and imperative character. Christ has redeemed us with His own blood, therefore we are under infinite obligations to serve Him with heart, and head, and life, and means. Freely we have received, therefore, if we would avoid being guilty of the basest ingratitude, freely we must give. “The love of Christ constraineth me,” was the lofty sentiment, and undying impulse of the Apostle Paul in all his heroic, self-denying toil; and the same mighty motive should actuate us in every work we perform, and in every sacrifice we make for the Lord Jesus. The Holy Scriptures furnish clear and ample instruction for our guidance, in the management of the property trust as the responsible stewards of God. We need therefore experience neither confusion nor perplexity in answering the question, “What should be the extent of our giving, to the cause of God?” The Jewish law of tithe or tenth, together with ancient examples of freewill offerings, throws a great deal of light on the subject of systematic beneficence.

The “tenth” principle is one of very ancient obligation. It was adopted by the patriarch Abraham, and later on, by his grandson Jacob; and it was enjoined on Israel by formal injunction, and the regulations in regard thereto, having

been framed into a law, were placed on the statute books of the nation. It is clear, then, that this law was not merely a part of the ceremonial economy of Moses, but one, the observance of which dated back to time immemorial. It was evidently designed to be a regulating precept in all future dispensations of the Church—a principle never to be set aside.

It is true, it was re-enforced under the Mosaic economy, just as was the Sabbath law; but as the Sabbath law is just as much a law of the Christian Church as it was of the Jewish Church, so the property law, or tenth system, is of perpetual obligation. No moral precept has ever been repealed. God's law, which regulates the property trust, is as strictly of a moral character as that which regulates the question of time. If, therefore, the moral precept pertaining to the trust of time be still binding, what authority have we to declare that God's moral precepts in regard to the disposal of property have been cancelled? They are equally parts of God's moral law, and as such stand or fall together. But they both stand, because Christ said, "I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil."

It is evident that God claims for Himself at least one-seventh of our time, and one-tenth of our income, and neither of these laws can be violated without entailing loss and suffering on the transgressor.

If the Church under the old dispensation, with its inferior privileges, gave so largely to the cause of God, surely the Christian Church, in the possession of higher privileges and with a commission to evangelize the world, should not adopt a smaller scale of contribution. We contend that the obligations and motives for liberality have been immeasurably intensified under this new dispensation, by reason of our vastly increased privileges, and also in view of the enlarged field of operation which God in His providence has opened up before the Church. Never before in the history of the world was there such a demand for the consecration of property on the part of the Church as now, in this latter part of the nineteenth century, because never before did God give her such a magnificent opportunity for reaching and saving a lost race. The

sphere for the exercise of Christian benevolence and missionary enterprise is extending with amazing rapidity, and God calls upon the Christian Church everywhere to concentrate and consecrate all her forces for active service, that she may measure up to the glorious emergency of the hour. It is universally acknowledged that with increased privilege there comes increased responsibility. That being the case, the Christian is under obligation to devote his property to God, in larger proportions than were those who only enjoyed the feeble light and inferior privileges of the Jewish dispensation.

It is quite evident that the early disciples, under the Divine illumination of Pentecost, were prepared to go a long way beyond the bounds of Old Testament liberality. The circumstances were peculiar, requiring an entire and universal surrender of their earthly substance for the benefit of the Church. The Church had been inaugurated, and already embraced a membership of over three thousand souls, but her coffers were empty. Funds must be secured in some way. What a beautiful picture of self-sacrifice we have in that Church under the constraining love of Christ. Those primitive Christians advertised their property for sale, and as soon as possible turned their real estate into cash, and handed the money to the Apostles to meet the pressing needs of the Church.

Think of a man selling a house, or lot, or part of a farm now-a-days to raise funds for the extension of God's cause in the earth! What a stir such an act of sacrifice would make in the community! Yet just such occurrences were the order of the day in Apostolic times. The whole church was imbued with the spirit of unselfish love, and nothing in their estimation was too precious to sacrifice for the name and cause of Christ. No wonder it is written, "And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." The New Testament dispensation with its antitypical realities, its Pentecostal baptism, its sphere of action wide as the circumference of the globe, certainly affords no shelter for narrow covetousness or illiberal contribution.

We speak advisedly, when we say that there is nothing so dishonoring to God in the Church to-day, and hindering the salvation of the world so much, as the glaring and almost universal disregard of the property trust. "Covetousness is the plague-spot, the brand-mark of the Church's present condition. It is an all-consuming cancer in her soul, eating up the vitals of her piety and bliss." If we could only get covetousness out of the Church, we should soon get power and soul-saving efficiency into her. God is not chargeable with the slow progress of the Church. He is bending with infinite concern over a dying sin-stricken world, but His plan of operation is to save by the agency of the Church, which, alas! is only to a very limited extent imbued with the self-sacrificing spirit of Christ.

The work of evangelization progresses just as fast as the zeal and love and liberality of the Church increase, and no faster. But is it not evident to every spiritual mind that the Church, in many instances, is so steeped in the spirit of selfishness as to effectually hold the grace of God in restraint? Grasping covetousness forms the granite barrier which prevents the grace of Christ from flowing out to refresh and save a famishing world.

Let us consider more particularly the old Jewish regulations for the property trust, in contrast with the meagre givings of Christians in the present day, and in this the most highly privileged dispensation that the world has ever seen.

"It is commonly supposed that the devout Jew gave a tenth of his means to God. A careful examination of the facts convinces us that his yearly offerings to God were on a scale of liberality far greater. There was the ransom for his first-born son, and also the first-fruits of his flock. There were the first-gatherings of his harvest, estimated at one-sixtieth, and the corners of his field left in reaping, another sixtieth. Then whatever dropped from the hand in reaping was left for the poor; and once in seven years the lands were allowed to produce spontaneously for the poor. Then there were the trespass-offerings, sin-offerings, half-shekels of the sanctuary, and the remission of all debts every seventh year. Then came the tithe for the priesthood—a tenth of the

produce of the fields—and of what remained another tenth for the Temple and the poor.”

A careful summing up of all their givings shows that the honest Jew was in the habit of consecrating at least one-third of his income to God. We find, therefore, that under the Jewish dispensation laws regulating every department of giving were not only clearly and accurately defined, but were solemnly and rigorously enforced.

“In this, shall we say, advanced age, it becomes a serious question to what extent the laws that regulated the givings of the Jews are binding upon us. Many of those laws were for the support of different objects in the Temple service, but this service, with its various details, has passed away, and of necessity such laws have become null and void. All that was ceremonial and local has been repealed. We venture, however, to affirm that the principle, the duty of giving, is not ceremonial, but moral in its nature and influence. Let it never be forgotten that to give is a moral duty, and part of the moral law. With no sanctuary worship and its half-shekels, ‘sin-offerings,’ etc., and no Jewish priesthood, the letter of the law has been abrogated, but the spirit of the law—the law itself—still lives, and is binding. We have temple worship and a living ministry, and the various institutions of the Church to be supported in this age of Christian activity and life; and it is really a grave question; and whether the earnest, prayerful and believing Christian of the present day, in the possession of means, is not under obligation to give to God as much as the honest and devout Jew of a former day.”

The above quotation contains the opinion of a devout minister of Christ in this Dominion, who has given a great deal of time and thought to the investigation of this question. We think that no Christian, who apprehends his superior privileges in this Gospel dispensation, and whose heart responds with Christ-like sympathy to the crying needs of a perishing world, will regulate his contributions by a narrower scale than that which governed the ancient Jew.

It would appear from a careful study of this whole question, as it relates to the different dispensations of the world's history, that we are morally bound to lay aside as a minimum, one-tenth of our income for God, and then to supplement that tenth by further contributions and thank-offerings according to our resources, and according to the demands of the Church in her ever widening conquests for Christ. There is perhaps no law in the Bible that is more thoroughly misapprehended, and more generally disregarded than this very law, which is designed to regulate God's claim upon the earthly substance, which He has permitted man as His steward to handle for the time being. Christians should be exhorted to study the Word of God on this important subject, that they may form proper conceptions of their responsible duties pertaining to the management and distribution of their material wealth.

Let us briefly review the situation. In the earliest history of the remotest dispensation, at the very gates of Eden the godly Abel offered up sacrifice to his Maker. Abraham gave one-tenth unto God, and when called upon to surrender his only son Isaac, immeasurably dearer to him than all earthly substance, he promptly obeyed the command. Jacob when at Bethel, on that memorable night when he had the vision of angels, vowed a vow unto the Lord, and this was the purpose of it; that if God would be with him and give him food to eat and raiment to wear, he would surely serve God and consecrate one-tenth of his substance to the Giver of all good.

The Mosaic dispensation, which afforded higher privileges than that of the Patriarchal, imposed a tariff of systematic tithing that claimed about one-third of all the property possessed by the Israelites. The regular stated annual contributions of the Jews to the service of God were very large, and yet, on special occasions, when thank-offerings were called for, how readily and nobly the people responded!

Witness the scene at the erection of the Tabernacle. The people gave in such abundance, that the building committee of the Tabernacle complained to Moses of the surplus, and accordingly the leader of the people issued a

proclamation throughout the camp to this effect:—"Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the Sanctuary work." "So the people were restrained from giving. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much." It is not often now-a-days that a trustee board, in building or repairing a church, is constrained to send a notice to the pulpit, kindly requesting the people to withhold their gifts, inasmuch as the contributions already made are amply sufficient to meet all the demands in full. But the time is coming when the treasuries of the Lord will be flooded; when railroads, and steamboats, and manufacturing establishments, and all the industries of Christendom will be run for the glory of God, and the extension of Gospel light and truth in the earth.

As another illustration of special liberality over and above the regular contributions, we might instance the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. David and his nobles headed the subscription list with over two hundred and forty millions of dollars, and this enormous sum was augmented by subsequent contributions, till it reached an aggregate of three thousand millions of dollars. Coming down the ages to the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, the highest dispensation the Church has yet enjoyed, we find the primitive Christians transcending the bounds of Old Testament liberality. They literally sold out for God, put their property into a common treasury, and from this source distribution was made to all men as every man had need.

And yet, with the precepts and example of the ancient Church before us for a period of four thousand years, with the sacrifices of love made by the early Christian Church under the wonderful illumination of Pentecost, with the increased privileges and wealth of the present dispensation, with a commission that is not narrow and circumscribed like that of the Jewish Church, but aggressive and universal, a commission to publish the Gospel to all nations—with all these features of the case before them, some have the assurance to declare that God does not require His people in the present day to contribute so large a proportion as even one-tenth to His cause. We claim

that the whole tenor of Bible teaching, from Genesis to Revelation, contradicts and overthrows the position of those who take this narrow view of the subject. With increased privileges, increased ability for doing good, a sphere of operation as wide as the globe, how can it be otherwise than that the obligations of the Church in the matter of property consecration should be greatly increased?

The question is sometimes asked, “Should a poor man, or a man that is in debt, give one-tenth of his earnings to God?” We would reply by asking another question, “Should a poor man, or a man in debt, keep the Sabbath?” The poor or embarrassed man might defend himself against the claims of the fourth commandment, by an argument like the following:—“To me time is money. I can make a dollar a day. There are fifty-two Sabbaths in the year. To keep the fourth commandment and thus suspend labor for fifty-two days, means simply fifty-two dollars out of my pocket. I don’t think that God requires a poor man to set apart so large a proportion as one-seventh of his time for religious purposes, and, therefore, on what I regard the principles of common honesty and justice, I feel that I am guiltless in working at my business on Sunday as well as Monday.”

Could such a line of argument be accepted in harmony with the teachings of the Christian faith? Would not the practical outcome of such sentiments utterly destroy the very foundations of Christianity, and make every man a law unto himself? It cannot be that any man is more likely to improve his earthly condition, and pay off all his debts by a systematic violation of the Sabbath, than by the strict observance of that holy day. There certainly can be no gain in deliberately setting at defiance the law of an infinitely wise and benevolent God. If the voice of the fourth commandment were the voice of despotism, rebellion would be justifiable. But if the command is reasonable and benevolent, it is at once a matter of wisdom and prudence on our part to yield a willing obedience.

Our liberties, our enjoyments, our prosperity, our growth in every department of life are all affected by the character of the government under which we live. To surrender our liberties, our freedom of speech and freedom of conscience to the sceptre of tyranny, is to live the crushed and degraded life of a slave. On the other hand, to bow in joyful homage at the throne of a government whose laws are wholesome, broad, liberal, consulting the highest freedom and dearest interests of the subject—to bow in homage at such a shrine is to confer upon ourselves honors and blessings untold. Now, it will be found on investigation that such is the unselfishness and benevolence of the Divine government, that every law on the statute books is framed in the interests of the subject. Not in some of their interests, but in all of them, down to what might be termed the most insignificant items and trifles of life. And further, so thoroughly are these laws based on the mental, moral, spiritual and physical constitution of man, that whilst obedience thereto invariably brings blessings, disobedience just as invariably brings trouble and penalty. The Sabbath law is an illustration of this thought. This law claims one-seventh of our time for physical rest and sacred purposes. This, we claim, is pre-eminently a benign and gracious law. Such is the physical constitution of man, that his body cannot stand unremitting toil without serious injury. Man will live longer and do more work by a strict observance of the Sabbath than if he disregarded this regulation of the Creator. The human body demands the periodical rests indicated in this great time-law of God. No individual, no community, nor nation can set this law at defiance, without entailing upon itself untold misery and disgrace. The Sabbath law, then, is a highly salutary and beneficent law, as far as the body is concerned. Still higher are its spiritual advantages. For the time being man is liberated from the usual employments of life, and with thoughts and energies withdrawn from secular pursuits, he is afforded special opportunities for communion with God and with His people, and for the devotional study of Divine truth, and through these channels incomparable blessings come to his heart and family and home. The hands of this Sabbath law are full of benedictions for the children of men.

What is said of the Sabbath law may be just as truly said of every other law of God, viz., that it is framed in the interests of the subject. "The commandments of God are not grievous, but joyous, and in keeping of them there is great reward." Our argument then is this, that if it is profitable for the poor man to keep God's time-law, it must also be profitable for him to observe God's property-law. Both precepts come from the same Great Lawgiver, and are richly laden with blessings to those who keep them.

This subject might be illustrated largely from practical experience. Let the citation of one or two instances suffice. I was acquainted with a man who lived on one of my early charges who adopted the tenth principle, though at the time his income was very small. He lived in a log-house and owned a small farm of twenty-five acres. He had been in the habit of giving the scraps to the Lord,—a five cent piece or a ten cent piece that he might happen to have in his pocket when the demand for the cause of Christ was made. His attention having been directed to the subject of proportionate giving, he resolved to govern his contributions by the new light he had received. Accordingly, when he sold five dollars' worth of market stuff, he put aside fifty cents for the Lord. If he only sold one dollar's worth, he laid by ten cents. One-tenth of all sums, whether large or small, was faithfully deposited in a separate drawer for God. He soon found that his contributions on the new plan would be vastly in advance of his former givings, and what surprised and delighted him was, that notwithstanding his greatly enlarged scale of liberality, he had more left for himself than when he gave only the trifles to God. About this time the annual missionary meeting was held in his neighborhood, and when the subscription paper was circulated he contributed the sum of seventeen dollars, which was more than all the other farmers in the neighborhood, put together, gave that year.

I knew another man who adopted the tenth principle when in debt. A few weeks after his new decision, a note of one hundred dollars came due. The

party holding the note came to him and in the course of conversation remarked, “You have done a great deal for me, and I never intend to ask



you for this money.” So saying, he opened the stove-door and consigned the note to the flames. It is really wonderful how much this man and his two sons, both of whom have also adopted the tenth principle, have given of late years to the cause of Christ, and their testimony is this, that God has abundantly blessed them—both materially and spiritually—as the result. During a ministry of twenty years, I have met with a number of persons who have observed this system of contribution, and every experience corroborates the beneficence of the law, and the absolute reliability of the promises connected therewith.

*“One-tenth of ripening grain,
One-tenth of tree and vine,
One-tenth of all the yield
From tenths’ rain and shine.*

*One-tenth of lowing herds,
That browse on hill and plain:
One-tenth of bleating flocks,
For ten-tenths’ rain and shine.*

*One-tenth of all increase
From counting room and mart;
One-tenth that science yields,
One-tenth of every art.*

*One-tenth of loom and press,
One-tenth of mill and mine;
One-tenth of every craft
Wrought out by gifts of Thine.*

*One-tenth of glowing words
That glowing guineas hold;
One-tenth of written thoughts—
That turn to shining gold.*

*One-tenth! and dost Thou, Lord,
But ask this meagre loan,
When all the earth is Thine,
And all we have Thine own?”*

CHAPTER II.

THE disregard of God's claims upon the pocketbook is a crying evil in the Church to-day, and one that leaves a blight upon every department of Church work. Professors of religion are not, as a rule, doing business for God. They are doing business for themselves and devoting their incomes for selfish purposes, whilst the cause of Christ receives a very small and insignificant consideration in their financial plans. They declare that their property is their own, and they have a right to do just what they like with it, and this they affirm in spite of God's published and repeated declarations to the contrary. Listen to Jehovah's version of the matter: "The gold and silver are mine." "The cattle upon a thousand hills are mine, if I were hungry I would not ask thee." "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." In all these passages the absolute proprietorship of the Almighty is asserted. How significant and opportune was Jehovah's charge to His ancient people, in view of the wealth and prosperity of their future settlement in Canaan. "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied. And thou say in thine heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that hath given thee power to get wealth." Would that every prosperous business man realized and practically recognized the secret spring of his ever growing gains. Human independence is a myth. "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth," is a vain and wicked boast. Well indeed may God rebuke the folly and impertinence of such self-commendation, with the reminder,

"Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." How readily could the Almighty unnerve the right arm of

industry, and render the cunning workman a helpless invalid! How soon could He smite the brain with paralysis and transform the shrewd business man into a driveling idiot! One touch of God's retributive providence would wither human beauty, and blast human greatness, and close up every avenue to wealth and prosperity. Should the refreshing dews and genial showers and golden sunshine be withheld, all vegetation must necessarily cease and barrenness and death universally prevail.

Trading in the rich resources and varied treasures of Divine bestowment, man cannot afford to raise the cry of self-derived success. All the capital by which earthly possessions are multiplied is furnished by the bountiful hand of Providence.

Muscular strength, brain-power, mechanical skill, inventive genius, atmosphere, soil, light, rain and heat—the essential factors of human wealth, are all the gifts of God, and should never be overlooked in considering our obligations to the Author of all good.

If the generous bestowal of material blessing renders our obligations to God so great, what shall we say concerning the strength and perpetuity of those claims that grow out of the gift of Christ to our fallen race, and the whole plan of human redemption with its unutterable and eternal benedictions?

Who can describe the narrowness of soul, the want of appreciation, the consummate selfishness of the man who can summer in all these Divine blessings, and yet begrudge even one-tenth of his annual income for the extension of Christ's Kingdom in the earth? "Will a man rob God?"

The fact is, the entire system of Church finance requires revision. It ought to be the easiest thing in the world to raise money for the cause of that blessed Jesus, who went down to poverty and agony and death, that He might lift us to riches and joy and life. Instead of that, it is a matter of great difficulty to maintain the institutions of the Christian Church as they should be

maintained. It is far easier to raise money for a political club, for holiday recreations, or a band tournament, or even for a miserable kalithumpian procession, than it is to secure funds for carrying the Bread of Life to a starving world.

There is nothing that seems to grieve some people so much as an appeal for money on behalf of Christ's Kingdom on the earth. Thousands would like to see the cause prosper, but want a kind of success that costs nothing—"a cheap and inexpensive success that will support itself, and leave their cupidity untaxed and undisturbed." Let us remember that there is no success in any department of life without sacrifice, much less in the extension of Christ's Kingdom, which has its very foundation in unselfish benevolence.



What sacrifices men will make at the shrine of self! What sacrifices the commercial man will make to put more working capital into his business! What sacrifices the farmer will make to buy another farm, or to pay for the one he has! What plans and self-denials many a man will resort to in order to build a fine house and adorn it with elegant furniture! What downright hardships and terrible exposures men will submit to, away off in the gold mines far from the blessings of civilization and the comforts of home, in their resolute determination to dig a fortune out of the earth!

“We have no fault to find with all this. Self-denial, sustained courage, persevering toil constitute the highway to success in every avenue of life. But we inquire, should the motive of the merchant, or the farmer, or the fortune seeker be stronger than the motive of the Cross?

Where is the proof of our attachment and love for the Saviour, if the motive of the Cross does not move us with an all-absorbing impulse to do large things for Him? Have you thought, dear reader, of those words, so often embodied in Christian song—‘I gave my life for thee,’ and then of the question which follows—‘What hast thou done for me?’

This statement and this interrogation reveal the generosity of God and the ingratitude of man. Here we have Infinite love on the one hand and human selfishness on the other. How grasping covetousness is confounded in the presence of Calvary! It is with the mysterious, unparalleled, infinite sacrifice of Jesus before our gaze, that we gather the highest inspiration for Christian liberality and Christian work.

“Sweet the moments, rich in blessing, Which before the Cross we spend.”

*“Here we learn to serve and give, And our narrow self deny;
Here we gather love to live, Here we gather faith to die.”*

It is beneath the vertical influence of this manifested love that human selfishness retreats and vanishes, and the whole man—with all the powers and possibilities of his life—is surrendered to God.

Dear reader, if your heart rebels when you are asked to do anything for Christ, if your givings are small and contributed reluctantly at that, I pray you take a long and lingering look at the Cross. Look at it till you see its glory! Look at it till you feel its mysterious power melting and subduing your heart, and breaking all the bands of selfishness that have so long imprisoned your soul; and then, with the generosity which an all-pervading love inspires, you will appreciate the sentiments of the Christian poet when he cried:—

*Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so Divine, Demands my soul, my life,
my all.”*

The love of Jesus Christ transforms the matter of giving from an irksome duty into a refreshing privilege,—a spiritual luxury.

Of all potent forces in the universe of God, love stands forth in unrivalled strength. It will carry more burdens, it will endure more suffering, it will accomplish more work, it will win more victories, it will give more money, it will encounter and conquer more difficulties than any other moral force that can be named. It has been truly said that “To love, more than to anything else, this world owes what blessedness it enjoys.”

O that the love of Christ might extend the empire of its divine influence from the centre to the circumference of every Christian heart! In that case the questions of church finance and church work would soon be effectually settled, and the conquest of the world for God would be an event of early date. Love knows no burdens. Measured by this test, how professions of attachment and loyalty to Christ come short!

Should a faithful, loving wife ask a wealthy husband to procure her some article that she was very much in need of, and he should churlishly reply, "I cannot afford to get it for you," you would conclude that he did not love you much, or he would have granted his wife reasonable request. And when Jesus Christ, with his pierced brow and bleeding hands and wounded side, approaches His professed follower to plead on behalf of His needy, suffering cause, and that man ties his purse-strings and shuts his heart and sets himself like a flint to resist the most pathetic entreaties, what is the verdict? Why, that Mammon has a much stronger grasp on that man's heart than the love of Christ. The most charitable mind could reach no other conclusion.

I could wish that all Christians would investigate this property question, not only in the light of scriptural command and scriptural promise, but especially from the standpoint of the Cross; for then, I am convinced, they would be prepared to transfer the whole matter of contribution to the institutions of the church, from the legal basis of duty to the higher platform of joyous privilege. "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 be rich." "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work."

CHAPTER III.

WE now wish to call attention to some of the Divine pledges of blessing on behalf of those who faithfully observe the claims of His property laws, and to the indirect penalties that follow the violation of these laws. There is a remarkable passage in the third chapter of Malachi's prophecy that demands more than a passing notice.

The Jews had been withholding from God His prescribed proportion of the income, and, as the result of this sin, the land was visited with destructive insects and other pests, that destroyed the fruits of the husbandman's labor. At this juncture, when there was sore distress and scarcity throughout the land by reason of failure in the crops, Jehovah charged His people with the worst kind of robbery, and having commanded them to bring all the tithes into the storehouse, he flung out the notable challenge: "Prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

It is a fact worthy of special note, that in temporal as well as spiritual things, God places trust first in the order of events, and blessing afterwards. "Prove Me by trusting Me and I'll honor you by blessing you," is the substance of the Divine challenge.

It might at first sight seem unreasonable for God to demand all the tithes of the Jewish system, under the circumstances. Nevertheless, that is just what He did. It was done to promote humiliation and excite trust, and also to show His people their entire dependence upon Him for all the good things of this life.

The same principle of action is illustrated in God's dealings with His people in the days of the prophet Haggai, about one hundred and twenty-five years previous to the above-mentioned test. The Jews had returned from captivity, but instead of devoting their means and energies towards the rebuilding of the Temple, they were erecting comfortable homes for themselves, leaving the house of God neglected and desolate. The visitation of God upon the people and the land because of covetousness is full of admonitory lessons to all succeeding generations. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

"Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet saying, is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts; consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put into a bag with holes. Ye looked for much, and lo it came to be little: and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands." Let the men who think to outwit God by despising his money laws, ponder well the import of this withering, Divine curse. The prophet further reminds the people of their folly by pointing them to the small returns of the field and the vineyard: "Since those days were, when one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten." God would only have asked two measures out of the twenty, but seeing the farmer was not disposed to give any, the Lord took ten measures, or, in other words, He took fifty per cent. by penalty, when He would only have asked ten per cent. by law. Again, "When one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty." God only required of them five vessels, but seeing they were

greedily determined to hold all and give none, He took from them thirty vessels, or six times as much, by penalty, as He would have asked by law. “I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labour of your hands; yet ye turned not to Me, saith the Lord.”

Shall the potsherd of the earth strive with his Maker? Need insignificant man, dependent on the Divine bounty for every breath he draws and every atom of strength he possesses, expect to cheat God with impunity?

*“Heaven, though slow to wrath,
Is never with impunity defied.”*

Here again, in the midst of poverty and famine, God called upon the people to devote their time and strength towards completing the Temple. Modern prudence and wisdom would rebel at this point and say: “No! let the people look after their own families first, and afterwards take the interests of God’s cause into consideration.” The Author of all wisdom and blessing speaks otherwise. “Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.” And then Jehovah promised that from the very day they began to obey Him the tide of their calamities should be arrested, and an era of temporal and spiritual prosperity should be opened up for them by a smiling Providence. “From this day will I bless you.”

Oh that men would recognize the hand of God in all relations of life. Were the people to observe the property laws of the Bible, we should have such scenes of commercial and agricultural prosperity as the world has never seen.

“The sun gives ever, so the earth What it can give—so much ’tis worth; The ocean gives in many ways— Gives baths, gives fishes, rivers, bays; So too the air, it gives us breath, When it stops giving—comes in death.

Give, give, be always giving,— Give, give, be always giving,— Who gives not is not living; The more you give, The more you live, The more you give, The more you live.

“God’s love hath in us wealth unheaped, Only by giving is it reaped; The body withers and the mind Is pent up by a selfish rind. Give strength, give thoughts, give deeds, give pelf, Give love, give tears, and give thyself. Give, give, be always giving,— Who gives not is not living; The more you give, The more you live.”

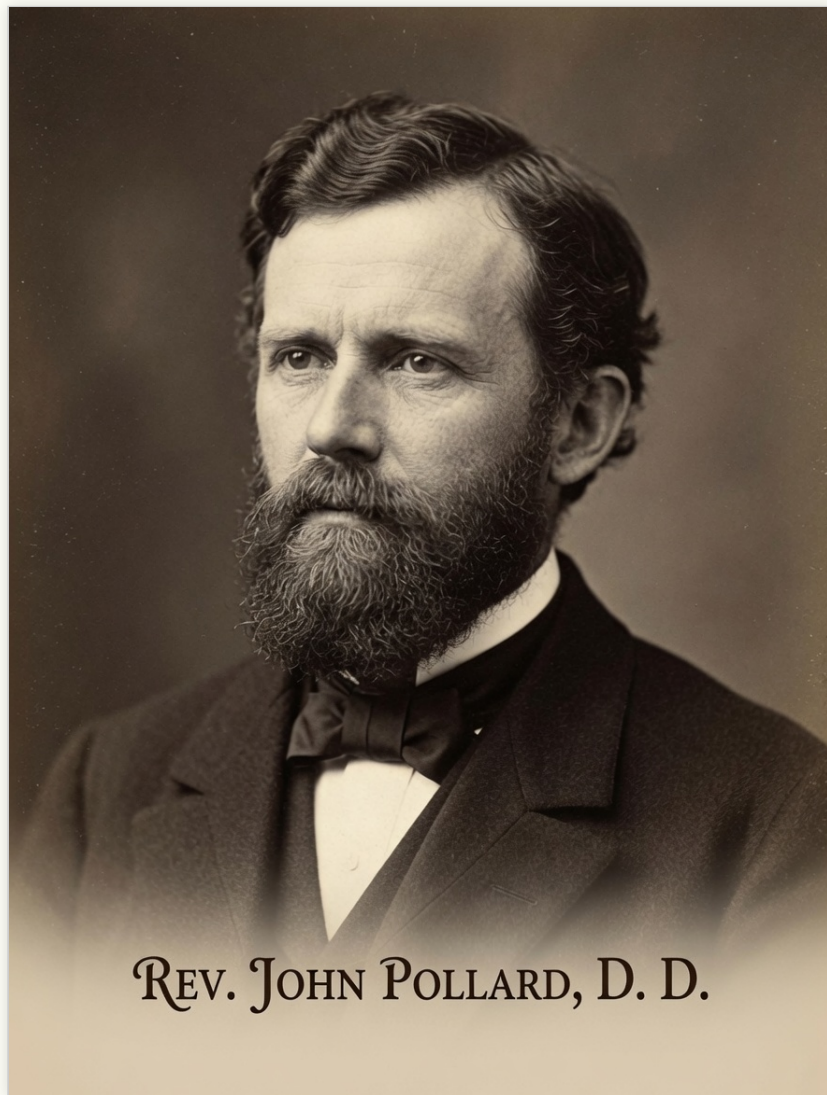
[We regret that want of space prevents us from publishing the full paper on “The Property Trust.”]

THE PUBLISHERS.

GIVING AND RECEIVING.

BY

REV. JOHN POLLARD, D. D.



GIVING AND RECEIVING

“To remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” —Acts xx. 35.

“MORE blessed to give than to receive?”

Who believes that? Some would deny it at once even as a bare theory. Some, whatever they might think of it as a naked proposition, would promptly discredit it as a rule of life: they think it would ruin them to act on it. Others might not feel authorized to discard it in any sense; and yet they stand in doubt of it. After all; in the statement, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” they would write a stupendous interrogation point (?), as if to say, “Is that true?” “Can it be true?”

What I propose to do is to help your faith in the doctrine of the text by showing that, however strange or absurd it may appear, it is in perfect accord with common sense and sound reasoning. At first it may seem a glittering fallacy; on examination it is found a solid, sober truth.

Several preliminary remarks must be made. Your thoughts have perhaps already darted to your pocket-books.

1. Let us not suppose that the giving and receiving here referred to are the giving and receiving of money alone. They are of course included; but the passage before us embraces much more. It embraces the giving and

receiving of sympathy, of prayers, of kind words, of kind acts, of anything, of everything that relieves, establishes, comforts, helps.

2. One act of receiving must precede all giving in the highest sense. It is that act of receiving referred to by John when he says, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John i. 12). We must be filled and enriched by the presence of Christ with us and in us before we can become givers to the world about us.
3. Christ, when on earth, acted on the principle of the text, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Matt. xx. 28): which is equivalent to saying, “I came not to receive, but to give; I came not to set the current of benefits from the world to me, but to turn that current from me to the world.” We have but to read the history of our Lord to see how fully the acts of His hands confirmed the utterance of His lips. His whole life, as well as His death, was a giving, not a receiving. The Son of God, being possessed of infallible wisdom, must have sought the object that was most desirable and most blessed.

Now we proceed to the main argument.

1. *The analogies of nature and life* give us no slight intimations of the teaching in the text.

Your writing-desk gives: from it you draw your materials for correspondence or any literary work you may propose to yourself. Your waste-basket receives. You think much more of your writing-desk than of your waste-basket. You take your writing-desk and put it on the table—the post of honor: you take your waste-basket and put it under the table—the station of inferiority and humiliation.

The fountain gives: the sewer receives. The fountain is pure, and sparkling, and attractive: the sewer is dark, and filthy, and repulsive.

Those substances in nature that receive all the rays of the sun and absorb in themselves as much as they receive are black—a color symbolic of woe. Those substances that receive none of the rays of the sun, and, absorbing none, give back all, are white—the color emblematic of purity and glory.

There is an inland sea that has no outlet:—the Dead Sea, in Syria. It has an inlet through which the rapid Jordan is emptied into its bosom. It receives but does not give. Its shores are a desert, on its surface no sail is spread, through its waters no fishes swim, in its tide no wild fowl bathe their plumage. Amid frowning cliffs it lies, forsaken of men, and accursed of God.

2. Look at the traits nourished by the two processes.

Receiving tends to nourish selfishness. It makes a man purse-proud, and sordid, and earthly. The horizon of this world completely bounds his vision. He will see nothing beyond this world, and consequently he will become narrow in his views and sympathies. We might suppose that, in the person that much receives and nothing gives, at least one excellent quality would be nourished—gratitude. But even here we find ourselves disappointed. The person that only receives is never grateful. His numberless and never-ceasing blessings come to be regarded by him as a matter of course. He sees not God the Giver in one of them. His greedy, eager gaze is too closely fixed on the gift, for him to see the hand that bestows it. He is like the swine beneath the oak, too busy eating the acorns to look up to the boughs from which they fall. Such are the traits nourished by receiving. What are the qualities developed by giving? Generosity, benevolence, fraternity, tenderness of soul, largeness of view, and resemblance to Him that gives to all life, breath, and all things. These are the life, breath, giving fosters; and these are the traits that exalt and ennoble human nature. They as far surpass the qualities nourished by receiving as fine gold surpasses the basest metal.

3. Then I appeal to your own experience.

You have been doubting whether it was “more blessed to give than to

receive,” when, if you had only read aright your own history, you would have known it was true. You have sometimes received. You have felt joy in receiving. At other times you have given. And you felt joy in giving. Both experiences are then before you. Which do you prize most? Are you not perfectly conscious that your joy in giving was of a better, purer, nobler type than your joy in receiving? Do you not feel that it was a joy that better became a rational, immortal, accountable being? Do you not feel that it was a joy you would rather think of and dwell upon amid scenes of affliction, and at the hour of death? The joy of receiving is like a sparkling dew-drop which a passing footstep may brush away; but the joy of giving is like a glittering star set in the sky of night, which will shine on over decaying empires, and through revolving ages.

4. *God has promised much to giving, nothing to receiving.*

What does Jehovah promise to giving? It would require a volume to tell you. I quote only one pledge that Jesus has made. “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom” (Luke vi. 38). This blessed promise effectually answers those that ask, “How am I to have anything to give, if I am to be giving all the time?” Give, and it shall be given unto you. You have probably seen men load drays with bagged hams. The man in the store will throw to the one on the pavement, and the man on the pavement to the man in the cart. The man on the pavement is constantly pitching the hams away from him, and yet is as constantly having a ham in his hands. Why? Because, as rapidly as he parts from one, another is thrown to him. So, God deals with the liberal soul; as he parts from what he has, God gives him more. Now search out your promise to the mere receiver; and when you have found it let me know.

5. *Receiving has no recompense in the next world: giving has.* Dives was a man that received on earth. He was clothed in purple and fine linen, and

fared sumptuously every day. But what, did he get on the other shore? Nothing, absolutely nothing. In the other world, a drop of water to cool his tongue was denied him. “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented” (Luke xvi. 25). In contrast with this spectacle look at the reward offered in the other world to giving. Jesus says, “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.” That is, take care how you become a receiver in this world. “But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just” (Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14). If receiving has its rewards only on earth, but giving its recompense both here and hereafter, surely we may no longer doubt that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

OBJECTION.

But some one may say, “The principle you advocate calls for us to discontinue all accumulation and do nothing but distribute.” Not at all. Your view completely overlooks the true relation between accumulating and distributing. We are not to dispense with distributing in our accumulating: neither are we to dispense with accumulating in our distributing. But we are to accumulate in order that we may distribute. “Let him labor,” says the scripture, “working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (Eph. iv. 28). Receiving must go on: but go on, not as a means of accumulation, but as a means of giving.

This subject teaches us many important...

LESSONS.

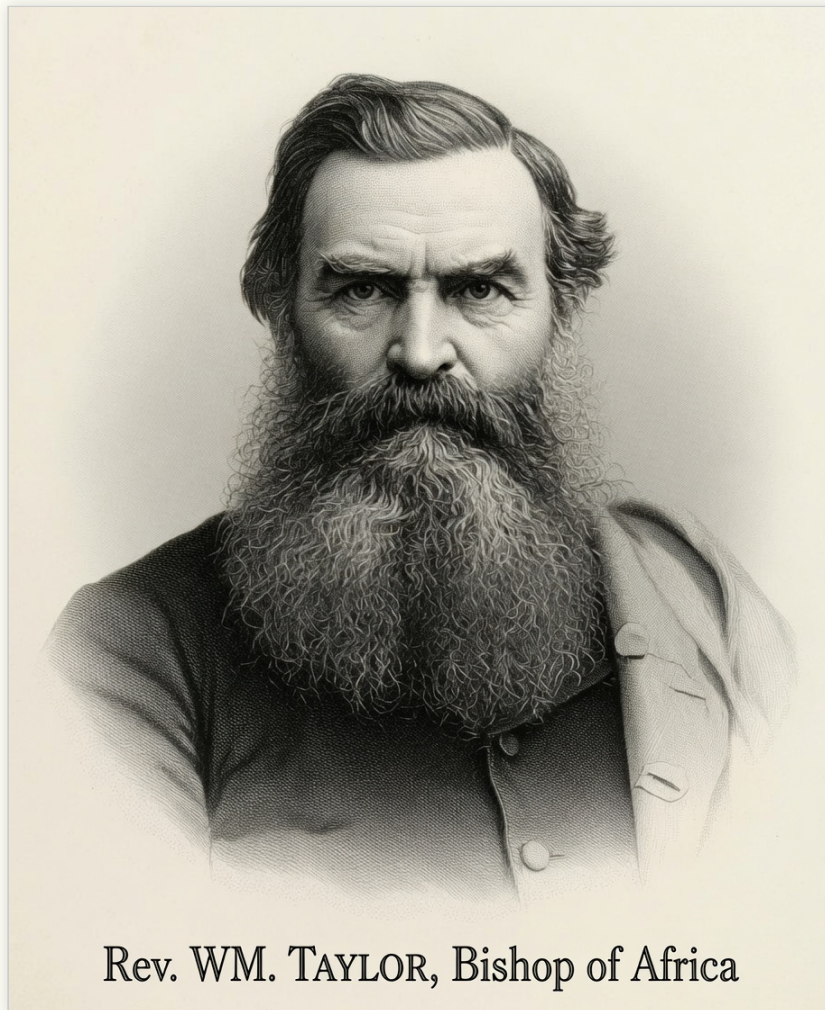
1. It rebukes the error of constantly considering what we are receiving from others. Some deal with this question almost entirely. With them the only inquiry is, “What treatment am I receiving from other people?” I have met with such persons very often. They have told me how cold, how distant, how unappreciative, how uncharitable, this one and that one are towards them. This may be a matter of some interest, but it is by no means the sole matter or the main matter. If it is true that “it is more blessed to give than to receive,” the question for us to ask is not how other people are treating us, but how we are treating other people; not what we are getting from our fellow-men, but what we are meting out to them.
2. It teaches us a lesson about accounts. Few business men neglect to inquire, at stated times, what their receipts have been. But in the light of this text, I must ask whether that should be all. When at the end of a year or a month or a week, we are thinking of earnings or salary or income, we should not merely inquire what money we have received, but we ought to add up also to see what we have given.

*“He only breathes, and never lives,
Who much receives and nothing gives,
Whom none can praise, whom none can thank,
Creation’s blot, creation’s blank.”*

THE TITHE.

BY

REV. WM. TAYLOR, BISHOP OF AFRICA.



Rev. WM. TAYLOR, Bishop of Africa

THE TITHE.

WHEN God established human rights to six days per week for all manner of honest industry and legitimate enjoyment in secular lines of life, He reserved one day of each week, a seventh of time, to which He gave us no right except to use it for purposes of mercy to man and beasts of burden according to His plain injunctions in regard to the institutions of the Sabbath.

So when God established human rights to property, He reserved the tenth of all net proceeds for purposes of mercy, and never gave to man any right to the tenth except as a disbursing agent for Him.

He has given to mankind, 1st, the mental appetite for property; 2d, the right to accumulate, to have, and to hold property; and, 3d, property resources in vast variety; and He protects their property rights by the eighth commandment of the Decalogue. Having done all this for all men, it would be extremely unlike God's way of doing business to let them riot in His vast domain, regardless of the rights of the Sovereign who has provided and supplies all its resources.

He opens His vast fields of wealth in all their varieties to be developed by the human race, giving fruitful seasons for the soil, water power, wind power, steam power, and electric power, with power of mind and muscle, requisite to all mechanical and commercial pursuits, and goes in partnership with each worker, demanding as His share the tenth of the net proceeds of their united labor. Abraham and Jacob conformed to this fundamental law with contemporaneous nations of that day. It was hence incorporated in the

divinely appointed Mosaic system of law. “All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s; it is holy unto the Lord;” not simply the Lord’s in the sovereign sense of “the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof,” but in the sense of business personal rights as explained in the next verse.

“And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto a fifth part thereof”—he would receive in money a fifth more than the current value of the tenth bullock or other kind of tithe he wished to redeem. “And as concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock,” herd of cattle or flock of sheep or goats, “even whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.”

Four varieties of value are named to teach us that all productions of human industry are subject to God’s reserved right of the tithe for the relief of the poor and needy, and for the support of the institutions of God for the benefit of mankind. It will be observed that this law of the tithe is not a ceremonial or a typical law, having a limited tenure, but is as enduring as “seedtime and harvest,” and human life and labor on earth. The man who refuses to give to God the tithe of his net earnings or income, to be applied according to His best judgment, is guilty of defrauding his Divine Sovereign.

“Will a man rob God?”

The rascally fellow replies, “wherein have we robbed Thee?”

God replies, “in tithes and offerings.”

What is the penalty? “Ye are cursed with a curse.”

What are the terms of reconciliation? “Bring the tithes into the storehouse and prove me therewith, saith the Lord, and see if I will not pour you out such a blessing as there shall not be room to receive it.”

He does not command them to bring the freewill offering. The one is a legal right, the other is an acceptable voluntary offering. He goes on to indicate the curse visited upon those who refuse to give to God His portion, and its removal at their return to honest dealing with Him.

“I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and the vine shall no more cast her fruit, and ye shall have a delightsome land, and all nations shall call you blessed.”

The devourer is a generic term to represent all extraordinary destructive things that waste the tiller’s toil, such as the caterpillar, the locust, the Kansas grasshopper, the army worm, the chinch bug, the potato bug, and such like, and the mildew and blight of various kinds which cause “the vine to cast her fruit,” the wasting or destruction of the maturing crops of any kind, and of property in general.

God does not do this vindictively, but to teach His subjects what a losing business it is to defraud their Maker. These laws apply alike to saints and sinners apart from the question of personal salvation, upon a personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of sinners.

The Pharisee who went up into the temple to pray “paid tithes on all that he possessed,” and undoubtedly received the promised blessing of God on his business, yet he did not receive Christ and obtain justification by faith as did the poor Publican.

All expenses involved in the production of values must be paid before “net proceeds” can be estimated, and tithed; the personal and family expenses of the producer must come out of the nine-tenths which fall to his share. The tithes should be “laid by in store” promptly; the disbursement of it may be delayed, subject to the order of God by some providential intimation that commends itself to the judgment and conscience of His partner in the

business. “We are workers together with God” in this as we should be in all that pertains to life and godliness.

ATTRIBUTIONS & PRODUCTION NOTES

The Path to Wealth; or, Light from My Forge

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Colophon

Produced with love for preservation and stewardship of timeless truths on biblical finance, generosity, and the path to true wealth. May it bless many as it has the editor and collaborators.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse...” — Malachi 3:10 (KJV)



God's Account

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END

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