

SUNDAY READING.

THE GLAD ASSURANCE.

oft in hours of pain and conflict Come these gracious words to me, Full of tenderness and pity— "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

THE FRIENDS OF JESUS.

SERMON, PREACHED BY PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John 15: 14. Our Lord does not, I think, in this text speak to us about his being our friend, but about our being his friends.

THE HIGHEST HONOR.

Beloved, it is the highest honor in the world to be called the friend of Christ. There is no title surely that exalts in dignity that which was won by Abraham, who was called "The friend of God."

Jesus values his friends, not by what they have, or what they wear, but by what they do. That is the point by which your friendship shall be tested: "If you are obedient you are my friends."

I. Let us come to the subject more closely, and notice first, that our Lord himself tells us

WHAT OBEEDIENCE HE REQUESTS

from those who call themselves his friends. True friends are eager to know what they can do to please the objects of their love; let us gladly hearken to what our adorable Lord now speaks to the select circle of his chosen. He asks of one and all obedience. It must be active obedience, notice that. Abstinence from evil is a great part of righteousness, but it is not enough for friendship.

AN OLD SAYING,

"He is my friend who grinds at my mill." That is to say, friendship shows itself in doing helpful acts, which prove sincerity. Fine words are mere wind, and go for nothing if not backed up with substantial deeds of kindness.

This obedience must also be universal. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." No sooner is anything discovered to be the subject of a command than the man who is a true friend of Christ, "I will do it, and he does."

THE TEST

is very comprehensive, "If ye do whatsoever I command you." I do not mean that little things are unimportant; far from it! If there be a gnat that God bids you strain at, strain it out with great diligence; do not let a midge escape you!

he bids you remove it. Here is the proof of your love. Will you do the smaller thing for Jesus as well as the more weighty matter? Too many say, "I do not see any use in it, I can be saved without it; there are a great many different opinions on the point," and so on. All this cometh of evil, and is not consistent with the spirit of friendship with Christ, for love pleases even in trifles.

Note well, that this obedience is to be rendered as to Christ himself. Put the emphasis on the little word: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." We are to do these things because Jesus commands them. Does not the royal person of our Lord cast a very strong light upon

THE NECESSITY OF OBEEDIENCE?

When we refuse to obey a command we refuse to do what the Lord himself commands. We are to act rightly because Jesus commands us, and we love to do his pleasure; there can be no friendship without this. Oh for grace to serve the Lord with gladness.

To close this first point, it appears that our Lord would have us obey him out of friendly spirit. Obedience to Christ as if we were forced to do it under pain and penalties would be of no worth as a proof of friendship; every one can see that. He speaks not of slaves, but of friends; he would not have us perform duties from fear of punishment or love of reward; that which he can accept of his friends must be the fruit of love. His will must be our law because his person is our delight. Some professors need to be whipped to their duties; they must hear stirring sermons, and attend exciting meetings, and live under pressure; but those who are Christ's friends need no spur but love. "The love of Christ constraineth us." When duty becomes delight and precepts are as sweet as promise, then are we Christ's friends, and not till then.

II. Having thus set forth what kind of obedience Christ requests, I now notice, in the second place, that our Lord leads us to gather from this sentence that those who do not obey him are

NO FRIENDS OF HIS.

He who does not do his commandments cannot be Christ's friend, because he is not of one mind with Christ: that is evident. Can two walk together except they be agreed? True friendship exists not between those who differ upon first principles, and there can be no points of agreement between Jesus Christ and the man who will not obey him. They are not of one mind; Christ is for holiness, this man is for sin; Christ is for spiritual-mindedness, this man is carnal-minded; Christ is for love, this man is for self; how can there be any friendship when they are diametrically opposed in design, object, and spirit? It is not possible.

He who obeys not Christ cannot be Christ's friend, though he may profess to be. He may be a very high and loud professor, and for that reason he may be all the more an enemy of the Cross; for when men see this man walking according to his own lusts they cry out, "Thus also wast with Jesus of Nazareth," and they attribute all his faults to his religion, and straightway begin to blaspheme the name of Christ. Through the inconsistent conduct of our Lord's professed friends his cause is more hindered than by anything else. Suppose you and I had some very intimate associate who was found drunk in the street, or committing burglary or theft, should we not feel disgraced by his conduct? When he was brought before the magistrate would you like to have it said, "This person is the bosom friend of So-and-so?" Oh, you would cover your face and beg your neighbors never to mention it. For such a fellow to be

KNOWN AS YOUR FRIEND

would compromise your name and character. We say this even weeping, that Jesus Christ's name is compromised, and his honor is tarnished among men by many who wear the name of Christian without having the spirit of Christ: such cannot be his dear companions.

Those that obey him not cannot be owned by Jesus as his friends, for that would dishonor him indeed. The title of "friends of Jesus" goes with a certain character, and cannot be otherwise obtained. Those are his friends who obey him:—"If ye love me keep my commandments." He grants this patent of nobility to all believers who lovingly follow him, but on his list of friends he enters none beside. Do you not see that his honor requires this? Would you have our Lord stand up and say, "The drunkard is my friend? Would you hear him say, 'This fraudulent bankrupt is my intimate companion! Would you have Jesus call friendly companionship with the vicious and profane? A man is known by his company; what would be thought of Jesus if his intimate associates were men of loose morals and unrighteous principles? To go among them for their good in one thing, to make them his friends is another."

III. Our third observation is: those who best obey Christ are

ON THE BEST TERMS

with him. "Ye are my friends," he seems to say, "and live to me, enjoying practical personal friendship, and daily intercourse with me, when you promptly obey." Some of you know by personal experience, brothers and sisters, that you cannot walk in holy converse with Christ unless you keep his commandments. There is no feeling of communion between our souls and Christ when we are conscious of having done wrong and yet are not sorry for it. If we know that we have sinned, as we often do, and our hearts are weak because we have grieved our beloved, and we go and tell him our grief and confess our sin, we are still his friends, and he kisses away our tears, saying, "I know your weakness: I willingly blot out your offences. There is no breach of friendship between us; I will manifest myself to you again."

be any happy friendship between us and our Saviour. If conscience has told you dear brother, that such and such a thing ought to be given up, and you continue in it, the next time you are on your knees you will feel yourself greatly hampered, and when you sit down before your open Bible and hope to have communion with Christ as you have formerly enjoyed it, you will find that he has withdrawn himself, and will not be found by you. Is there any wonder? If sin lieth at the door how can the Lord smile on us? Secret sin will poison communion at the fountain head.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Oh, beloved, see to this! Under all the crosses, and losses and trials of life there is no comfort more desirable than the confidence that you have sinned at doing your Lord's will. If a man

SUFFERS FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

while steadily pursuing the course of holiness, he may rejoice in suffering. They may call the faithful one fanatic, and enthusiast, and such ill-sounding names; but over these there is no need to fret for the honor of being Christ's friend infinitely outweighs the world's opinion. When we follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth he is responsible for results; we are not. The consequences which follow from our doing right belong to God. Abhor the theory that for the sake of a great good you may do a little wrong. I have heard men say, ay and Christian men too, "if I were strictly to follow my convictions I should have to leave a post of great usefulness, and therefore I remain where I am, and quiet my conscience as well as I can. I should lose opportunities of doing good, which I now possess, if I were to put in practice all I believe, and therefore I remain in a position which I could not justify on any other ground." Is this according to the mind of Jesus? Thousands of people sin because it seems so advantageous, so wise, so necessary, so sure to turn out well. Hear what Christ says:—"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." If you do evil that good may come you cannot walk with him, but if your heart is set toward his statutes you shall find him loving you, and taking up his abode with you.

IV. By our text we are taught that

THE MOST FRIENDLY ACTION

a man can do for Jesus is to obey him. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Rich men have thought to do the most friendly act possible toward Christ by giving an immense sum to build a church, or to found an almshouse or schools. If they are believers, and have done this thing as an act of obedience to Christ's law of stewardship, they have well done, and the more of such munificence the better, but where splendid benefactions are given out of ostentation, or from the idea that some merit will be gained by the consecration of a large amount of wealth, the whole business is unacceptable. Jesus not asks lavish expenditure, but ourselves. He has made this the token of true love: "Ye do whatsoever I command you." To bring our wealth and not to yield our heart is to give the casket and steal the jewel.

Others have imagined that they could show their friendliness to Christ by some remarkable action of self-mortification. Among Romanists, especially in the old times, it was believed that misery and merit went together, and so men tortured themselves that they might please God. They went for many a day without washing themselves or their clothes, and fancied that they thus acquired the odor of sanctity. I do not believe that Jesus thinks a man any more his friend because he is dirty. Some have put on a hair shirt, or have worn

A CHAIN GIRDLER,

which made wounds. I do not think that the kind Lord Jesus counts these things to be friendly acts. Ask any humane person whether he would be gratified by knowing that a friend wore a hair shirt for his sake, and he would answer, "Pray let the poor creature wear whatever is most comfortable to him, and that will please me best." The loving Jesus takes no delight in pain and discomfort; the maceration of the body is no doctrine of his. When we hear of the nuns of St. Ann sleeping bolt upright in their coffins, we take no particular satisfaction in their doing so; a kind heart would beg them to go to bed. I went over a monastery some time ago, and over each bed was a little cut-of-nine tails, which I sincerely hope was used to the satisfaction of the possessor, but I did not copy the idea. Our Lord cannot be gratified by self-inflicted, self-invented tortures. Jesus Christ has not demanded this as the gauge of friendship, neither will he regard us as his friends for this. He says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Some think it a very friendly act towards Christ to attend many religious services in a consecrated building. They are at matins, and vespers, and

FEASTS AND FASTS

without regard to number. Some of us prefer to have our religious services each day in our own homes, and it will be a dreadful thing when family prayer is given up for public services; but a number of people think little of family devotion, they must needs repair to the parish church or to some other temple made with hands; but let no man dream that Jesus is thus made our friend. We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. It is well to be found meeting with God's people as often as we can; but still you may multiply your sacraments and increase your ceremonies, and you may attend to this service, and to the other service, until your heart is worn away with grinding at the mill of outward religion. Ye are Christ's friends, if ye do whatsoever he commands you: that is a better test than early communion or daily mass.

The practical outcome of it all is this: regard every question as to duty by the light of this one enquiry—Will this be a friendly action to Christ? If I do,

this shall I act as Christ's friend? Then I am glad. If it will dishonor him I will have nothing to do with it. You would not do anything unkind to him, would you? Certainly you would not do anything to grieve him if you saw him before your eyes. Well,

KEEP HIM ALWAYS BEFORE YOU.

You will want much of the Holy Spirit's anointing to do this. May God give it to you. Live, dear friends, as if Christ would come at once and detect you in the very act. Do that which you would not be ashamed of if the next instant you should see the Lord sitting on the throne of his glory, and calling you before his bar. Thus living, you shall delight yourself in the abundance of peace.

"So shall your walk be close with God. Calm and serene your frame; So pure light shall mark the road That leads you to the Lamb."

Obedience will gladden you with the blissful presence of your Lord, and in that presence you shall find fulness of joy. You shall be the envy of all wise men, for you shall be the beloved of the Lord; and your pathway, if it be not always smooth shall be always safe, for Jesus never leaves his friend, and he will never leave you, but he will keep you even to the end. May this be my happy case and yours. Amen.

NEWS ITEMS.

A distinct shock of earthquake was felt in Memphis, Tenn., at two o'clock yesterday morning.

Cardinal Manning, who was born in 1808, died quietly and without pain twenty minutes after eight Thursday morning.

The Duke of Clarence, the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, died yesterday at Sandringham, of influenza and pneumonia. He was 28 years of age.

Cardinal Simeoni, formerly Papal Secretary of State and Perfect-General of the Propaganda, died in Rome Thursday from influenza. He was 76 years of age.

Mr. McLennan, the Conservative candidate, was elected Thursday member of the House of Commons for Glengarry over Mr. McArthur, Liberal, by a majority of 336 votes.

The Montreal Citizens' League won its first victory yesterday against the lotteries, when Ephrem Lemoine was fined \$50 and costs for publishing, recommending, and advertising foreign lottery tickets.

It is stated that it is the intention of a prominent Quebec lawyer, in his quality of an elector of the province, to sue out a writ of injunction against the new Royal Commission appointed by the De Boucherville Government.

A report that a bridge will be built between a point near Kingston, Ont., and Jefferson county, New York, has rejoiced the hearts of farmers on Wolfe Island, who predict a greatly increased value for their farms if the project is carried out.

The Western Dairymen's Association closed its convention at Brantford yesterday. The meeting was well attended and highly successful, and it is believed that the dairy industry of the country will be much benefited by the information disseminated and the interest aroused.

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- The Churches. METHODIST, Cambridge St.—Rev. T. M. Campbell, Pastor. Services at 11 A.M., and 7.00 P. M. Sabbath School and Bible Class at 2.30. Classes at 10 A.M. Prayer Meeting, Wednesday at 8 P. M. Young People's Christian Endeavor Society, every Friday evening at 7.30. METHODIST, Queen Street.—Rev. Newton Hill, Pastor. Services at 11.00 A. M. and 7.00 P. M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P. M. Prayer Meeting Thursday at 7.30 P. M. BAPTIST, Cambridge Street.—Rev. W. K. Anderson, Pastor. Services at 11.00 A. M. and 7.00 P. M. Prayer Meeting Sabbath morning at 10.30 A. M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P. M. Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor Monday at 7.30 P. M. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 7.30 P. M.—All seats free. ST. ANDREW'S (Presbyterian), William Street. Rev. Robert Johnston, B. A., Pastor. Services at 11.00 A. M. and 7.00 P. M. Sabbath School at 3.00 P. M. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 8.00 P. M. Young People's Christian Circle Sabbath Morning at 10.15. ST. PAUL'S (Church of England) Russell Street.—Rev. C. H. Marsh, Rector. Services at 11.00 A. M. and 7.00 P. M. Sabbath School at 2.30. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 7.30 P. M. ST. MARY'S (Roman Catholic) Russell Street.—Rev. Vicar-General Lalor, Pastor, Rev. Father Nolan, Curate. Services at 8.00 and 10.30 A. M. and 7.00 P. M. Sabbath School at 3.30 P. M. Y. M. C. A., Rooms Cor. Kent and Cambridge sts. Open daily from 9.00 A. M. to 10.00 P. M. Prayer Praise Meeting Saturday at 8 P. M. Young men's meeting Sunday at 4.15 P. M. Short addresses, Good singing, Young men always welcome. Dr. W. H. Clarke, President; C. K. Calhoun, Gen. Secretary.

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THE MARCH OF IMPROVEMENT.

Art in the household and beauty in the ordinary surroundings in life was the gospel propounded by the late Professor Ruskin and other elevators of the human mind, and to realize what progress has been made in this direction it is well worth while paying a visit to the magnificent show rooms of the old established furniture house of Messrs.

OWEN MCGARVEY & Son.

1849-1853 Notre Dame Street.

MONTREAL.

A walk through those spacious show rooms is a revelation; in fact they really amount in themselves to a Montreal Industrial exhibition in their line. Such must necessarily be the reflections of anyone who pays a visit to this firm's prominent establishment and makes a tour of inspection through their attractive warerooms.

Everything in the furniture line is to be found there, from a twenty-five cent chair to a fifteen hundred dollar bedroom set, and prices to suit everyone.

No one need despair; the millionaire can furnish his house from top to bottom with the finest and most costly, and his junior clerk can fill his little tenement with useful and pretty articles at prices to suit his more limited means.

On entering the well-known and extensive warerooms on Notre Dame street, the visitor is struck by the excellent display of

Sideboards, Dining Tables, Hall stands, Bookcases, Wardrobes,

Library Tables, Writing Desks, and Easy and Combination Chairs of all descriptions.

On reaching the second floor a beautiful assortment of

PARLOR FURNITURE

meets the eye, such as 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 piece parlor suites. Odd piece suits, gilt chairs, corner chairs, ottomans, divans, tete-a-tetes, piano and foot-stools in plushes, brocatelles and silk damasks of all the newest and latest shades; also a full line of fancy centre, card and work-tables, statuette-stands, ladies writing desks, music stands and easels.

On the third floor a fine selection of Rocking, Easy and Reclining Chairs claims particular attention. The celebrated bent wood furniture imported from Vienna, Austria, and of which the Messrs. McGarvey make a specialty, also occupies a prominent position on this floor.

On the fourth floor bedroom sets in profusion are to be found from the cheap ash wood to the elegantly carved set valued at fifteen hundred dollars. Brass and iron furniture, of which they have just received a very large consignment from Birmingham, England, is an especially noticeable feature; handsome solid brass bedsteads and pretty cots for children from \$30 up to \$125—there they are of the newest designs: neat iron bedsteads as low as \$5, and rising to much higher figures, can also be found here. A great advantage in this house is that the price of every piece of furniture and article is marked in plain figures, but owing to the widening of Notre Dame street west, which will necessitate their removal next spring, they are now offering special inducements in the way of Discounts off the marked prices. The entire establishment is a model one, neatness and order prevailing everywhere; all available space is taken up to accommodate the enormous stock which they carry, and from which purchasers can select at their liberty. Their new passenger elevator will be found not only a great convenience, but also a luxury in its way to carry their customers to any of their six flats of show rooms.

The firmly established reputation of this well-known house is a sufficient guarantee that outside show is only the last thing aimed at, and that stability and good value for money are to be found in the old established firm of Messrs.

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