

SERMONETTE.

The Glorifying That Is Good.

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Text: Jer. 9:23, 24—"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord."

In these times of unrest and disturbance we could wish for the good services of such men as the prophets of old who, in the crowning years of the history of the Israelites came to them warning and admonishing them. It was not always an easy and convenient task and often the prophets were much discouraged and had just cause for despair, as Elias in the wilderness, and Jeremiah who again and again would take up his harp and instead of melodious and cheerful notes, he was made to bring forth the lamentations. Hear his wailing in this 9th chapt. v. 1: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, etc." Even though the masses would not be converted, there were yet a few who would hearken unto his warning voice. Perhaps it was well so, for the prophet might otherwise be tempted to pride himself in his particular calling and to glory in his successes. But he was resolved to glory only in the Lord, and to such glorying he admonishes, both the faithful of his people, and all Christians who are yet concerned about the right kind of glorying.

I. The negative side. "Let not the rich man glory in his riches." Does the man who gets his wealth through original claim, inheritance or gift deserve any special praise? An American writer tells of two millionaires who died in America about the same time. The one began his career with the resolve to become a noted and highly respected man by accumulating much wealth. There were but two thoughts prominent in his mind: *Self* and *Wealth*. The result was that in time he could think of nothing else. He soon became a mammon worshipper. The newspapers reported his death but without one word of praise. Few people had pity for him, and still less mourned for him. What a pity! The other man began life with the thought that a man's success is measured by the degree in which he is charitable to others and of service to the world. He considered his wealth as "goods in trust," and spent it in the erection and furnishing of a large

academy where young men and young women could prepare themselves for usefulness to others. Thousands of those whom he educated mourned at his death. His name is honored and his memory cherished because of his generosity. You can indeed have as an aim the securing of riches, but do not glory in their realization. Do not forget that riches are "goods in trust," and that the measuring of one's greatness lies in the degree in which we have been of service to others.

"Let not the mighty man glory in his strength." Where was Samson's strength after his head was shorn? In vain did Goliath boast of his strength when God delivered him into the hands of little David. Greek mythology tells of the giant athlete Antaeus who regained his strength by touching his mother—Earth. Whereupon Hercules lifted him up above the earth until his strength gradually failed him. So a mightier conquered the mighty. Who will boast of his own strength while we are constantly in the midst of temptations from within and from without? Peter tried it and fell, and so shall every one fall who glories in his own strength.

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." Think of the many discoveries and inventions which men have brought forth. Wonderful indeed! But that which was considered the greatest invention is, with the passing of the years, thrown into the scrap pile—the steam engine gives place to the electric motor. Newspapers only a day or two old, are thrown into the fire. A librarian once asked a medical professor which of his books might be placed on a back shelf. The professor replied, "All books older than ten years can be packed up." That does not mean that the newest is always the best. Even in our day men are looking about for a substitute for the Bible, which to them is out of date and old-fashioned. The Bible alone has wisdom, because "God is Wisdom, God is Love."

II. The positive side. "Let him that glorieth, glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth that I am the Lord." Of how much greater value then all earthly riches and attainments is the human soul. How terrible those words must sound in the ears of one seeking earthly things: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast gathered?" Thus the man who gathers earthly riches and is not rich in God. Lazarus was rich in God. With him, we, too, even in the greatest of poverty, can comfort ourselves with