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THE TEACHER'S ELEVEN HELPERS.*

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EIGHTH LECTURE.

This morning our theme is: "The Teacher's Eleven Helpers." Every Sunday-school superintendent who is capable will sooner or later have a good school. However disorganized the school may be when he takes it, he will work cosmos out of chaos in due time. Every capable teacher, whatever may be the class passed over to him or her, will sooner or later have a well-managed class because the teacher can by patience, perseverance and prayer largely overcome the difficulties that any class presents. If the teacher is fortunate enough to have a good superintendent, then teacher and superintendent work in close co-operation, and school-work and class-work rapidly attain a fine development.

I am talking this morning, however, about that particular teacher who, even independently of the superintendent, can make admirable use of the eleven helpers that God has given.

Every teacher has *two eyes*. I have seen teachers who you would think were blind, because they did not seem to see. Every superintendent who notices finds teachers who are oblivious to disorder in the class. The boys may be cutting up didos but the teacher keeps on the even tenor of her way and

*This article is one of ten lectures on "The Book and the Boy," which Dr. Schauffler delivered at Union Theological Seminary during October, 1914, on the Sprunt Foundation. The lecture was taken down by a stenographer, and we give it as it was delivered. See editorial comment.

"THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED
UNTO THE SAINTS."

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We are indebted for this expression to the Apostle Jude. He begins his short, pungent epistle by saying that he had been purposing to write to the churches concerning "Our Common Salvation." Had that purpose been carried out we might have had from his pen a comprehensive letter treating of all the saving doctrines of the gospel—one of the same general character as that of Paul to the Romans. But an emergency had arisen which impelled him to write at once a letter of another character—one that was shorter and for a more specific purpose. Certain false teachers had crept into the church privily—"ungodly men," he called them, "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ." To resist their influence he wrote exhorting Christians everywhere "to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." The expression is a suggestive one, and will bear analysis. By "the faith delivered unto the saints" we are to understand what is elsewhere spoken of as "the gospel." It is "that body of truth which is the object of faith and brings salvation to the soul that receives it." It is that to which Paul refers when he speaks of preaching "the faith" of which he once made havoc; and when near the end of his life he said, "I have kept the faith." He gives a summary of it when in his first letter to the Corinthians he says: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received; that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." It is that which the author of Hebrews speaks of as the "Salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." That which Luke has in mind when he speaks of "those things which are most surely believed among us."

We understand it to be that body of truth which was witnessed to by the apostles of Christ, embracing the great facts of his life, his death and resurrection, with their interpretation of these facts as related to Old Testament Scripture, as revealing the mind and purpose of God, and as meeting the need of sinful men.

This faith was "*delivered* unto the saints." It was not discovered by them; it was not the outcome of human wisdom and experience, but of the wisdom and grace of God. It was not the result of men's striving after God and divine things, but of God's seeking after men. It was not a matter of attainment, but of communication and acceptance. It was not an *evolution*, but a *revelation*. It could not be both; for the two processes are as diametrically opposed as works and grace. The one is from beneath, the other is from above. Where one begins, the other ends. It is true that every divine revelation has a human basis; there are human conditions which prepare for and warrant it; but they are conditions of failure and need. They furnish the void which the revelation fills; they make the appeal to which the revelation is the response. This truth the apostles are careful to guard. Paul says: "I delivered unto you that which also I *received*." What he taught was not the product of his own mind; he had received it. To the Galatians he says: (1:11, 12) "I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." To the Corinthians he writes (1 Cor. 2:10,12): "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Jesus, praying for his apostles, said: "I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world. I have given them the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them." His promise to them was that he would

send the Holy Spirit of truth to abide with them and in them; that he would guide them into all truth; that he would take of his and show it unto them, teaching them things which they were not prepared to receive until after his death, and resurrection and ascension to the Father. That this promise was kept the Day of Pentecost bears witness. The apostles always claimed for themselves a conscious fulfilment of it. This gives to their writings a unique character and place in the literature of the world. Ordinarily the literature of an age is an expression of the life, and spirit and thought of the age. It is an index of the age's character and thought. But the teaching of the apostles was squarely opposed to the spirit and thought of their age. It was esteemed foolishness by the wisdom of the world; and for the reason that it was not of the world, but of the Father—the outcome not of evolution, but of revelation.

Furthermore, this faith was delivered to the saints "*once for all.*" That is to say, it is complete and final. It admits of no modification. It may not be added to, nor taken from. It can have no successor, nor rival. Like everything else that comes from God, it is perfect. "Whatsoever God doeth," says the Preacher, "it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." (Ecc. 3:14.) The Scriptures lay strong emphasis upon this feature of every revelation. Of that which came through Moses the Lord said: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." (Deut. 4:2.) "Every word of God," says the proverb, "is pure—add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30:6.)

Paul does not hesitate to say, "If any man or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8.) And most significant are the closing words of the book of Revelation: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written

in this book." (Rev. 22:18:19.) Thus finality is a clearly marked feature of the faith delivered unto the saints. The gospel, like its divine Author, is the same yesterday, today and forever. What it was in the first century it is in the twentieth, the same unchanged, unchanging truth. Through it God has spoken His last word to this age. To tamper with or change it is to mar His perfect work. Of course, it is freely conceded that there may be, and ought to be, continual increase in our knowledge and appreciation of revealed truth. Every successive age ought to witness fuller and clearer interpretations of the written word; a richer unfolding of its meaning and manifold applications. Philosophy and science, history and experience, all shed new light upon it, and, in this sense, there is a legitimate development of doctrine. But the expansion is not in the body of truth, but only in our grasp of it. As Trench says in one of his Hulsean lectures, "The true idea of Scriptural development is this, that the church, informed and quickened by the Spirit of God, more and more discovers what in Holy Scripture is given her; but it is not this, that she unfolds by an independent power anything further therefrom. She has always possessed what she now possesses of doctrine and truth, only not always with the same distinctness of consciousness. She has not added to her wealth, but she has become more and more aware of that wealth; her dowry has remained always the same, but that dowry was so rich, and so rare, that only little by little she has counted over and taken stock and inventory of her jewels." But the church has ever been beset by the temptation to modify the revelation with which she has been entrusted, either by addition or suppression, in order to adapt it to prevailing conditions. The temptation is insidious. It comes in friendly guise, in the name of progress and advanced thinking. It holds out the promise that the life and thought of the church will be enriched by the change, her influence extended, and her efficiency enhanced. But the promise is deceptive. Instead of enrichment, there is impoverishment. What seems to be an advance is really a retreat. It is against such a seeming advance that the Apostle John utters a warning when he says: "Whosoever goeth onward (marginal, taketh the lead) and abideth not in the

teaching of Christ, hath not God." (2 John 9.) There are onward movements that lead to apostasy. History has some impressive lessons to teach us in this connection. All the religious apostasies of the past have come from modifying divine revelation, either by addition or suppression, so as to harmonize it with existing conditions, and commend it to the wisdom and tastes of men. They have come too in the name of progress, as advance movements, and an improvement on all that had gone before.

What is heathenism but man's modification of God's original revelation to the head of the whole human family? The apostasy of Israel under Jeroboam was of similar origin. Jeroboam did not propose to supplant the worship of Jehovah, but only to change the established mode of worship; to enrich it with forms borrowed from Egypt, and adapt it to changed political conditions. The second Commandment was shelved, much as the fourth is among us, and on a similar plea. But Jeroboam's calf-worship was soon followed by the Baal worship of Jezebel, and he is known in history as the man "who made Israel to sin."

Pharasaism, that most hopeless of all apostasies, was the result of rabbinical modifications of Old Testament revelations. Our Lord's charge against the Pharisees of his day was that, they made the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men. In all his encounters with them he swept aside their traditions, and went back to the original revelation as the only authority. The revelation made through Christ and his apostles has met a similar fate. Gnosticism, the earliest heresy to disturb the church, was simply an attempt to bring the gospel into harmony with heathen philosophy, that it might be more acceptable to the wisdom of the world. The papal apostasy grew out of the unwarranted assumption that the church is not only the guardian and upholder of the truth, but also the medium through which new revelations are made—herself the authoritative source and revealer of truth. In his well-known essay on the "Development of Christian Doctrine," Newman claims for the church the right of such a development of doctrine as comes not only from a fuller comprehension of the original deposit of truth,

but from actual additions to it. "There are gaps," he says, "in the structure of the original creed of the church," which it is the business of the church to fill up. Hence dogmas have from time to time been promulgated as articles of faith which have no place in the teaching of Christ and his apostles. This has proceeded, it is claimed, according to the law of supply and demand; but in every case the demand has been from the carnal heart, and the supply, not from the wisdom of God, but from the craft of men. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was simply a renunciation of all such dogmas, and a recognition of the original revelation as the only authoritative rule of faith. Like every other real advance in the history of the church it came from going back. Protestantism is based on two great principles: The vital principle—justification by faith; and the formal principle—the divine authority of the Scriptures.

But there is unmistakable evidence that the Protestant church is in danger of drifting from her original mooring. There are not a few teaching in her name who no longer bow to the authority of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Much of the teaching of the apostles and even of the Master himself, is discounted as sharing some of the prevalent errors of their age, and as anachronistic in the twentieth century. Paul's interpretation, for example, of the facts of the gospel is not to be accepted as final, but must needs be recast so as to harmonize with modern scientific thought and commend itself to the modern mind. Some go so far as to reject all external authority in religious belief, finding the seat of authority, not without, but within. All this is in the name of progress, and we are confidently promised by Mr. R. J. Campbell that, if the old foundations are abandoned, "upon the foundations laid by modern science, a vaster and nobler fabric of faith is rising than the world has ever known before." In a similar strain Dr. Newman Smythe says, "The Christianity that now is must give its baptism to the Christianity that is to be. If the age of the Protestantism which passeth away was with glory, much more than that which remaineth is with glory."

Unquestionably the movement is a wide departure from the historic position of the Protestant church. That it is really

progressive in its character is by no means so certain. To us, it seems plainly a movement down grade which only a mistaken liberality can look upon with complacency.

Some specious arguments are urged in justification of the movement, which it may be well to notice. First, from the standpoint of the *Mystic* it is claimed that the Holy Spirit has been promised to guide us into all truth, and that it is only reasonable to expect that, with the progress of the ages, He will make new revelations to earnest seekers after truth. Our first answer is that, should the Holy Spirit make new revelations of truth in our age, they would certainly be in entire harmony with such as he made in the apostolic age. The modern teacher, guided by the Holy Spirit would not contradict or modify the teaching of Paul or John. Revelation is always harmonious. Truth is never at war with itself. But further, we deny that the promise quoted contains any such guarantee as is implied in the argument. To whom was that promise made? To the eleven apostles in the upper chamber, the evening before the crucifixion, in close connection with other promises which were manifestly for the apostles alone. As for example, "He will show you things to come." "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to you in remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." This promise could only have been made to those who had heard Christ with the natural ear. The covenant which our Lord established with the apostles in that memorable conversation contains two sections—the first promising those gracious operations of the Spirit which they would enjoy in common with all believers. The second guaranteeing to them that special inspiration which they would need to lay the foundations of his church. The revelation of new truth was the distinctive function of prophets and apostles, and miraculous gifts were bestowed in order to accredit the revelations. God bore them witness "both with signs and wonders," and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will." (Heb. 2:4.) These gifts, with the function which they attested, closed with the apostolic age. The apostles had no successors in office. The gift of prophecy has ceased. The miraculous credentials are no longer in evidence. Hence all Mohammedan Korans,

Swedenborgian dreams, saints' legends, Mormon revelations, spiritualistic communications, etc., are *prima facie* spurious.

Again, it is argued that spiritual truth is a living thing. "The words that I speak unto you," says Jesus, "they are spirit and they are life." The word of God is likened to seed which germinates and grows and brings forth fruit. And from this the inference is drawn that, as time goes on, there are natural and legitimate additions to the original deposit of truth. But the inference is not in line with the Scriptural analogy. It is true the word of God is compared to seed, and that, like seed, it germinates and brings forth fruit. But what are its fruits? Not other words or truths, but children of the kingdom, renewed natures, characters adorned by the fruits of the Spirit. What Peter said to the saints of his day is applicable to all: "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." Generation after generation of children are born unto God by His word, but the truth is carefully guarded that it remains the same incorruptible seed as at the beginning.

There are still others who remind us that the church is older than the Scriptures, and therefore it is a reversal of the natural order for her to be held in subjection to the authority of Scripture. It is strange that a fallacy so transparent, should prove so persistent. The church does antedate a completed Bible, but not a revelation. She pre-supposes revelation, and has her origin in it. She is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." There can be no church where there are no believers; and there can be no believers until there is something to believe. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It is true that the New Testament writings are subsequent in date to the church's beginning, but she did not originate them. They were delivered unto her for her instruction and guidance. The relation which she sustains to them is that of custodian and witness. She is "the pillar and ground of the truth"—not the author of it. An ambassador is before his message; but that gives him no authority over it. His business is to deliver without alteration what has been entrusted to him.

The church in Rome antedated the epistle to the Romans,

yet the epistle came to the church as an authoritative rule of faith and duty.

Again, from the standpoint of the *rationalist* the position for which we contend is stoutly opposed on the ground that it fetters the human reason, enslaves the present to the distant past, and puts an end to all freedom of thought. This, we admit, would be a deplorable result; but does it follow?

Let it be remembered that, in the realm of morals and religion, thought, like conduct, has legitimate boundaries. Conduct is free within the limitations of the right. When these are transgressed there is no longer freedom, but bondage. "Everyone that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin." (John 8:34.) "I shall walk at liberty," says the Psalmist, "for I have sought thy precepts." (119:45.) In like manner religious thought is free only within the limitations that are set by the truth. When these are transgressed there is bondage to error. "If ye continue in my word," says Jesus, then ye are my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jno. 8:31-32:2.) As we have in holy Scripture an authoritative standard of *right* by which conduct is to be regulated, so we have an authoritative standard of *truth* by which thought is to be regulated if it would be really free. The self-styled "free thought" that has ignored this standard has, as everyone knows, unsavory associations in history. It has often led to conduct all too free for the safety and purity of society.

After all it may be questioned if those who refuse to acknowledge the binding authority of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles are as fully emancipated from all external authority as they imagine. Is there no authority to which they bow? Are there no oracles to which they lend an obedient ear?

We venture to say that no Pharisee was more subservient to the traditions of the elders, nor mediæval theologian to the decisions of councils or the opinions of the fathers, than are some of our modern religious teachers to what they claim are the conclusions of science. The old formula, "as the Scriptures teach," has for them largely been displaced by another—"as modern science teaches." This, too, in spite of the facts that the conclusions of science are perpetually changing, and that

science confessedly deals only with the "seen and temporal," "the visible and accessible universe," whereas the great verities which are the content of Christian faith belong to the realm of the unseen, the spiritual and eternal.

When, therefore, we hear a modern teacher say that, "upon the foundations laid by modern science a vaster and nobler fabric of faith is rising than the world has ever known before;" and that "science is supplying the facts which the new theology is weaving into the texture of religious experience;" and another, that "modernism is laying broad foundations of religion in history, science and democracy;" we recognize the repetition of a very old experiment.

"My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." It is simply to turn away from "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone," to build upon the shifting speculations and hypotheses of men.

"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:24:25.)