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A daily walk with God in his
own ordinances

Walter S. Hubbell
A *Commander*
DAILY WALK WITH GOD

IN HIS OWN ORDINANCES,

OR THE

BIBLE STANDARD OF DUTY,

As Exemplified in the Primitive Christians.

AN ESSAY,

By REV. STEPHEN PORTER,

GENEVA, N. Y.

“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”—*Malachi*.

“Now I praise you brethren that you keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you.”—*Paul*.

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DEDICATED
TO
CHRISTIAN MINISTERS,
AND
"THEIR FELLOW LABORERS IN THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST;"
SOLICITING THEIR EARNEST AND PRAYERFUL
CO-OPERATION TO RESTORE THE
BIBLE STANDARD OF DUTY,
AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS,
AND THUS SECURE
THE PROMISED BLESSING
OF A CONTINUED REVIVAL IN THE CHURCH,
AND THE
SPEEDY TRIUMPH
OF THE
REDEEMER'S KINGDOM.

INTRODUCTION.

The scheme of man's redemption originated in the infinite wisdom and love of God. Its execution involved the amazing sacrifice of Calvary. That sacrifice, in due time, was freely offered—all the needful means provided; and the Holy Ghost, the mightiest agent in the universe, sent down to render those means efficient in the great work of human salvation.

And while this work is going on, God has revealed it as his *fixed purpose*, that whosoever would share in it, and thus be saved from the degradation and ruin of sin, restored to favor and communion with God, transformed into his holy image and fitted for heaven, *must consent to "be led by the spirit; and have his mind turned from the objects of sense and the vanities of earth, to the soul stirring objects*

of the Christian faith. And that these objects may exert their appropriate influence on the heart, and thus control the life, they *must be kept before the mind.* This is done under the Spirit's influence, by an earnest waiting upon God in the ordinances of his own appointment—thus co-operating with the Spirit in the work of our own salvation and that of others. •
“If ye live after the flesh, (says an Apostle,) ye shall die. But if ye *through the Spirit,* do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are *led by the Spirit of God,* they are the sons of God, and have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father.”

· Thus brought into communion with God the Father, through faith in his dear Son, and the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, we are to *take up the cross daily,* and follow Christ in his self-denying efforts for the salvation of perishing men; and “whatever we do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, by him.” Thus our religion, like the Bible, is full of Christ. We associate him with every duty,

every blessing, and every hope. In Christ crucified for our sins, we gain the most impressive views of the infinite *evil* and *demerit* of sin, combined with his *amazing love* to us sinners. It is this which melts the heart in penitence, and inspires love to Christ, and zeal for his glory. And it is only by *keeping the eye of our faith habitually fixed* on a crucified Saviour, that our penitence, love and zeal can be perpetuated.

Hence, if we neglect to walk with God in the ordinances of his appointment, and suffer the cares, or business or pleasures of earth to engross the mind and interrupt our communion with Christ, our zeal soon languishes—love grows cold—the Spirit is grieved—darkness shrouds the soul, and hope is ready to expire. No child of God can rest at ease in such a state. He will cry to the Lord for help, and find the promise fulfilled: “Ye shall seek me and *find* me, when ye shall *search* for me with all your heart.” (Jer. 29: 13.) This implies a penitent return to the path of duty; co-operating with the Spirit in the work for which his presence is sought.

Thus the solemn truth is practically demonstrated, that to raise fallen men into communion with the blessed God, and transform them into the image of his dear Son, requires, on their part an earnest and persevering effort in the use of the means of divine appointment. This truth, which men have been slow to learn and prone to forget, was proclaimed and urged by the Saviour when he said: "*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*" "*Agonize to enter in at the straight gate.*" And having entered, by yielding to the Spirit's influence, "*Run the christian race.*" "*Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Press toward the mark.*" "*Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*"—the faith that works by love, and purifies the heart and overcomes the world. "*For we wrestle, not against flesh and blood: but against principalities—against powers—against the rulers of the darkness of this world—against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"

This struggle can never prove successful, with *six* days devoted to the sensual and earthly, and but one to the spiritual and

heavenly. To hope for it is presumption. All the lessons of Scripture and reason, and the experience of ages combine to teach that *worldly-mindedness and spiritual slumber* are always prominent characteristics of the Church when her members are so great a portion of the time drawn away from communion with Christ and each other, to mingle with the world in its strife of business or politics, or its hot pursuit of wealth or pleasure. By engrossing so much of the time and thoughts and feelings and activities of christians, the world enstamps its own image upon them, and thus paralyzes their influence for saving good to souls. Hence the Sabbath exercises *alone*—powerful as they are for good when rightly improved—have never kept the Church awake and active, growing in grace and gathering the spiritual harvest. And *alone*, they were never designed to do it. But from its appointment, many seem to infer that, since the fall, God has doomed man to toil six parts out of seven of his whole time, for his daily bread; or for those things which “perish with the using.” But is it so? Even under the administration of him who died for

our redemption, are we *required* to put forth *six times* as much effort for the frail dying body, as for the immortal soul and its vast interests for eternity?

What are the teachings of Scripture on this subject?

And what was the practice of the Primitive Christians?

CHAPTER I.

OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

THE early converts to Christianity were Jews ; educated under the Mosaic dispensation, which was preparatory to the Christian. And in opening the Old Testament, we find that God, by express enactments, had released the Jewish Church from toil for the body about *one-half of the time* ; that they might wait on him without distraction, in the ordinances of his own appointment for the salvation of the soul.

This will appear, if we consider that, in addition to the weekly Sabbath, given to man in Paradise, God ordained,

1. The *daily service*, styled the morning and evening sacrifice.—*Ex.* 29 : 38–46.

“ Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar ; two lambs, day by day, continually ; the one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning,

and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even ; with his meat offering and his drink offering. 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 I will 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."

This sacrifice typified the Lamb of God, slain to take away sin. While burning on the altar, it was the hour of prayer ; not only at the temple, where a multitude daily assembled, but all over the land, and wherever the children of Israel were scattered abroad. They worshiped with their faces toward the altar and the manifested glory of God in the Temple.

But how could the whole nation be aided in their daily devotions by this sacrifice at the temple, when only a small part of them could be present to witness it ? It was indeed an impressive type of the death of Christ to those

who were present ; but not so to the absent, if they had never seen it. To obviate this difficulty, as far as practicable, God ordained,

2. The *three annual festivals*.—*Ex. 23* : 14–17. Nehemiah, chapt. 1, “ Three times a year thou shalt keep a feast unto me—all thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God.” There, for eight days in succession, they were called to unite in exercises of religious worship and instruction. Thus all were kept familiar with the temple service, so that when absent they could fix the eye of their mind on God’s altar, and thus be aided in their daily devotions.

3. The *Sabbatical year* ; or one year in seven, as a rest from servile labor.—*Lev. 25* : 3–5. “ Six years thou shalt sow thy field and prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof. But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land. Thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord thou shalt not reap, nor gather the fruit of thy vine undressed ; for it is a year of rest unto the land.”

4. The *Jubilee*, or fiftieth year, which brought them two years of rest in succession.—*Lev.* 25: 8-13. "Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee—forty-nine years: then thou shalt cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound; and ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof; a jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you. Ye shall not sow, nor reap that which groweth of itself; nor gather the grapes of it of thy vine undressed. It shall be holy unto you."

Add these several items together—the daily sacrifice, morning and evening—the weekly Sabbath—the three annual festivals—the sabbatical year and the jubilee—and they amount to about *one-half of their whole time*.

Thus released from care and toil for the body, they had abundant time to cultivate the spirit of devotion, by waiting on God in the ordinances of his own appointment for the salvation of the soul. And even while toiling for the body, one-half of the avails of their labor was devoted to purposes of devotion and charity; and thus made to subserve the

best interests of the soul. For God required them to give of their annual income, one-tenth to the Levites, who ministered at the altar—*Numb.* 18: 20, 21 ; and another tenth for the three annual festivals at the temple—*Deut.* 14 : 22-26 ; and “ at the end of every third year,” *another tenth*, to be laid up in store “ for the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, that they might come and eat and be satisfied.”—*Deut.* 14 : 28-29.

In addition to these three tithes, various *offerings* were required, some fixed by law and others voluntary, amounting in all, to about one-half of their income. And lest they should be anxious for the body, while thus concerned for the soul, God promised them his special care and protection. *Lev.* 25: 18-22.—“ Ye shall keep my judgments and do them, and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill. If ye shall say : “ What shall we eat the seventh year ? Behold, we shall not sow nor gather in our increase ! ” then will I command my blessing upon you the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years ; and ye

shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of the old store until the ninth year; until the fruit be come in ye shall eat of the old store." In the next chapter God renews and amplifies his promise, on condition of their obedience. "If ye shall walk in my statutes and keep my judgments and do them, then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely, and none shall make you afraid; and I will walk among you, and will be your God and ye shall be my people."

Thus God promised them his constant presence and blessing. Released, as they were, *one-half* of the time from care and toil for the body, to attend to the more important concerns of the soul; and *one-half* of their income devoted to the same object; still he assured them of an abundant supply of their temporal wants; provided they would walk with him in his ordinances and be obedient. But should they

refuse, he threatened them with terrible judgments, (*Lev. 26: 14-46.*) In reviewing their history, we find these promises and threatenings literally fulfilled. Obedient—they were blessed; rebellious—they were cursed. This is true of their whole history, even to the present day.

CHAPTER II.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

HERE the scene opens with the mission of John the Baptist, as the herald of the Son of God. His ministry was short; but his preaching was *powerful*, and the nation was moved! No man could have instructed and baptized such vast multitudes as he did without laboring daily.—*Mat. 3: 5, 6.*

But a greater than John the Baptist is here! His example is worthy of imitation. Mark his footsteps, as he went about doing good; and you often find him preaching *daily*, and to vast congregations, as well as to families and individuals. It is said, "There followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." On one occasion, (*Mat. 15.*) you hear him say, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they

continue with me now *three days* and they have nothing to eat. And I will not send them away fasting lest they faint in the way." Here four thousand men, besides women and children, were fed by miracle. Thus he encouraged dying sinners to wait upon him in his daily ministrations. Other like instances are on record. *Luke 19: 47, 48*, it is said, "He taught *daily* in the temple—for all the people were very attentive to hear him." Three times a year we find him uniformly at the temple, working miracles of mercy, and teaching the congregated thousands there. Hence his rebuke to those who went to apprehend him in the garden.—"Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves to take me? I sat *daily* with you in the temple teaching, and ye laid no hold on me."

That *daily* convocations for religious worship and instruction are sanctioned by the example of Christ, there can be no question. But was his example followed by the apostles and primitive christians? It was; and the proof is abundant. But since the papal apostacy, it has lamentably failed to arrest the attention, and control the practice of the church.

Let us then briefly survey the proof, as drawn first from the inspired records, and then from well authenticated history of the primitive Church.

Their commission to preach the gospel to every creature was given with the promise, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." With this commission and promise, (it is said,) "They returned to Jerusalem and went up into an upper room--the number of the names was about a hundred and twenty. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." For ten days they sought the promised blessing. It was then conferred. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance." Their word was with power. "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The next day, it is said, "Many who heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand." "And all that believed were together and had all things common."

Loving Christ supremely, and each other as

themselves, they were thus incorporated under the law of Christ—the great law of love—into one household, with him as their Head. Those who had this world's goods in possession devoted their *property*, as well as themselves, to the Lord; and thus became stewards in the household of faith. As such, they imparted their income, and even their capital when needed, to supply the daily wants of the household, and advance the cause of their Lord and Master. This was simply carrying out in practice the doctrine of Stewardship, which Christ taught his disciples, when he said, "Who then is that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods"—a joint heir with himself to all the treasures of the universe.

With such a reward in view, and with the daily experience that, "it is more blessed to give than receive," what loving disciple of Jesus, having this world's goods in possession,

could refuse to consecrate them all to the cause of such a Master ; and thus become a steward in his household ? Could he see a brother or sister naked and destitute of daily food, and refuse them the needful supplies ? Could he claim or use the goods entrusted to him as his own—squandering them in useless expenditure upon his lusts—or hoarding both capital and income, to gratify, and thus increase a sordid love of gain ? No whole-hearted disciple of Christ could ever do this. It would sink his character in deep disgrace, and his soul in utter ruin. “For the Lord of that servant will come, (says Christ,) in a day when he looketh not for him, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

And were there any such who gained a standing in the Primitive Church ? We read of one man and his wife who attempted it ; claiming to have devoted themselves and their all to the service of Christ, while they “kept back part of the price, and lied to the Holy Ghost.” But when convicted of their guilt, they were so overwhelmed with its enormity,

that they sank in the agonies of death, and "gave up the Ghost." And great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things. And they were all, with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them; (i. e. without devoting himself and his all to Christ.) But the people magnified them. And *believers* were the more added to the Lord; *multitudes*, both men and women."

Thus the principle of stewardship, in regard to earthly possessions, was cordially believed and firmly *established* in the Church of Christ. And hence it is said, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them *that aught of the things which he possessed was his own*; but they had *all things common*. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them," (when the income was insufficient and funds were needed;) and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need."

Thus Christ, as predicted by the prophet,

(*Malachi 3 : 2.*) was "like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap," purifying his Church from the dross of selfishness, and presenting it to the world as one family, united in loving him supremely and each other as themselves; and having their temporal wants daily supplied from a common fund, committed in trust to his stewards. Of this fund Christ was acknowledged as the *owner*, and his stewards the *dispensers* to "every man as he had need."

This ordinance of the Christian Church constituted her richest ornament, and the chief element of her moral power, to draw her own members together, and cement them in one common brotherhood; and to attract and win sinners to Christ, and multiply the trophies of his grace.

We cease to wonder, therefore, as we proceed with the inspired record, "That they who gladly received the word and were baptized, *continued steadfastly* in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers: and daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and

singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people"—(the multitude exclaiming, "Behold how they love one another!") "And the Lord added to the church, daily, such as should be saved. And daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." "And the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem *greatly* and a *great number* of the *priests* were obedient to the faith." This so enraged the rulers who had crucified Jesus as a malefactor, that they unsheathed the sword of persecution, making such havoc of the church, that "they were all scattered abroad except the apostles."

But it is said, "They went everywhere preaching the word." Thus the gospel was more widely and rapidly diffused, and prevailed with increasing power, confounding its enemies, or converting them to friends; until, in view of the vast multitudes of Jewish converts, the elders assembled at Jerusalem were led to exclaim: "How many thousands, (or as in the original, tens of thousands,) of Jews there are which believe!"

Saul, of Tarsus, when converted, drank into the same spirit, and spread it far and wide over the Gentile world. When at Athens, it is said (*Acts 17: 17*), "His spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore, disputed he in the *synagogue* and in the *market daily* with them that met with him." Thus, he had at Athens two places of preaching Christ *daily*.

When at Ephesus, it is said, "He went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months; disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." And when opposition arose, he left the synagogue, meeting *daily* in the school-room of one Tyrannus. And this continued for the space of two years; "so that all they which dwelled in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And many that believed came and confessed and shewed their deeds. Many also of them that used curious arts, brought their books together and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God

and prevailed," that within less than thirty years, Paul could say to the Collosians, "It bringeth forth fruit in *all the world*;" and to the Romans, "Your faith is spoken of throughout the *whole world*."

For the first eight years, until Peter was sent to the house of Cornelius, all the converts to christianity were Jews. As such they had been brought up under a dispensation which released them from toil for the body, to attend to the more important concerns of the soul, *one-half of the time*; and one-half of their income devoted to the same object, with the promise of an abundant supply of their temporal wants. When they enlisted into the service of Christ, they expected the same privileges: *Acts 21: 20*. And in the light of New Testament history, we see them actually employed in his service, using their property in common, as *his stewards* for the relief of the poor, *daily* waiting upon him in his ordinances, both publicly and from house to house: and the Lord working with them and adding to the church *daily* such as should be saved."

In thus following the example of Christ, did

the Primitive Christians obey his instruction also? What is the *teaching* of Christ on this subject? Does it sanction the general practice of christians now, who toil *six days* in the week almost exclusively for the body and a treasure on earth; and leave but little more than *one* for the soul and a treasure in heaven? We hear him say, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." (*John 6: 27*) This surely requires that we make the soul the chief concern, and its preparation for heaven the great business of life. And thus he explains it in his sermon on the mount. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but treasures in heaven. If thine eye be single, (fixed on one object—the heavenly treasure,) thy whole body shall be full of light, (shining in the Saviour's image, to illumine the path of dying men to heaven.) But if thine eye be evil, (craving earthly treasure, while professing to seek the heavenly,) thy whole body shall be full of darkness. And how great is that darkness! (the cheerless vale of earthliness, doubt and fear; ending in the blackness of darkness for-

ever.) Hence he adds, with solemn emphasis—No man can serve two masters—Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Behold the fowls—your heavenly father feedeth them. Consider the lilies—even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. And shall not your heavenly Father much more feed and cloth you? O, ye of little faith! Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, *and all these things shall be added unto you.*”

In view of these plain instructions of the Saviour, who can believe that the people of God now, are less favored in regard to the amount of toil for the body, than under the Jewish dispensation? Is not the promise of temporal support made to God's ancient people, expressly renewed by Christ to the gospel church? The Jews, while released from toil

for the body one-half of the time, and required to consecrate one-half of the avails of their labor to purposes of devotion and charity ; were yet assured of an abundant supply of their temporal wants ; provided they would walk with God in his own ordinances for their eternal salvation. And Christ assures us that our heavenly Father, who feeds the ravens and clothes the lilies, will much more feed and clothe his own children, while they toil in obedience to him ; not so much for earthly as for heavenly treasure. Hence, he closes this part of his subject with a command and a promise ; “ Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and *all these things shall be added unto you.*”

Thus, it appears from the New Testament, with the clearest evidence, that the *daily* use of the means of divine appointment for the salvation of souls, both publicly and from house to house, was sanctioned by the example and teaching of Christ, and introduced by his apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, into the christian dispensation. “ *Daily* in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

CHAPTER III.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

FROM well authenticated history we are furnished with abundant proof,

That the *daily service*, introduced by the apostles was *continued* in the Christian Church.

That it was *generally attended* by professing christians, for more than three hundred years.

That while thus attended, it was blessed as the means of *perpetuating the revival*, which commenced on the day of Pentecost.

That the *neglect* of this daily service marks the *decline* of piety in the church, and the commencement of that "*falling away*," predicted by Paul, which introduced the Papal apostacy.

SECTION I.

The daily service, introduced by the inspired apostles was continued in the Christian Church.

Dr. Lardner, in his ecclesiastical history says: "At first, the churches assembled *every day*; and traces of this are found in *later times*, in the *daily assembling* of the churches to hear the scriptures read and for celebrating the communion."

Joseph Bingham, in his "*Antiquities of the Christian Church*," says: "The most noted and usual times of meeting, besides the Lord's day, were the morning and evening of *every day*; which, in times of peace, were *constantly* and regularly observed.* Again, he says, "The evening and morning are the most celebrated times of the ancient *daily service*; and are to be found in almost every ecclesiastical writer.†

From the writings of the Fathers, we find these statements abundantly confirmed.

In the Constitutions of the Primitive Church,

* Abridgement by Henry, p. 665.

† Bingham's Works, vol. 4, p. 373.

Book 8, chap. 35, the *order of exercises* in their daily service is described; consisting of "alternate singing and prayer—reading and expounding the Scriptures—preaching and communion at the Lord's table."

Eurebius, Bishop of Cessarea, who died in 338, wrote the history of the Church, for the first 300 years. In his Evangelical Demonstration, he says expressly, "They celebrated the memorials of Christ's body and blood every day."—Book 1, ch. 10.*

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, who suffered martyrdom in 258 says, "We do, *every day*, receive the Eucharistical elements as the nourishment of our souls unto eternal life."† Again he says, "We celebrate the *daily sacrifice*"—meaning the Lord's Supper, which is often called by the ancients, the *daily sacrifice*, because daily celebrated at the altar.‡ Thus in the Christian Church, the Lord's Supper took the place of the daily sacrifice in the Jewish. It was a continuance of that service with only

* Quoted by Bingham, vol. 5. p. 367, London, Ed. 1045.

† Bingham p. 852.

‡ Cyprian's Works, part 1, p. 145; London Ed. 1717.

a change in its form—the daily memorial of Christ's death, instead of the bleeding lamb, which had been the daily type of his death.

Jerome, a celebrated Father in the church, who died in 420 assures us, "It was the custom at Rome for the faithful to receive the body of Christ *every day*." Again he says, "It was the custom, not only at Rome, but of the Spanish Church to communicate *every day*."*

Very frequent allusions to this service are found in the writings of the fathers, both as a season of daily communion at the Lord's table, and also of *daily preaching*. In perusing their numerous volumes of sermons that have come down to us, we find frequent mention of what they had preached the day before ; and of their being preached successively, one day after another. "This (it is said) was their constant and ordinary practice." As instances in proof of this, we refer to the sermons of Origen of third century—of Crysotom, Jerome, Gaudentius, St. Ambrose and St. Austin, of the fourth century ; and of Theodoret and Caesarius of

*Jerome's Epistles, 28 and 50, quoted by Bingham, p. 852 ; and in vol. 5, p. 364.

the fifth century ; of whom it is said, "they preached almost every day, and frequently at both morning and evening prayer. And Canon 19th of the *Council of Trullo* was instituted to promote this practice."*

SECTION II.

The daily service was generally attended by professing christians, for more than three hundred years.

Justin Martyr, who wrote about the middle of the second century, describes the several parts of this service, at the close of which he says, "Then the consecrated elements are distributed to and partaken of, by all that are present, and sent to the absent, by the hands of the deacons." Again, he says, "The deacons distribute to every one present, to partake of the Eucharistical bread and wine ; and then convey it to the absent : " thus literally obeying the apostolical injunction, "Exhort

* Bingham's Abridgement, p. 713-14.

one another *daily*, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." To neglect this high privilege through worldliness, or careless indifference was a disciplinable offence. And in the council of Antioch, held in 341, it was adopted as a rule for the whole church, that "all such as neglect the holy communion, after the first and second administration shall be suspended from the church, till they mend their ways by confession and repentance."*

The first council of Toledo, held in 400, adopted a rule, (see chap. 5,) "That if any presbyter or deacon should be in any city or country where there was a church, and did not come to the daily sacrifice or service, he should no longer be reputed as one of the sacred function."†

The council of Agde, held in 506, orders such to be reduced to the communion of stran-

* Reeves' Apol. p. 119-126; London Ed. 1709. Bingham, p. 854 and 887.

† "Presbyter Diaconas, &c. qui intra civitatem fueiet, vel in loco in quo ecclesia est, si ecclesiam ad sacrificium quotidianum, non venerit, clericus non habiatur."

Bingham's Works; vol. 2, p. 152.

gers; which implies, at least, suspension from their office. And the code of Justinian contains a cannon to punish them with degradation, "because of the scandal they give to the laity by such neglect of divine service."* So careful were they to make the clergy examples of piety to the people, and thus guard them against neglecting the daily service.

In accordance with these rules, no one could hold his standing in the church, without a regular attendance upon its stipulations and ordinances. And their strict enforcement secured a regular attendance upon the daily service, wherever it was practicable.

Tertullian says, (chap. 39,) "When we meet for the public service of God, we come together in as *formidable a body*, as if we were to storm heaven by force of prayer. And when this holy *army* of supplicants are met in goodly array, we send up our united prayers."† So deep and general was the interest in these devotional exercises, that they were frequently prolonged through most of the day, as seasons of

* Bingham; p. 212.

† Rceve's Apol.; vol. 1, p. 330.

special thanksgiving, or of prayer and fasting.

The Lord's day was the great christian festival, universally kept in joyful remembrance of the resurrection of Christ. On this day they rose up to give thanks and pray; while on other occasions they were accustomed to kneel. Saturday was stately observed as a day of thanksgiving in the eastern portion of the church, where the Jewish custom prevailed; but in the western, it was kept as a fast, in remembrance of the Saviour's humiliation in the tomb. But the whole church were united in keeping Wednesday and Friday of every week, as stated seasons of fasting and prayer. Tertullian says, "Wednesdays and Fridays we do all observe, yet not in obedience to any command or to the end of the day; but prayers are concluded at the ninth hour, according to the example of Peter in the Acts. "Paul tells us that he was 'in fasting often;'" and thus it was with the Primitive Church.*

From the writings of the Fathers, it would

* Eusebius, Book 4, ch. 15, p. 135. King's Enquiry, part 2, n. p. 133 and 152; London Ed., 1713. Cave's Primitive Christianity, Part 1, ch. 7.

be easy to furnish a volume of testimony, that the *daily service*, ordained of God, under the Mosaic dispensation, and introduced by the inspired Apostles into the Christian Church, was not only *continued*, but also fully *attended* by professing christians, until the "falling away" which introduced the papal apostacy; that as the death of Christ was *prefigured* to the ancient church, by their *daily sacrifices*; so it was *commemorated* by the christian church in her *daily communion* at the Lord's table. And this daily service, connected as it was with frequent reasons of *fasting* and of *thanksgiving*, together with their closet and family devotions, and their preaching Christ from house to house, must have occupied at least one-half of their active hours in the public and private exercises of religious worship and edification.

SECTION III.

While christians continued thus daily to wait upon the Lord in his ordinances, the revival continued which was commenced on the day of Pentecost.

So great a portion of *time* as they devoted to the concerns of the soul, and occupied in self denying effort for the salvation of men, clearly indicates a revival state in the church. And this is confirmed,

1. By the *manner of their attendance* on these religious exercises. A holy *army* of suppliants (says Tertullian,) met in goodly array, and in as *formidable a body*, as if we were to storm heaven by force of prayer." And he adds, "We meet also for the reading of the Holy Scriptures, by which our spiritual life is wonderfully nourished, and our faith and hope confirmed. And, besides the reading, we continually preach and press the duties of the gospel, with all the power and argument we are able.

Similar testimony of other writers is abun-

dant throughout this whole period, as any one may see by consulting Dr. Cave, on Primitive Christianity : part 1, chap. 9.

Thus the daily meetings of the Primitive Church were not cold and formal and thinly attended, as our week-day meetings generally are ; but as strongly marked with the impress of the Spirit's presence and power, as in any of our most favored revivals ; when christians love to meet and pray together, and "exhort one another *daily*"—"teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord."

Nor did their religion expend itself in mere *feeling* or animal excitement ; but its genuineness was demonstrated,

2. In its abundant fruits of benevolence and active charity : even such as attended the out-pouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Tertullian, about the close of the second century, says,* (ch. 39) "Our brotherly love continues, even to the division of our estates ;

* Reeve's Apol. vol. 1, p. 335-7, London Ed. 1709.

which is a test few brotherhoods will bear, and which commonly divides the nearest relations among you. But we Christians look upon ourselves as one body, animated by one soul; and being thus incorporated by love, we can never dispute what we are to bestow upon our own members. Accordingly, among us, *all things are in common*, excepting wives." Again he says (pages 366-7): "Is it any great wonder that such charitable brethren as enjoy all things in common, should have such frequent love-feasts? We think all is gain that is laid out in doing good. When, therefore, we are at the charge of an entertainment, it is to refresh the bowels of the needy."

Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, says, "We who formerly valued our money and estates above everything, do now put them into a common stock and distribute to those that are in need."* This holding "*all things in common*" was simply regarding their property as not their own, but *all the Lord's*, and themselves as his *stewards*, appointed to manage it for the comfort of his

* Apology 2, p. 61

family—the household of faith, and for the furtherance of his cause.

On this subject we have the testimony of *enemies* as well as friends. Julian, who died in 363, was baptized in infancy and trained up in the church. But after being elected Emperor of Rome, he became a bitter enemy and persecutor. While vilifying the christians, he speaks in strong terms of their active charity. He says, “By their charity to the poor, they beget the greatest admiration in the minds of men, for they give themselves up to humanity and charity; and, by these plausible and interesting ways, strengthen and increase their wicked and pernicious party.” Again he says, they first inveigle honest men, by what they call their feasts of love, banquets, ministry and attendance upon tables; and then seduce them into their wickedness and impiety,” i. e. in forsaking the idol temples.

As Emperor of Rome, Julian had employed all his influence to check the progress of Christianity and uphold paganism; but without success. Hence, in a letter to Arsacius, the chief priest of idolatry, he laments the deser-

tion and ruin of the idol temples, and the great declension of paganism; and then advises him to the same course to sustain it that he condemns in the Christians. "For the poor (says he) having no care taken of them, the wicked Gallileans know very well how to make their advantage of it." And hence he urges Arsaicius "*to take care of the poor and build hospitals in every city* for the entertainment of poor strangers and travelers, both of their own and other religions. "For it is a shame (says he,) that when the Jews suffer none of theirs to beg, and the wicked Gallileans relieve, not only their own, but those of our party, that we only should be wanting in so necessary a duty." Lucian, also, while attempting to ridicule the Christians, speaks in equally strong terms of their active charity. He says, "They contemn all the advantages of this life; and shew an incredible readiness, at any cost or pains, to relieve the wants of their fellow creatures — whether friends or enemies."* How powerful is christianity,

* Cave, Part III, pp. 287-8 and 293.

when shining in the lives of its professors! It extorts praise, even from its bitterest enemies and persecutors!!

Thus the same fruits which evinced the genuineness of that revival on the day of Pentecost, still marked its progress.

Finally, We have complete demonstration of the *continuance* of this revival, in the vast number of converts to Christianity, and their steadfastness in the faith through scenes of violent persecution.

In 253, Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, wrote a tract to Demetrian, a violent persecutor of the Christians, in which he says, "Our numbers are great, and we are consequently able to make our adversaries very sensible of our resentments. Yet we bear all your violence without the least return; assured that whatever we suffer shall, in due time, have its appropriate vindication."* In this assurance, they were not disappointed. For the more they were persecuted, the more they multiplied and grew; until it passed into a proverb, "The

* Cyprian's Works, p. 193; London Edition, 1717.

blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church."

Minucius Felix, who wrote about the middle of the third century, says, "The daily increase of our numbers is a commendation of our religion. For the Christian party are faithful to their holy profession, and are continually augmented from the heathen."*

Tertullian, near the close of the second century, says: "The common cry is, the city is invested, town and country overrun with Christians. And this universal revolt of all ages, sexes and qualities, is lamented as a public loss; and yet this prodigious progress of Christianity is not enough to surprise some men into a suspicion that there must needs be some secret good, some charming advantage, thus *to drain the world, and attract from every quarter.*" Again he says, "We are but of yesterday, and have grown up and overspread your empire. Your cities, your islands, your forts, towns and assemblies; your very camps, wards, companies, palace, senate, forum,

*Reeve's Apol. vol. II, p. 152, London Ed., 1709.

all swarm with Christians. Your temples indeed we leave to yourselves. And they are the only places you can name without Christians. If as professed enemies, we were to engage you in the open field, do you think we could want forces? If such a numerous host of Christians should but retire from your empire, the very evacuation would be abundant revenge. You would stand agast at your desolation, and be struck dumb at the general silence and horror of nature, as if the whole world were departed! You would be at a loss for men to govern; and in the pitiful remains, you would find more enemies than citizens. But now you exceed in friends, because you exceed in Christians.”*

Thus had Christianity triumphed over paganism, and left her idol temples almost deserted, before God passed the sceptre of government into the hands of his own people, and extinguished the fires of persecution.

The reign of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, commenced early in the fourth

* Reeve's Apol., vol. I., pp. 157-323-4-5-6.

century. It was attended, not only with outward peace and prosperity to the Church; but with a rapid increase in numbers. It was emphatically a sealing time for the servants of God, as predicted in the seventh chapter of Revelation.

Thus the revival which commenced on the day of Pentecost was continued for more than three hundred years. So long as Christians continued *daily* to wait upon the Lord in his ordinances, he wrought with them and added to the Church daily such as should be saved. And thus he sanctioned the *daily service*, introduced by the Apostles into the Christian Church, and blessed the efforts of his people in gathering an abundant spiritual harvest.

Had this blessed revival continued, with all its fruits of love to God and zeal for his glory, and of peace and good will to men, and active charity, it would long since have introduced and perpetuated Messiah's triumphant reign on earth. And why was it not continued? Alas! a sad mistake was committed. The civil government, when brought under Christian influence, undertook to foster the Church

by sustaining the Christian ministry from the public treasury. And she, at length, began to lean for support on the civil arm, and not on the presence of the Spirit and the blessing of God, or with her own efforts. By this the Spirit was grieved and the Church shorn of her strength. And ere she was aware, on the walls of her temples was written "Ichabod—the glory is departed." By her union with the state, her light went out. The abominations of popery were gradually introduced; and a long night of ignorance and superstition overspread the nations emphatically styled the "*dark ages*." The man of sin sat enthroned in the temple of God, baptized with the name of Christian, but breathing the spirit of anti-Christ. Under his malignant influence, Rome again unsheathed the sword of persecution against the faithful, who refused to bow at the shrine of her idolatry. The struggle was tremendous. Christian blood flowed in torrents. Fifty millions, slain in the conflict, were borne to heaven in the flames of martyrdom! Anti-Christ prevailed, and the Church was driven into the wilderness, where she has now re-

mained for twelve hundred and sixty years, weeping over her children slain and her primitive glory departed.

SECTION IV.

In tracing the history of this terrible apostasy—commencing as it did, under the unhallowed influence of a church and state union—we find its *progress marked by an increasing neglect of professing Christians to wait upon God in his ordinances; especially the daily service.*

Dr. Cave on Primitive Christianity,* says: "The custom of receiving the sacrament *every day*, continued longer in some churches than in others, and wore off by degrees as the primitive zeal abated. St. Basil tells us that in his time, near the close of the fourth century, there was a general attendance at the Lord's table four times a week—on Lord's day, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. St.

* Part I., pp. 339-341.

Augustine, who died in 430, says, in his Epistle to Januarius, "In some churches, not a day passes without the administration of the sacraments; in others it is administered only on Saturday and Sunday; and in others only on Sunday."* Afterwards, as the spirit of religion still more sensibly declined, from once a day it came to *twice* a week—then to *once* a week, on Lord's day—then to once a month, and after that, to *thrice a year*. To so great coldness did the piety and zeal of Christians grow, after the true primitive spirit of the gospel had left the world."

During the progress of this decline, we find it deeply deplored by the writers of that age. Chrysostom says: "It makes me sigh from the bottom of my heart, that when Christ, our common Lord and Master, is about to appear in these holy mysteries, the Church is in a manner empty and deserted. In vain do we stand at the altar! In vain is the daily sacrifice to so many who refuse to partake. What excuse can be allowed for this? The best preserver

* Quoted in Calvin's Institutes, p. 395. N. Y., 1819.

of kindnesses is the remembrance of them, and perpetual thanksgiving for them. Therefore, these venerable mysteries which we celebrate *every day* in our assemblies, are called the *Eucharist*, or thanksgiving, because they are the memorials of God's kindness to us."*

Thus, while the daily service was continued, many neglected to attend, and ungratefully turned away from the memorials of a Saviour's dying love. With such St. Ambrose earnestly expostulates. "If it be our daily bread, (says he,) why receive it once a month or once a year only? Receive that *daily* which is for thy *daily* benefit, and so live that thou mayest be prepared to receive it *daily*. He that is not prepared to receive it *every day*, is not prepared to receive it after a year."†

Chrysostom, who died in 407, says: "This is what destroys all religion, that men count it piety and reverence, that they come not frequently to the Lord's table; not considering

* Hom. III., p. 362; quoted by Bingham, p. 854.

† Ambrose de sacram, book 5, ch. 4. Bingham, p. 852.

that if they come unworthily, though it be but once a year, they are deserving of punishment. It is not irreverence to come frequently, but to come unworthily, though a man do it but once in all his life. But we are so stupid as to think that when we have wallowed in sin all the year, without any care to repent, it is sufficient, that we have not daily presumed to take the memorials of Christ's body and blood—not considering that Judas, who betrayed Christ, did it *but once*; and the Jews, who crucified him, did it *but once*. But did that excuse them? Why measure this matter by time only? Let the reasonable time be a good conscience. With this qualification, come always—without it, come not even once, lest you eat and drink judgment to your own souls.”*

“When matters were come to this degeneracy, (says Bingham†) instead of reviving the ancient discipline, which excluded such

* Hom. 5, on I. Tim., p. 1540, and Hom. 17, on Heb., p. 1872; quoted by Bingham, pp. 852-3.

† P. 854.

members from the Church, it was determined by the council of Agde, about the year 506, that the laity should be *required* to receive the communion only three times a year. This decree was renewed by the council of Tours, in 813. But still the clergy and the more devout of the laity continued the *daily service*, and the practice of daily communion, as appears from the writers of that age. Bertram says "The sacrament is administered not only once a year, but on *every day* throughout the year." And it is remarkable, that so late as the ninth century, the council of Aix La Chapelle attempted to restore the ancient practice to its primitive lustre, by reviving the decree of the council of Antioch, passed in 341, which orders such as neglect the communion to be excluded from the Church. But the disease had become too inveterate to be easily corrected. The corruption increased; until, by the council of Lateran, the obligation to communicate was reduced to *once a year*. This was done under Pope Innocent III., about the year 1200. This rule was afterwards taken into their canon law, requiring every man,

woman and child who had come to years of discretion, to make auricular confession of all his sins to his own priest, and receive the communion privately once a year; unless excused by his priest.”* “And here (says Bingham, p. 855) we may date the utter ruin of the ancient and apostolic practice of frequent and general communion of the whole Church together—private and solitary masses having been substituted in its place”—thus rejecting the ordinances of God, and “teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.” “This continued until the reformation in the sixteenth century.”

Then those who protested against the abominations of popery, attempted to rectify these abuses. And the first Reformers happily succeeded, so far as to abolish private masses and auricular confession from all the Protestant churches. But to restore the *daily service and communion of the primitive Church*, was not so easy. It required a closer walk with God, by the constant indwelling of his Spirit and the lively exercise of that faith which dis-

* Bingham's Works, vol. 5, p. 372.

cerns the Lord's body ; and thus constrains us to *take up the cross daily* and follow him in his self-denying efforts for the salvation of men. In this state of mind, we are prepared for a daily communion. But it can never be attained and perpetuated, by those whose hearts and hands are so filled with the world, that they have no time to attend a *daily service*. This was the difficulty which baffled the first reformers. * Calvin labored hard to restore the primitive practice. Commenting on *Acts II : 41-47*, he says : " The invariable custom was, that no assembly of the Church should be held without the word being preached, prayers offered, the Lord's Supper administered, and alms given." In his *Institutes*, he pleads hard for this custom, and censures its neglect as certainly a device of the devil.* Yet, after all, he could not prevail to have even a *monthly communion* established among the people ; but was overborne in his endeavors, and forced to yield to a rule for communion only three times a year. But he says he " took care to have it

* Book 4, ch. 17, pp. 595-6, N. Y. ed., 1819.

entered upon record that *this was an evil custom*, to the intent that posterity might more easily correct it.”* There that record has stood for three hundred years, and the evil custom still remains uncorrected. And what has been the consequence? Instead of an active, vigorous, aggressive piety, Protestant christendom, with comparatively few exceptions, has witnessed a constant tendency to decline and spiritual slumber. Even in Germany, where the Protestant faith achieved its greatest wonders, within fifty years from the days of Luther, most of the churches had sunk into a cold and dead formality, fostering the spirit of scepticism — which boasts its fifty thousand infidels even as emigrants to this country. During the great revival in the time of Whitfield and Edwards, the Wesleys and Tennants, and their associates, about one hundred years ago, an effort was made so far to restore the primitive practice as to have a communion *every Sabbath*. In the Life of Edwards† we find one of his letters, addressed

* Calvin on Ecclesiastical Rites, p. 206; Bingham, p. 855.

† P. 417, New York edition, 1830.

to Rev. Thomos Erskine of England, in which he acknowledges the receipt of "Randal's Letters on frequent Communion," and says in reply: "We ought to pray earnestly for a general revival, and to use means that are proper in order to it. And one proper means must be allowed to be *a due observance of Christ's ordinances*, one of which is that which you and Mr. Randal have been striving for, viz: *a restoration of the primitive practice of frequent communion*. It must come to this at last; and Christ's ministers and people should rest in nothing short of a full restoration of the primitive practice." Yes, it must come to this at last—*a full restoration of Christ's own ordinances*, with a "*full assurance of faith*" and expectation of his promised blessing. This alone will secure the constant presence of his Spirit and the light of his countenance, and thus keep the Church *awake*, and *active*, and *successful*, as *daily* laborers in the vinyard of Christ. Long have his people refused to do this. Nearly fifteen hundred years have rolled away since the Church forsook the ordinances of her God, and grieved his Spirit, and turned

away from the light of his countenance. Thus she eclipsed her rising glory, and left the world in almost total darkness for a thousand years.

Then the light of the Reformation dawned, portending a brighter day. But alas! that Reformation was but *partial*; and she has since shed but a feeble and flickering light on the dense darkness which still broods over this sin-ruined world. Seasons of blessed revival she has indeed experienced, or the light of her piety would have gone out. But these seasons have been comparatively few, of short continuance, and limited in their results. Much has also been done, especially within the last fifty years, in preparing the way of the Lord among the nations. But even in christendom the harvest has not been gathered, *and the millions are perishing*. The noon of the nineteenth century has passed over a *slumbering* Church, and the Saviour's remonstrance, *unheeded*, is still ringing in her ears: "*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.*" Let the

churches return unto the Lord, and seek him daily in his own ordinances, with full confidence in his promise, as the primitive christians did, and he will soon return to them with the light of his countenance and the *joy of his salvation*. “Then will they teach transgressors His ways, and sinners shall be converted unto him.” All christendom shall be shaken, like the dry bones in the valley of vision; and the Spirit, like a rushing, mighty wind, shall breathe upon the millions of the slain, that they may live, and rise to proclaim the triumph of his grace. Yea, more — he will reveal his conquering arm — already stretched out in judgment on the wicked — in subduing the *nations* to his peaceful sceptre.

Let the Church come up out of the wilderness in which she has so long wandered; let her show herself to the world, as leaning for support upon the arm of her Beloved, seeking daily communion with him, not only in private, but also in the great congregations; let her united voice of prayer and praise, of warning and entreaty, ring in the ears of a dying world from day to day, and Christ would soon give her the victory.

Thus he once triumphed over *pagan persecuting Rome*, when she claimed to be mistress of the world. And thus he will yet triumph over *papal persecuting Rome*, though *leagued with earth and hell* to oppose his reign.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DAILY SERVICE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

WHEN the Church passed from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation, there was a great change in her *Ritual*. Circumscision, which, for more than nineteen hundred years, had been the appointed seal of God's everlasting covenant with Abraham and his seed — was exchanged for christian baptism, with the apostolic assurance, “*The promise is to you and to your children ;*” for “*if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*” And instead of all those bloody sacrifices, which pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ, the simple ordinance of the Lord's Supper was instituted, as a *memorial* of the same great event. And, as they had been accustomed to a *daily service of divine appointment*, with an ordinance which *typified*

that event, they now *commemorated* it, in their daily communion at the Lord's table. Thus the *daily service was continued*, with only a change in its form. And this was done by the agency and sanction of the Apostles, who were gifted with miraculous powers and *guided by the Holy Ghost*. And we find it not only *continued*, but *fully attended* in the Church, for more than three centuries, during the period of her highest prosperity and most signal triumphs. What more evidence do we need of its divine appointment as a gospel institution? It was introduced by the same authority as the baptism of females, and the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. Our authority, in these cases, is the *practice of the inspired Apostles*. And this we have for the *daily service*. This the primitive Church had, and regarded as ample authority in every such case. Their general rule was, "That any ordinance or usage of the Church, which could be traced back for its origin, not to any act of council, but to the *practice of the inspired Apostles*, was *instituted by divine authority*." This fact, being ascer-

tained, was allowed to settle the question and foreclose debate. And some modern, as well as the ancient commentators, understand the direction of Christ: "This do ye as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me," as a command to *do it often*. Near the close of the second century, Tertullian and Cyprian assure us that the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," was understood as including food for the soul as well as the body; and that Christ, in that form of prayer, had taught his disciples to ask that the consecrated elements from his own table might be given them *daily*, for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. "This," says Bingham (vol. 4, p. 371), "is demonstration that they assembled for public worship *every day*, since they received the Eucharist *every day*, which they did not use to consecrate but in public assemblies of the Church."

If this daily service was held as a *divine institution*, *how* and *when* was it discontinued?

This was done (as we have shown in chapt. III., sec. 4.) first, by *simple neglect*, when the Church became corrupted by her union with

the State. And then, instead of enforcing the discipline of the Church, they attempted to *justify* that neglect by usurping authority to *legislate* in the Church of Christ, and adopted a rule releasing the laity from *obligation* to attend the daily service, or to commune at the Lord's table oftener than *three times a year*; which was afterwards reduced to *twice*, and then to *once* a year. By this, and other kindred acts, the Church of Rome assumed the character of Antichrist, of whom it was predicted by Daniel, that he "should speak great words against the Most High, and wear out the Saints of the Most High, and think to change *times* and *laws*. Yea, he shall magnify himself to the Prince of the host, and by him *the daily sacrifice shall be taken away.*"

As the "taking away of the daily sacrifice, and setting up the abomination which maketh desolate," marked the horrible wickedness of the Jews, and provoked the terrible judgments of their national overthrow and long-continued dispersions, so the taking away the daily sacrifice or service of the Christian Church was an act of horrible wickedness, which opened the

way for all the abominations of popery, and all the blood and horror which have marked its course and desolated the fairest portions of christendom. "And how long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" This question was announced by a heavenly messenger, in the ears of Daniel. And soon the answer came, which we find recorded in his book, and also in the Revelation by John, (*Dan.* 8 : 13, 14, and 11 : 11, 12 ; *Rev.* 12 : 6,) limiting the duration of the reign of Antichrist to 1260 years. This period is believed to be drawing near to its close. "*Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed, and the daily service restored.*" Here is demonstration that the Christian Church had been blessed with a daily service of divine appointment. For how could it have been taken away, and how again restored, if no such service had ever been instituted ?

For about three hundred years has Protestant christendom rejected the daily service as a *divine appointment*, and blindly followed in

the footsteps of Antichrist, in legislating for themselves as to the *times* and *seasons* of waiting upon God in his ordinances — the Sabbath only excepted. And is it not high time to awake to this subject, and see wherein we have failed to walk with God in his own ordinances, and thus have caused him to hide his face from us and withhold his promised blessing? Why not return at once to the practice of the primitive Church, and thus adopt the uniform standard of christian duty, which was established by divine authority? Can the blessing of God be secured, the conscience of christians be reached, and any thing like uniformity of practice be restored to the churches, in any other way? While all our week-day appointments for public service are regarded as of mere human authority, what can be expected, as a general thing, but a meagre attendance, and the consequent prevalence of worldliness and spiritual slumber? “*Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the way and see, and ask for the good old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.*” “*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. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me now herewith, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

As to the three annual festivals, the sabbatical year, and the Jubilee, which were specified seasons of rest and of rich spiritual privilege under the Jewish economy, they were inapplicable to the gospel dispensation; but, in their spiritual import, doubtless included in that universal Jubilee, proclaimed by angels at the Saviour's birth — a Jubilee of "*good tidings of great joy to all people.*"

And can it be that the people of God are less favored now, as to servile labor and time for social worship, than under the former dispensation? Has the gospel abridged their privileges? What if all those positive enactments, except the daily service and the weekly Sabbath, *are* repealed? With all the light thrown on this subject from the ancient dispensation and from general laws which indicate

the will of God, and with the commission in her hands — “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” — a commission which has devolved upon her the responsibility of a thousand millions of immortal souls — shall christians conclude that God has withdrawn that provision for their temporal support which he pledged to his ancient people, and doomed the gospel Church to toil for the body nearly six parts out of seven of their whole time? Surely, none but a groveling mind, blinded by the love of this world to the amazing interests of the immortal soul, could ever *cherish* a thought like this. Surely, the Apostles and primitive christians did not so learn Christ, or neglect their high commission to labor for the world’s conversion to God. No! instead of devoting little more than *one-seventh* part of their time to this great work, we see them *daily* engaged in it, and the Lord working with them, and making daily additions to the Church. And is it not right and safe to follow their example, even with the Saviour’s solemn mandate ringing in our ears: “*Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which*

endureth unto everlasting life." This surely requires that we make the soul the *chief* concern, devoting to it our principal care and effort.

Does unbelief suggest, "What, then, will become of the body?" Listen again to the faithful and tender Shepherd of his flock, and you hear him say: "Be not anxious what ye shall eat, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek,) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and *all these things shall be added unto you.*" And is not Christ as able and willing to redeem his pledge to his people now as in ancient times? None can doubt this.

CHAPTER V.

DAILY SERVICE A DICTATE OF COMMON SENSE.

MAN, in his present state, has a soul endowed with rational and immortal powers, inhabiting a frail, dying body, with its animal propensities and instincts. Our bodily wants are *few*, and the means of supply are wisely and graciously furnished by the great Author of our being, who requires us to labor and pray for "our daily bread." Our spiritual wants are *many*, and press upon us with all the cravings of an immortal soul, with its vast interests for eternity. These interests are all jeopardized by sin, and the soul has become a moral wreck, sinking in the bottomless abyss of ruin. But God, in boundless mercy, has interposed to save, and provided all the needful means, even at the amazing sacrifice at Calvary!

Under these circumstances, which class of wants is it that claims our *chief* attention and

most strenuous efforts, in the use of God's appointed means? Is it those of the body, which is but dust, and must soon return to dust again? Or is it those of the *soul*, sinking as it is in the awful abyss of endless and unutterable woe? The common sense of a world pronounces: "*The soul is the chief concern—its wants the highest and most urgent wants of man.*" This verdict is confirmed by the Lord of glory, who laid down his life for its redemption. We hear him say, "Labor *not* for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." "Seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things needful to the body shall be added unto you." It is not true, then, that he who furnished the means of our eternal salvation at an infinite price, has doomed man to such perpetual toil for the body that little time or strength is left for the means to secure the welfare of the precious soul.

But sin has hardened the heart, and stupified the conscience, and so *brutified* the immortal mind, that man, forgetful of his high-born destiny, grovels in the dust, anxious for the body, un-

concerned for the soul. Surrounded as we are by such objects of compassion, and having been rescued ourselves from the same forlorn condition, what can we do to rescue others? Whatever is best adapted to awaken their attention, and *keep it awake to the amazing interests of the perishing soul, certainly ought to be done.* This is the dictate of our *common humanity*, as well as christian principle. And what more effectual than the means which God has devised, and which he so signally blessed when used by the Apostles and primitive christians, while "*daily, in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ,*" and to commemorate his dying love in their daily communion at his table?

CHAPTER VI.

DAILY SERVICE DEMANDED.

THE *daily service which characterized the Apostles and primitive Christians, is still demanded by the exigencies of the Church and the world.*

The Church is a community gathered out of an apostate world, enslaved to sin and satan. And thus gathered, by their genuine conversion to God, they are to grow in knowledge and in grace, to shine in the Saviour's image, and thus be "the salt of the earth and the light of the world." As such, the Church is commissioned and solemnly pledged to educate her own offspring for Christ, (Deut. 6-7,) and to stretch out her arms of compassion to all nations, and gather into her bosom the whole human family, converted to God by her prayers and efforts, and adorned with the beauties of holiness, and thus fill this dark and sin-ruined

word with light, and joy, and peace, and salvation.

All this is to be accomplished, by the blessing of God, through the agency of christians. But how? Not by exhausting all their energies for the body during six days of the week, and little else than dreaming over the means of grace during the seventh, that they may thus recruit their exhausted energies only to plunge again into the cares and business of the world. While christians are thus minding the flesh, and treating with so much indifference the amazing interests of the perishing soul, they will be sunk in spiritual slumber. Their own children will slumber and be hardened in sin, perverting the gospel into a savour of death unto death to their souls! And the world around them will slumber, and its dying millions will perish.

This is not a mere picture of fancy. Would to God it were! But look around on the Church and the world, and, to an awful extent, you see it realized. What worldliness and spiritual slumber in the Church! What neglect of the means for her own growth in

grace, and for her enlargement in the world's conversion to God! What unbelief in regard to the efficacy of these means, and the encouragement which God has given us to the diligent use of them! Even in this noon of the nineteenth century, emphatically styled "*the age of action,*" when God is opening wide the door of christian enterprise in all the earth, and the agonizing cry of its perishing millions, "*Come over and help us,*" is piercing like a death-wail the ears of the Church, alas! how small a proportion of her members are really awake to this mighty enterprise! how many are apparently resting in a dead faith! Some, indeed, among all denominations of the evangelical Church, *are doing nobly and praying earnestly;* and, blessed be God, their number is increasing, and the foundation work of this stupendous edifice is slowly advancing. "But," says an active friend of missions, "compared with the efforts now demanded by the exigencies of Christ's kingdom, the present is an age of worldliness, lukewarmness, and self-indulgence. The merest modicum, as a general thing, is given to the work of Christ, while multitudes

go for fashion, extravagance, and luxury. Even the little we give for foreign missions seems in danger of bribing our consciences into a neglect of the perishing around us. The broad way is still the thronged way, even in christendom."

How manifest is it, that with the present worldliness and unbelief of the Church, and neglect of the means of grace, the millenium can never come, or be continued if it should come! To bring about this predicted event, in the way of God's appointment, christians must awake and arise from the dust, and put on the armor of light and the garments of salvation, and exert their energies for Christ. It was to promote this object that Jesus Christ, as he went about doing good, taught the multitudes who thronged about him, *day after day*; and was always present at their national festivals, to raise his voice and pour out his heavenly eloquence upon those vast assemblies. And to promote the same object, the Apostles and primitive christians followed in his footsteps, while "*daily, in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*"

CHAPTER VII.

DAILY SERVICE SANCTIONED.

THE Holy Spirit has stamped the broad seal of heaven upon his daily service, by crowning it with signal success.

We have reviewed the opening scene of the gospel dispensation in a powerful revival of religion on the day of Pentecost—a revival preceded by a *ten days prayer meeting* for the promised baptism of the Spirit, and carried forward, by the blessing of God, on the *daily labors* of his servants, “adding to the Church *daily* such as should be saved.” We have reviewed the *history* of the Church, and seen her daily service *continued*, and the Lord working with his servants to perpetuate this revival for more than three hundred years—sustaining his Church through ten general persecutions, and multiplying converts till the great majority became christians, the temples of idolatry were deserted, and christianity

swayed her peaceful sceptre over the whole Roman Empire. And it was not until there was a "falling away" from their daily service and communion at the Lord's table, that the Spirit was grieved and the revival declined.

But, though grieved with the backsliding of his people, the Lord still waited to be gracious. And, from that eventful day to this, whenever Christians have been aroused to similar efforts, God has crowned them with proportionate success in the revival of his work. And when they have ceased to go preaching Christ from house to house, and to meet often for social worship and instruction, the revival has ceased. And as soon as they were content to meet only upon the Sabbath, with a few to sustain a prayer-meeting, and perhaps a lecture, once a week, you are sure to find the mass of the Church worldly minded, at ease in Zion, and sinners moving on to destruction, like the ox to the slaughter-house, while a few faithful souls are found, "who sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the midst of them."

This is strikingly exemplified in the whole

history of the Protestant Church. Look, for instance, at her seasons of progress and decline in this country during the last half century. In Dr. Baird's report on the state of religion in America, recently made to the Paris Conference of Christians, he says: "While the population of this country has increased during the last half century a little more than *fourfold*, the number of evangelical churches, ministers, and communicants has increased more than *ninefold*." This cheering progress in converting the nation to Christ is the result of numerous and powerful revivals, which were more or less prevalent during the first forty or forty-five years of this period. But for the last ten years or more, there has been a lamentable dearth of revivals. The attention of Christians has been sadly diverted from their appropriate work, and engrossed with worldly objects. Spiritual slumber has generally prevailed; and the *increase* of the Church, instead of continuing, as it had been, to be *more than double* the national increase, has been about *one-third less!* *

* Primitive Piety Revived. Boston Tract and Book Society: 1855.

At this fearful ratio is the comparative number of the unconverted in this nation, gaining upon the Church, while her members slumber! *When will they awake?*

How true is it, that God works while his people are willing to work with him, humbly waiting upon him in the ordinances of his own appointment. And when they refuse, his Spirit is grieved and the work stops. Thus God teaches his people the necessity of coöperating with him *daily* in the great work of the world's conversion to Christ, and encourages them thus to "*continue steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*" And by refusing to do this they have grieved the heart of Infinite Love, and called forth his compassionate lamentation: "*Oh! that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him.*" And again, "*Oh! that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been like a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of a sea; thy*

seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels as the gravel thereof.” (Ps. 81: 13-15; Isa. 48: 18, 19.)

Here God teaches what large attainments in holiness and peace would have been the legacy of his Church, and what abundant enlargement, in the conversion of her enemies and the multiplication of her seed, even as the sand of the sea, had she only been faithful to her covenant vows; and how lamentable and heart-rending are the consequences of her unfaithfulness and backsliding from God! By this the Holy Spirit has been grieved, Christ has been wounded in the house of his friends, and millions of souls, for whom he died, left to plunge into eternal ruin!!

Over such a scene, no wonder the benevolent Jesus wept, and poured out his heart in that bitter lamentation, “*Oh! Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but ye would not. Therefore your house is left unto you desolate!*” How tremendous the responsibility of professing Christians! It is enough to make an angel tremble!

CHAPTER VIII.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

WE shall now briefly notice some objections to the view we have taken of the *Bible standard of duty*, as exemplified in the primitive Christians.

OBJECTION I.

It may be said that *a daily service and communion at the Lord's table would so familiarize the scene to us as to counteract its appropriate effect, and become a mere formality.*

We reply: It might indeed be so with the hypocrite and the self-deceived, but directly the reverse with those who, by faith, "discern the Lord's body." And for proof we appeal to the nature and design of the ordinance, and the *experience* of the Church during the *first*

three and last three centuries of the Christian era. In Christ crucified for our sins, we see, in the strongest possible light, the infinite evil and demerit of sin, combined with his amazing love to us sinners. It is this which melts the heart in penitence, and inspires love to Christ and zeal for his glory, and tender compassion for our perishing fellow sinners. It is this which inspires the highest rapture of the redeemed in heaven, while they sing, "*Worthy the Lamb! for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*" The scene of Calvary will never be forgotten in heaven, but viewed and celebrated with ever increasing interest as the immortal powers of the redeemed expand, and they are able to comprehend more and more of the "*height and depth, and length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.*" And it is only by *keeping the eye of faith habitually fixed on the cross*, that penitence, love, and zeal can be perpetuated in the Church militant. If the cares, or business, or pleasures of the world are suffered so to engross our thoughts as to divert them from Christ, our zeal soon languishes, our love

grows cold, our conversation savors of earthly, not of heavenly things, and the Spirit is grieved. To prevent this, while visible and tangible things are constantly making their strong appeal to our senses, the Saviour has kindly furnished *the most effectual antidote*.

“ Well he remembers Calvary,
Nor lets his saints forget ”—

while they daily meet him at his table in the symbols of his dying love, and listen to his melting voice, “ *This do in remembrance of me.* ” The primitive Christians did this; and thus proved, by happy experience, the blessed influence of daily service and communion at the Lord’s table, as the most powerful means of divine appointment to keep the eye of their faith steadily fixed on a crucified Saviour, and love to him and each other burning in their hearts. Hence it is said, “ *All that believed were together, and had all things common,* ” regarding their property as all the Lord’s and themselves as his stewards: “ *They parted their goods unto all men, as every man had need. And great grace was upon them all. And they contin-*

ued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

This portrait of primitive Christianity, drawn by the pencil of inspiration, continued true to the life, as we have seen, for more than three hundred years. While the Church assembled daily, and renewed their vows and their strength at the Lord's table, and thus combined their individual influence and efforts for the honor of Christ and the advancement of his cause; they drank deeply in his spirit, and took up the cross daily and followed him in self-denial, for the good of others. Tertullian says: "Our brotherly love continues, even to the division of our estates. We think all is gain that is laid out in doing good." Justin Martyn says: "We, who formerly valued our money and estates above all things else, do now put them into common stock, and distribute to

those that are in need." Even Julian, a bitter enemy of the Christians, says: "By their charity to the poor, they beget the greatest admiration in the minds of men; for they *give themselves up to humanity and charity*, and thus strengthen and increase their wicked and pernicious party."

Thus they confounded their enemies, and witnessed the victories of their King in subduing the whole Roman Empire — then mistress of the world — in sweet subjection to his peaceful sceptre, the great majority devoted Christians.

Justin Martyn, who died 165, speaking of the triumphs of the gospel, says: "There is not a nation, either Greek or Barbarian, or any other name, even of those who wander in tribes or live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgiving are not offered to the Father of all, in the name of the crucified Jesus." Clemens, of Alexandria, about the year 200, says: "The gospel is spread through the whole world, in every town, and village, and city, converting whole houses and separate individuals."

What a contrast in the zeal and success of the *primitive*, when compared with the *Protestant* Church, during an equal period of the last three hundred years! With vastly superior advantages in wealth and learning, and the use of the press, with steam power to multiply Bibles and tracts, and scatter broadcast the leaves of truth which are for the healing of the nations, alas! how slow our progress in reaping the great harvest of the world for Christ! Even in christendom the masses are not converted, and the millions are perishing. And while six hundred millions in heathendom, sinking in the flames of perdition, are pouring their death-wail into the ears of the Church, and calling for help, how few of her members are giving anything like an earnest response to this urgent call!! The whole amount of all that is given by American Christians for this object is only an average of twenty cents to each member, and is less by one-half than what is annually expended by the devotees of pleasure in the theatres and opera-houses of the single city of New York! and the poor heathen are annually devoting nearly as much

for the support of *one heathen temple* in Calcutta as all the Christians of America and Great Britain are giving to save these six hundred millions from eternal perdition!!

More than half of our professors, it is said, *give nothing*. Nor do they *pray* that the "kingdom of God may come" to save the perishing. For they are seldom or *never seen* in our meetings for prayer. Like Thomas, when the disciples are met with Jews in their midst, *they are "not there."* Even a large majority, in most of our churches, are so uniformly absent that they are not *expected to be there*, except on the Sabbath, when drawn and entertained by the eloquence or skill of the preacher. Thus they manifest their lack of self-denial for the cause of Christ, and of interest in devotional exercises. And their influence, as professors of religion, exerts a tremendous power to encourage the ungodly, who boldly proclaim, in action, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? or what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?"

A minority in our churches generally, evince a better spirit; counteracting, in some meas-

ure, this unhallowed influence, by occasional seasons of "*special effort*" in using the means of grace, attended with "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and more or less additions to the Church of such as shall be saved. But these special efforts are soon relinquished, and the world regains its predominating influence. Then, by common consent, the sanctuary is *closed during the week*, except that from its hundred and forty-four hours, *one* or *two* are selected for evening service. This service soon attracts little attention, and affords unmistakable evidence that the Spirit is grieved and the revival exchanged for a season of declension, which, in many instances, is long and distressing to the pious heart, the Church being shorn of her strength and diminishing in numbers. This has been the general experience of the Protestant Church for three hundred years.

Look, for instance, at the city of New York. For the last *ten years*, which were preceded by a general revival, the statistical reports of the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches show a total *decrease* of one hundred

and five members, while the population has more than doubled in the same period. And this is but a specimen of the American Church. From the census of 1840, compared with that of 1850, we ascertain that the increase of population in the United States was about thirty-five per cent. in ten years, which is an average of three-and-a-half per cent. annually. During that time the increase of evangelical Christians was about twenty-four per cent., or less than two-and-a-half per cent. annually, and less, by *one-third*, than the increase of the nation. If the whole of this increase of the Church were from the families of her own members, (which is by no means the fact,) it would still leave more than *one-half* of the children of God's covenant people *unconverted* — *sinking to perdition from the very bosom of the Church!* What a sacrifice is annually offered by the Christian Church on the altar of mammon!! And if her faith is not sufficient to lead her own children to Christ, and plead the promises of God's everlasting covenant for their salvation, alas! for the millions of our race who are yet alien from God, and dying without hope.

Let facts be compared in relation to the zeal and success of the Church during the *first* three and *last* three centuries of the Christian era, and they fully demonstrate the salutary influence of the daily service and communion at the Lord's table, and earnestly call for its restoration.

Let the Church awake from her dream of worldliness and "*return unto the Lord,*" resuming her daily walk with him in his own ordinances, and thus adopt the Bible standard of duty, as exemplified in the primitive Christians; and, like them, she would plead and receive the promise, "*I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.*" Then, instead of the fitful and often retrograde movement of the last three centuries, her course would be steadily onward and upward, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day of her millennial glory.

And how long ere she would achieve her universal triumph in the conversion of the world to Christ? It is estimated that the Protestant evangelical Church, in this country, now numbers 3,765,950 members, and actually

holds in possession more than half the wealth and resources of the nation. With such an army enlisted for Christ; such immense resources at command; such facilities for evangelization, and an open door of intercommunication with the whole world, what might not the American Church do, if she were only awake?

Let the love of gain, of worldly honor, of vain pleasure, now prompting to such indomitable energy and immense sacrifices, be supplanted by the love of Jesus and of perishing souls — prompting to equal energy and sacrifice — and might not each member of the Church be instrumental in the conversion of at least *one soul a year* to Christ? If this were done, her number would be doubled annually; and in less than three years the whole nation would be gathered into the fold of the good Shepherd! and thus be prepared to go out and unfurl the gospel banner in every nation, town, and hamlet under heaven, proclaiming in their own tongues the wonders of redeeming grace!! And if the same ratio of increase were continued, the whole world would be converted in

less than nine years! And is it too much to hope for, that a Christian, bought with the blood of Christ, filled with the Holy Ghost, fired with the love of Jesus, and aided by the combined prayers and influence of the whole Church, thus engaged with him in the same work, might be instrumental in leading *one soul a year* to Christ? Oh! that Zion might again put on her strength, and witness the victories of her King! Shall this blessed work be longer delayed? Will the Church continue to expend her energies upon the things that perish with the using? Will her sons and her daughters, born from above, forget their birth-right, despise their proffered inheritance, and still linger in the wilderness, looking back to the house of their bondage? Let the watchmen, like Moses in the camp of Israel, hear the voice of God, and "*speak to the people that they go forward.*"

OBJECTION II.

In the present state of the Church, it would be discouraging and worse than useless, to urge a standard of duty so elevated as that exemplified by the Apostles and primitive Christians. What hope is there of securing its adoption?

We reply: If it is the *Bible standard*, there should be no fear of consequences. "*He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? Is not my word like as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*" "*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" To secure this result, Christ sends forth his servants, not alone, or in reliance on their own strength or eloquence; but with the assurance, "*Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;*" "*ALL POWER is given unto me, both in heaven and earth. Go ye THEREFORE and disciple all nations, teaching them to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I have commanded you.*"

The first preachers sent forth with this commission and promise found the piety of the Church, then existing in the Jewish nation, at a far lower ebb than it is now, and the whole heathen world mad upon their idols. But wherever they unfurled the gospel banner, the true worshipers of God, attracted by a power divine, rallied around it, converts were multiplied, and the Bible standard of duty was erected and maintained for centuries, amid the combined opposition of earth and hell.

Let the same means be used, with the same reliance on the presence and power of the Great Head of the Church, and not only will the same results be witnessed, but results still greater and more glorious, in proportion to our vastly increased facilities for sending the gospel to the destitute and evangelizing the world.

Of this we are assured, not only by induction from the past, but by the promises and prophetic visions of the future, and their actual fulfilment in the recent wonders of grace which God has wrought in the Sandwich Islands. It is written, "The isles shall wait for his law."

Our missionaries found them waiting; and soon after they had learned their language and begun to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, the Holy Spirit applied the truth, and the dark-minded heathen began to call upon the name of the Lord. They sought retirement in the fields to *pray*. They met together to *pray*. Their neighbors called them "*the praying people*." As such, they found the promise fulfilled: "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*." Saved themselves, they sought salvation for others, and established and maintained *daily meetings* for christian fellowship, instruction, and prayer. And God has held them up as an example to the world of a continued revival in the Church; and the rapid spread of the gospel in the conversion of sinners to Christ.

A missionary who had returned on a visit, after spending twelve years with them, stated to the writer, a few months since, that "their general custom is, besides family worship and prayer three times a day in the closet, to arise every morning at four o'clock and assemble for public worship—the males in one apart-

ment and the females in another — and, after spending an hour in prayer and singing, they come together and continue the service half or three quarters of an hour longer ; then separate, and meet again for the same purpose in the evening. And so powerful is the influence of these daily services in keeping alive the spirit of devotion, that no one, either male or female, who cherishes a hope in Christ, is ever known to decline leading in prayer when favored with opportunity. Such is the simplicity of their faith in the promises that when they plead for an impenitent friend or neighbor, and invite him to Christ, they expect his conversion. And they are not disappointed. God hears and answers their daily and earnest supplications, and they witness the progress of his work.” In one of those islands is the largest Church in the world — a church of more than six thousand members ! under the care of one missionary. And, in all the islands, a very large majority of the native population are hopefully converted to Christ and brought into communion with the Church. And the genuineness of their religion is demonstrated, like

the primitive Christians', by its abundant fruits of benevolence and active charity — even such as attended the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. They contribute more largely, in proportion to their means, for the support of gospel institutions, both at home and abroad, than any other portion of the Christian Church.

All this has been accomplished in less than thirty-five years, by the blessing of God on the daily services of his people. And if a standard of duty thus elevated can be established and maintained among people converted from the lowest depths of paganism, why despair of its adoption in this land of the pilgrims, and throughout christendom, and in every part of the heathen world?

Let ministers of the gospel hold up the Bible standard of duty as exemplified by the primitive Christians, and kindly and earnestly invite their people to rally around it; let the disciples of Jesus imitate the example of that little band who came down from the mount of Christ's ascension, and bowed together around the mercy seat in that upper room, to plead

for the promised gift of the Holy Ghost; let them consecrate themselves and their all to Christ, in a daily walk with God in his own ordinances, and as sure as God hears and answers prayer, and proves faithful to his promises, they would soon be filled with the Spirit and go "everywhere preaching the word," and find sinners crying for mercy and rejoicing in Christ.

Regarding this daily service as of divine appointment, and pledging themselves and the converts to maintain it, the good work of conversion, growth in grace, and preparation for heaven, would doubtless be perpetuated until time shall end, and the scenes of the judgment open on the world.

OBJECTION III

It may be said, If the millenium is to be introduced and perpetuated by restoring the daily service and communion of the primitive Church, how is it possible for ministers to sustain the amount of labor that will devolve up-

on them, especially in this age of literature and refinement? With all the other labors and cares of the pastoral office, can they furnish beaten oil for the sanctuary, and preach and administer the Lord's Supper every day?

In meeting this objection, two things may be said. In the *first* place: Let a minister, in addition to the appropriate moral and mental culture, be a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and sustained by the united prayers and co-operation of the Church, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and he will *easily* perform an amount of labor utterly impossible, and which would crush him to the earth if left to his own unaided energies. This is proved by numerous facts in the history of the Church, and accords, more or less, with the experience of all ministers and christians accustomed to labor in revivals. *Besides this*, if the Spirit were poured out, and a revival commenced and perpetuated like that of Pentecost, with our facilities for education, ministers in abundance would soon be raised up, filled with the Spirit, and richly furnished for their work. Thus a band of associate pastors, like that of

Ephesus, would be found as co-laborers in every church; and being sustained by the united prayers and co-operation of the whole membership, it would doubtless be found much *easier* to keep up the interest of a *daily service* than even that of a *weekly service*, where the minister is left to struggle alone in the midst of a slumbering Church and a stupid community. And, until such aid is furnished, ministers will stand approved of their Master, so far as they hold up the true *gospel standard*, and urge its claims upon the Church and the world as God shall give them strength.

OBJECTION IV.

The Christian may "seek first the kingdom of God," and thus secure the promise, "all things needful shall be added," without devoting *one-half* of his time to duties strictly *religious*, in dictinction from those that are *secular*. For he may and ought to serve God in everything. "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." He

may therefore regard supremely the glory of God and a treasure in heaven, while he is laboring for his daily bread.

Very true; but if he thus labors on the Sabbath, or at *any other time* which ought to be devoted exclusively to prayer, reading the Scriptures, or the religious instruction of his children, or any other direct effort to save souls, he is not in the way of his duty. To do one thing, when Christ requires us to be doing another, is not the way to please him or secure his promised blessing. And the question at issue is not whether we may serve God in our secular business — for this is admitted by all — but what proportion of time should be ordinarily devoted to it? Do we hear the reply: “Six days shalt thou labor, but the seventh thou shalt rest,” and devote to the means of religious culture? * Well, be it so, that the Sabbath is thus diligently observed by Christ.

* The writer once had an Elder in the Church under his charge, who, for a time, maintained this view of the fourth commandment — a circumstance which has eventually led him to prepare this Essay and offer it to the public.

ians. But suppose that, during the week, they have no closet, no family altar, no searching of the scriptures, no assembling for social worship and edification, (which, alas! is sadly characteristic of too many professors,) while they spend their whole time and strength in worldly business. How, I ask, could such professors be distinguished from the mere servants of mammon? Surely, this is not the way to please Christ and promote his kingdom on earth. None will pretend it. The question returns, then, with interest. How should our time be divided between those duties which are *secular* and those which are *strictly religious*, as distinguished in the fourth commandment?

Were an equal amount of time devoted to each, as required by the Jewish Church, and thus expressed by the poet:

“ Eight hours for labor,
Eight for devotion given,
Eight for refreshment ;
But all for God and heaven ”—

would not God abundantly bless the labors of

his people, both for their bodily and spiritual good, and for the more rapid progress of his cause on earth? Who can doubt this?

OBJECTION V.

All are not gifted with equal energy and skill in business, or engaged in occupations equally productive; and if the poor brother, with a limited income, were to spend one-half of his time in religious exercises, how could he provide for himself and a dependent family?

We answer: If the Church were thus to improve the means of grace, with humble and prayerful dependence on the blessing of God, it would expand her bosom with enlarged benevolence, and result as with the Israelites in the wilderness, when they went out to gather manna. "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." This *was* the result in the Christian Church, while she maintained her daily walk with God in his own ordinances. "There was none among them that lacked, for distribution was

made unto every man as he had need." But should such a distribution of the avails of labor meet the temporal wants of the Church, still another obstacle may be urged, even by those who are deeply interested in the great work of the world's conversion to God.

It may be stated as in

OBJECTION VI.

The Christian Church is in circumstances very different from the Jewish. They were required to provide only for their own wants as a distinct people, and sustain the institutions of religion among themselves. But Christ opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, and required his Church to preach the gospel to every creature, and plant its institutions in every land. A great part of this work remains to be done. Six hundred millions are still perishing without the gospel. If this work were all accomplished — if the Church of Christ filled the earth, adorned with the beauties of holiness, and rejoicing in the constant smile of divine favor — from four to six or eight hours

in a day of labor for the body, might be all-sufficient. But in the present state of the world, surely more than this is required; and without it, how can the great work of evangelizing the nations be carried forward?

Answer: *Easily*—with the blessing of God. And for the proof, I appeal to facts in the history of the past. We have seen that God released his ancient people from toil for the body *one-half of the time*; and yet he required of them *one-half of their annual income* to sustain religious ordinances, and for the relief of the poor. By these enactments God designed to bring his people into habitual communion with himself, and cultivate in them the spirit of enlarged benevolence, that they might participate with himself in the luxury of doing good, and thereby be enabled, from their own experience, to bear testimony to a selfish world that “*it is more blessed to give than to receive.*” And his providential arrangements with his people were directed to the same end. Hence he told them, “The poor shall never cease out of the land. And thou shalt not harden thine heart nor shut thine hand against thy poor

brother. But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him, because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto." This promise secured to them the blessing of God in all they did, both for the soul and body, for time and eternity. Thus, while God required of his people the spirit of enlarged benevolence, he guaranteed to them in the way of obedience both the means and the opportunity for its daily cultivation. And his design was to educate them into his own blessed image, and thus raise them to participate in his own infinite felicity — the felicity of doing good. Hence in obedience they were richly blessed.

Now look at another fact, recorded in New Testament history. The spirit of enlarged benevolence required of the ancient Church was actually exemplified in the primitive Christians, and the promised blessing was realized in their daily experience. While "*daily* in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach

and preach Jesus Christ," and to commemorate his dying love, multitudes were "*daily* added to the Church of such as should be saved." They were also blessed with abundant provision for their temporal wants. It is said, "Great grace was upon them all. And all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and in breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." And so long as "all that believed were together, continuing daily to unite in the worship of God in Christ, and commemorate his dying love, their earthly possessions and all the avails of their daily labor were cheerfully consecrated to him, and held in trust as a common fund to be dealt out "to every man as he had need." Faithful to their trust as the stewards of Christ, there was no call for miracles to supply the daily wants of his household. His treasury was kept full and overflowing, even to his *ene-*

mies as well as his *friends*. For this we have their united testimony in chapt. III., pp. 41-44.

Thus, in the figurative language of Paul to the Hebrews, (13 : 10-16,) Jesus Christ was set forth as an altar in the primitive Church, on which two sorts of sacrifices were daily offered, viz., "the sacrifice of *praise*," including all the acts of devotion, and the sacrifice of *charitable actions*. Neither can be accepted alone ; but when both are united, "with such sacrifices God is well pleased." With such sacrifices his people were richly blessed for more than three centuries, and their influence was powerful ; rapidly diffusing the savor of the gospel over the whole earth.

With such sacrifices, the cause of Christ is destined again to rise, and gain that complete, universal, and permanent triumph predicted in the 72d Psalm, "when prayer shall be made for him *continually*, and *daily* shall he be *praised*. And to him shall be given of the *gold* of Sheba. The kings of the islands shall bring *presents*, and offer *gifts*. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him ; all nations shall *serve* him. His name shall be continued as long as the sun,

and men shall be *blessed* in him. All nations shall call him blessed.”

Let the Church now adopt the Bible standard of duty as exemplified in the primitive Christians, and resume her daily walk with God in his own ordinances, consecrating *time*, and *property*, and *personal effort* to the cause of Christ, and who can doubt that not only the poor would be provided for and gospel institutions sustained at home, but *missionary effort* would be increased a thousand fold for the world's conversion to God.

The danger of accumulated wealth, “kept for the owners thereof to their hurt,”* would be regarded, as it really is, an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of salvation. “How *hardly* (says Christ) shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”—an obstacle so great that to remove it (he declares) is impossible with men, and *only possible* even with God.†

* Eccl. 5: 13. † Luke 18: 24-27.

If this teaching of Christ were really believed, who could make it the great business of his life to *heap up riches* for himself and his children? like expending his time and energy in "building up a great wall to keep his whole family out of heaven." How can this wall be broken down — this mighty obstacle removed — that the way to heaven may be as easy to the rich as the poor? Though *impossible* with men, one way in which it *is* possible with God is to take away their wealth, that they may no longer be tempted "to trust in uncertain riches," and be led to "trust in the living God." Many who were once rich have been thus saved, "yet so as by fire." Another method is to press their conscience with the claims of the gospel, and give them no rest until they yield to the divine will, and cheerfully consecrate their wealth to Christ, consenting to be *only stewards* in his household, (like Joseph in the house of Potiphar,) using the goods entrusted to them for the honor of his name and the advancement of his cause in the world. Had the young man who came to Christ seeking direction in the way to eternal life *consent-*

ed to do this, he would not have gone away *sorrowful*, but rather *rejoicing* in the prospect of abundant *usefulness* opened to him in this world, and of inexhaustible treasures and a crown of glory unfading in heaven.

Were this doctrine of stewardship now to control the practice of the Church, as it did the primitive Christians, instead of depending mostly, as we now do, on the contributions of the poor and those of limited means, the abundance of the rich would flow into the treasury of the Lord, and soon furnish means sufficient to publish the gospel to all the perishing millions of our fallen race.

From such a door of escape from their peril, and of abundant usefulness, open to the rich, we fear indeed that many now in the Church, like that young man, will turn away *sorrowful*, preferring *earthly* to *heavenly* treasure. But with the Bible standard of duty maintained in the Church, they would no longer delude themselves with the vain hope of heaven, nor dishonor Christ, as his professed friends, by bestowing upon his cause a mere pittance of their income, while they withhold their *abund-*

ance for their own selfish purposes. Nor would any of the children of the covenant be led, by the example of their parents and other church-members, to make *gain* their god, or *squander* the goods entrusted to their stewardship in useless expenditure upon their lusts. But, under the influence of a daily walk with God in his own ordinances, they would be early led to Jesus, and filled with his Spirit, and trained up in the good work of the Lord; like the primitive Christians, testifying to all around them, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto *themselves*, but unto *him that died* for them and rose again." Thus constrained by the love of Christ, they would go or send out into all the world, teaching and exemplifying his blessed gospel, and "daily walking in all his commandments and ordinances blameless."

With a standard of piety thus active, pure, and elevated, the Church of Christ would "look forth as the morning," breathing the fragrance of light and love over all the nations, and they

would soon be seen flowing to him, "bringing their silver and their gold with them to beautify the place of his sanctuary," and make his name glorious in all the earth.

Not in vain did the Lord of glory come down and "redeem us to God by his blood." Not in vain did he reascend to occupy the mediatorial throne as "Head over all things to his Church." The object of his mission will assuredly be accomplished; for he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Already, under the guidance of his infinite wisdom, the improvements in agriculture and the mechanic arts, and the progress of labor-saving inventions, have lightened our toil for the body by performing the work of *many days in one*. And in a vastly greater ratio have they lightened our toil for the bread of life. What if all our Bibles, and tracts, and religious papers, and books now flooding the world, were to be written out with a pen, as in the days of the Apostles and primitive Christians? How vast the labor of furnishing the bread of life to the perishing millions of

our race! But with the power of the press, and the improvements connected with it, once the labor of *years* is now performed in *a day!* And when the Church shall awake and exert all her energies for Christ, he will soon triumph over opposition, and introduce the millennial glory of his reign. The earth will again bloom in the beauty of Eden, and bring forth in abundance, like the garden of the Lord. Yes,

“Sure as his truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.”

Away, then, with our unbelief. Be it the great business of the Church here to prepare herself and others for a better and brighter world! Let her example correspond with her creed, and thus bear convincing testimony that *the soul is man's chief concern*. Then, under the government of the Prince of Peace, no miracle will be needed to deliver our whole race from all that oppressive care and toil for the body which interferes with the intellectual

and moral culture of the immortal spirit, its eminent preparation for heaven, and for its onward progress in knowledge and happiness through interminable ages!

CHAPTER IX.

INFERENCES.

WHY REVIVALS DECLINE

IN reviewing this subject we learn,
1. Why it is that revivals are of so short continuance, and often succeeded by a long night of spiritual slumber.

It is not because the means of God's appointment are insufficient to keep the Church awake and active, growing in grace, and constantly gathering the spiritual harvest; nor is it because God ever fails to bless those means, when faithfully used. "His arm is not shortened or his ear heavy," that he cannot hear and constantly bless the labors of his people. And hence he assures them, "They that wait upon the Lord *shall renew their strength*. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and *not be weary*; they shall

walk and *not faint.*" A cloud of witnesses have testified, from their own experience, to the truth of this. Job says: "He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Paul says: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. For this cause we *faint not*; even though our outward man perish, yet our *inward man is renewed day by day.*" This is the natural effect of a *daily walk with God in his own ordinances.* No one can thus abide in communion with Christ, beholding his glory and having fellowship with him in his self-denial for the good of others, without finding his soul invigorated and transformed more and more into his holy image. Hence the exhortation to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye *know* that your labor is not vain in the Lord." All who have tried it *know* this. And, for the encouragement of all, Inspiration declares, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." A state of

revival is therefore the natural state of the Church. She is necessarily in that state, while walking with God, steadfast in his covenant. Why, then, is not the Church always found in this state, growing in grace and gathering the spiritual harvest? It is because she has fallen away from the Bible standard of Christian duty. In devoting themselves to Christ, her members did not even *intend*, like the primitive Christians, so to renounce the world and take up the cross as to become *daily laborers* for Christ in gathering his spiritual harvest; or, if they did, they failed to carry out this *intention*, and, being led by those in the Church before them, they entered upon the fruitless effort to serve God and mammon; and soon found they had left their "first love" and been drawn away by the cares of this world and its perishing vanities. If truly converted, they deplore their backslidden state and unfitness to pray and labor for the good of souls. And they sometimes struggle to regain the freshness of their first love. But they struggle almost in vain, not being aware of the true cause of the difficulty. And why? They have grown

up under the impression that man's *chief business* in this life is to take care of the body and labor for those things which perish with the using. This impression has been strongly fixed in their minds by witnessing, from their earliest recollection, the example of their parents and of church-members generally. Following this example, they find a *constant tendency to backslide* and become worldly-minded. And they witness and deplore the same in others as well as in themselves. But still they continue their business arrangements, not after the model of the apostolic Church, nor even of a Church now in a revival state, but rather in accordance with a state of spiritual slumber, devoting but mere fragments of their time and strength to the momentous concerns of the soul.

Hence, when aroused by an influence sent down from above, and brought into a revival state, they are led by the Spirit to engage more frequently, as well as more fervently, in the private and public exercises of religious worship and edification. This increased effort for the honor of Christ in the salvation of souls

breaks in upon their business arrangements, and they soon find their worldly cares so pressing that many are led to think it their *duty* to "forsake the assembling of themselves together," that they may meet the calls of business and take care of their property. They wish the revival to continue; hope it will—but *MUST be excused*, for they have neither time nor strength to attend the meetings or put forth the efforts which God is blessing for the progress of his work. Their example counteracts the influence of others, and weakens their faith. And thus, by degrees, they return to their former routine of christian duty, and settle down at ease, with that amount of *time* and *effort* devoted to the means of grace for the salvation of souls, which the experience of ages, and their own experience, has *proved insufficient* either to keep the Church awake or to secure the blessing of God in gathering the spiritual harvest.

No wonder the Spirit is grieved, and so few are converted, and converts lose their first love, and such long, dark nights of spiritual slumber brood over the Churches; while the millions, even in christendom, are perishing!

MEANS OF A CONTINUED REVIVAL.

We learn,

2. When to expect a continued revival in the Church — a revival which shall result in subduing the whole world to the sceptre of Christ, and perpetuate his triumphant reign on earth. This happy period, foretold by the prophets, will assuredly come; but not until Christians come out from the world and remodel all their arrangements of business and pleasure, on the principle of their professed belief that the *soul*, and its preparation for eternity, is *man's chief concern and the great business of his present life*. Then they will have *time and strength daily* to wait upon the Lord in his ordinances, as the primitive Christians did; and lay themselves out on the altar of God as living sacrifices, devoted to prayer and effort for the world's conversion to Christ. Then the spirit of primitive christianity will reanimate the Church. She will put off her sack cloth, in which she has mourned for 1260 years, and again put on the armor of light and

the garments of salvation. "The glory of the Lord will be seen upon her." She will "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." The scene of Pentecost will revisit the earth, and overspread the world. And, under the Spirit's influence, "poured upon all flesh," the triumphant reign of Christ will be introduced and perpetuated, and earth become the vestibule of heaven.

CHAPTER X.

THE APPEAL.

WE close with an appeal to Christians of every denomination.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, *when* and *where* shall this work begin? Will you arrange your worldly business in accordance with it, as soon as practicable, and let nothing interfere with your entire consecration to him who bought you with his blood? Will you seek the Lord earnestly in the closet, and set your houses in order, and thus, like the primitive Christians in that upper room, come together *daily* and "continue with one accord in prayer and supplication" for such a baptism of the Spirit that you may henceforth enjoy his constant presence with you, not as a "wayfaring man" who comes to tarry for a night or a little sea-

son, but to take up a permanent abode in your hearts, and mould your whole souls into the image of Jesus, and employ you in the blessed work of a constant revival of religion among you—a revival like that of Pentecost, when “daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ, the Lord working with them, and adding to the Church daily such as should be saved.” O, how soon would such a revival bring all your unconverted children and youth, and the perishing multitude around you, into the fold of Christ! How rapidly, like that at Jerusalem, would it spread over all the region, and encourage other churches, and still others, to arise and work for Christ and gather the spiritual harvest? How greatly would such a revival enlarge and beautify our beloved Zion? How would “the glory of the Lord be seen upon her!” and thus her light would go forth as brightness, and shine with increasing splendor, until it mingles with the flood of glory which shall introduce and perpetuate Messiah’s triumphant reign on earth.

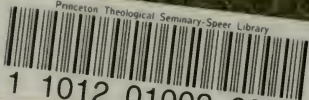
Dearly beloved, shall this blessed work begin with us? Shall it begin now? The Lord is "*waiting* to be gracious." Truly, "He is long-suffering to usward—not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Now, after *so long a time*, he still repeats the call to his people, and, with moving compassion to a dying world, he sounds it long and loud in their ears: "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me now herewith if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Shall such a blessing be yours? It is infinitely rich. It cost the amazing sacrifice of Calvary! It is proffered freely, and urged upon your acceptance. Will you consent to receive it on the terms proposed? Or, do you dislike the terms, and choose rather to slumber on, and still longer try the patience of God, and grieve his Holy Spirit, and hold back the blessing from a dying world! and thus let other generations, and even your own children, go down to darkness and swell the wailings of the lost!!

These solemn questions we must soon meet in judgment. Oh! that the present generation of Christians might prepare to meet them with joy, and thus unite with all heaven in the song of triumph over a renovated world!

THE END.

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