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SERMONIC.

ALL THINGS MADE NEW.

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And He that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new.—Rev. xxi: 5.

THERE is a good time coming for this world. We call it, variously, the millennium, the latter-day glory, the Sabbath of the earth. Amid the darkness and gloom which arise from the contemplation of human woe, the Church in every age has been taught to look with fond anticipation to the future, when the mischiefs of the fall in Adam will be retrieved by the renovation of all things in Christ.

In the wonderful visions vouchsafed to the exiled apostle in Patmos was a prophetic view of this renewed and glorified world, under the figure of the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven, accompanied by the Divine proclamation cited in the text—“Behold, I make all things new.” It is the promise of a day fairer than any that has yet been seen on earth, when the evils which have hitherto afflicted it shall be abolished, and universal peace and holiness shall bless the world.

In considering a promise of so much interest, toward whose fulfilment we now seem to be making some visible and rapid progress, let us direct our view to three points:—

1. The methods by which God will effect the purpose mentioned.
2. The progress which has already been made in it.
3. The outlook as to its completion.

I. The methods by which God will fulfil His purpose to make all things new.

Two theories prevail. The first we may call the *miraculous*. It is assumed that the prophetic language relating to it is to be taken literally. Christ now, ere long, is suddenly to burst into view in a visible and bodily form, in the clouds of heaven. The righteous dead are to be raised in the bodies which had been laid in the grave. The earth is then to be set on fire and all the evil in it burned up, as if it were a mass of material filth. The sun, moon and stars, with all the mighty universe above and around us, are to pass away with a great noise. The earth and the heavens are then to be re-created. In that new world the mountains will be found

[* The first several sermons are reported in full; the remainder are given in condensed form. Every care is taken to make these reports correct; yet our readers must not forget that it would be unfair to hold a speaker responsible for what may appear in a condensation, made by another of his discourse.—Ed.]

the Mount Vernon of Boston. Their example, in this respect, should be imitated by churches in other cities. If mission-work of this kind be faithfully followed up, when these men return to China they will go to live and teach the Gospel to their countrymen, and wonderfully help our missionaries there in their work of evangelizing China.

III. Encouragements: 1. Amicable treaty relations to regulate trade and immigration. 2. Present religious progress. 3. Future hope. Dr. Legge, the professor of Chinese, thinks that thirty years from now, at the present rate of conversions, there will be twenty-six millions of church members and one hundred million professing Christians in the Chinese empire.

IV. References: For light on the subject, consult the missionary monthlies; Dr. S. Wells Williams' paper on "Chinese Immigration," as read before the Social Science Association at Saratoga, September 10, 1879, and an article in "The Boston Book Bulletin" for March, 1880.

Peoria, Ill.

SCRIPTURAL METHOD OF GIVING.

BY REV. W. T. WYLIE.

"THE gold and the silver is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts." We are to honor the Lord with our substance, as well as with our bodies and spirits, our time and our talents.

The subject of Christian giving demands the careful and prayerful attention of the Church to-day. Bible teachings need to be understood and applied in order that the people of God may claim God's promise of blessing to those who faithfully "do whatsoever He commands."

Two things demand attention—namely,

BIBLE PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF GIVING.

We note some points as to principles. The Word of God teaches:—

1. That *each* should be a giver.
2. That giving of our substance is *worship*.

3. That each should give a fixed portion (a tithe at least) of his income; also free-will offerings.

4. That each should give cheerfully.

5. That each should give according to his ability.

6. That each should give systematically.

7. That each should give with "forethought."

8. That each should give in a worshipful spirit, "laying by on the first day of the week."

In a multitude of cases in our churches, no effort is made to educate or train the people in these principles. As a consequence:—

1. Very many give nothing.

2. The idea of "worship" is not associated with giving.

3. There is no setting apart of any fixed portion or proportion for the Lord.

4. Gifts are offered as calls happen to be made, or as impulse and convenience prompt.

5. Personal prosperity is no guide to the measure of liberality in giving.

6. The poor and middle classes are actually educated not to give.

7. The *average* contributions of all our churches are pitifully small—less than one cent a day for all objects of beneficence.

THE CAUSE OF THIS CONDITION of the Church in a large degree results from the lack of the adoption of a *proper method* of giving. A proper system must be:—

Simple—so that all can readily understand it.

Thorough—so *not one* person will be overlooked or left to skulk; and—

Flexible—so it may be adjusted to the varied and ever-changing circumstances of individuals and congregations.

The teachings of the Bible demand the adoption of such *system or method*, in order that the *principles* taught may be carried out. Such a system, for instance, as the Bellefonte, which has been carried into effect, in some degree, in hundreds of churches; and which wherever intelligently and faithfully

adopted, has largely increased the gifts of the churches, and greatly promoted spiritual results.

And as this system, after being practically tested, has received the cordial endorsement of many pastors, we append an

EXPLANATION OF THE PLAN.

Two objects are to be provided for:—

THE SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL; THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

“SUPPORT” includes: pastor’s salary, wages of sexton, light, fuel, repairs, insurance, etc., and it is well to add the support of the Sabbath-school.

THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL includes all the causes of benevolence which the Church contributes to, as foreign missions, home missions, freedmen, etc., Bible, tract, and other causes.

CARDS ARE PRINTED representing each of these objects; or, one card may present support on one side, and benevolent work on the other.

In preparing the card for *support*, estimate the amount needed for the year—divide this by 365, and you have the amount required for each day. Divide this by the *number of communicants*, and you have the average per day for each. Some can give more than this, others less; but the contributions of friends and adherents will almost certainly secure the average required.

On the card for benevolence no estimate is made, but each is asked to give as God enables him. In this work every adherent and friend is invited to join. The total of this fund may be divided by the officers of the church as they deem best, or the *giver may direct all or part of his gift to such channels as he thinks best.*

The cards should be placed in the hands of EVERY PERSON, old and young, rich and poor, parents and children. When each has signed his card, stating what he will give, the cards are returned to the treasurer, who ENTERS IN THE TREASURER’S BOOK each name and subscription. Then the treasurer returns to each person his card, together with twelve small envelopes—one for each month. One package is marked

“SUPPORT;” the other package of twelve envelopes is marked “BENEVOLENCE.”

“EACH PERSON’S BUSINESS” is to place the amount of his subscription for the month in the envelope marked for that month, and drop it into the box provided for this purpose. The treasurer then opens the envelopes and credits each on his book, and thus the machine works from month to month.

In case some members of the church fail to return their cards promptly, they should be called upon by a committee of church officers.

Not one member should be left without being enrolled, as giving, if only one cent a day, or a fraction of a cent.

ADVANTAGES SECURED.—Among other advantages, the following are secured by the Bellefonte system:—

1. Thorough organization of the church. Each member is called to report for duty.
2. Each gives in the easiest way, little by little, day by day.
3. The officers of the church know the exact condition of the work of the individual members in the support and spread of the Gospel.
4. Each member is called to exercise his conscience and act habitually as in God’s sight.
5. Daily thought and prayer are directed to our first great work of advancing the Lord’s cause.
6. The young people and the children are trained under this system as Christian givers.
7. This system furnishes an easy and sure method of carrying into practice Bible teachings on this subject of “honoring the Lord with our substance.”

COST.—For a congregation of one hundred or two hundred members, the cost of cards, envelopes and treasurer’s book, need not exceed ten to fifteen cents a member, and this is absolutely nothing in comparison with the gain.

A letter on this subject addressed to me, with stamped and addressed envelope, will receive attention.

Butler, Pa.