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WHAT MAKES A HOUSE A HOME?

The International Sunday School Lesson for January 25th is: "Jesus Comforts His Disciples."—John 14:1-31.

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS

Few foreigners have ever set foot on the island of Patmos, although it is better worth visiting for its natural beauty than many a tourist "sight"; and the number of living Europeans and Americans who have seen the wonderful ruins of Ephesus may be counted by scores and hundreds, rather than by thousands. Both of these historic places have their greatest regard because of their relation to one man, John the Apostle. What he thought and saw and said and wrote there is more important than any of the Grecian ruins.

What somebody thinks there—perhaps the early impressions of a boy or girl in Sunday School—is a more significant fact about a neighborhood than the amount of wealth transacted there; or the erection of fine buildings; or the organization of convalescent camps. In every small town in Texas there is a chamber of commerce; and an exuberant local pride; but the growth of one great personality, the rise of a prophet, a dreamer, a poet, an inventor, means more than all the achievements over which "booster" organizations exult. Memories of St. John, and not of ancient temples and theatres and colonnades, draw the enterprising tourist to Ephesus to-day.

It was probably at Ephesus that John the aged wrote the latest book in the New Testament canon, the Fourth Gospel. The ripeness of his recollections seems to mellow the story as he tells it. In a sort of rare intimacy, millions of Sunday School members are gathering about the Beloved Disciple to discuss his memories of the Master.

An Old Preacher's Advice.

Once Dr. J. R. Miller, beloved of many of our readers, the world around, in palaces of royalty and in places of poverty, told me what when he first began his ministry an old clergyman said to him, "In every sermon you preach, speak some word of comfort. There is never a congregation that does not contain men and women who are in some sort of trouble."

While it needs instruction and correction and inspiration, this old world also needs, forever and fundamentally, consolation. "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness." Masked by smiles and by conventional conduct, there are secret sorrows in the souls of the majority of mankind. This is the first explanation of the prominent popularity of the Fourteenth Chapter of John's Gospel. It holds the comfort of Christ. In every Christian's Bible this passage is the most shambled; because it seems to admit the reader closest to the comprehending, compassionate spirit of the Saviour. When reason and logic and fortitude have done their utmost for the sorrowing soul, it still turns to the farewell words of Jesus for a real message of hope.

Any observer of the tendency of our times is bound to recognize that while we are exalting and institutionalizing Christianity, and magnifying its philosophical aspects, we are at the same time falling nowdays to stress the personal comfort of the Gospel. Christ as a solace and as strength for single souls is not preached as of yore. Do the churches argue about the Saviour more than they experience Him? When Christianity comes to be fundamentally a gospel of comfort for bruised and broken and bewildered human hearts it will lose all its hold upon humanity.

Shut Gates on the Open Road.

Sometimes an idea lodges in one's mind, and thereafter seems to find corroboration at every turn. Thus the contrast between the endlessness of the open road that Christ offers, and the shortness of the paths that the world provides, is almost uncanny. "Road Closed," the sign so familiar to motorists, seems to be thrust before one's eyes on almost every highway of life. We read political biographies of outstanding figures, and suddenly come upon the "Road Closed" notice of death. Look down every avenue of popular pleasure and, so near, there stands the inevitable "Road Closed!" We read in our "Success" literature of triumphant personalities, like Alexander the Great, and we find them all sharply broken off with a "Road Closed" sign, erected by death.

Not so with Jesus. When He came to sum up His teachings, and at the same time to comfort the breaking hearts of His bereaved comrades, He said:

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Speaking of valuable home remedies that every mother should always keep on hand, Nurse Carrington says: "I haven't met any preparation more dependable than 'Nerviline.' It is the ideal liniment; every drop rubs in—it is absorbed quickly, eases and relieves congestion in a short time. For chest colds, pain in the side, stiff neck, earache and toothache, I have found Nerviline invaluable. In treating the minor ills that arise in every home, nothing is more efficient than Nerviline."

For nearly fifty years Nerviline has been a household article in thousands of Canadian homes. Get a 35c. bottle to-day.

at once began to tell them of the open road that has no ending; but that stretches on throughout eternity. He is a Way with no "Road Closed!" signs. All His plans take into account two worlds. The only key to the riddle of life is the truth of immortality. There is not true comfort, and there is no real justice in human existence, unless a hereafter be postulated. It needs heaven to fulfill earth. The word of reassurance and promise that Jesus had for His intimate comrades in the farewell discourse of the upper room is still the word for which every human heart waits at the time of partings.

When a House Becomes a Home.

Outworn English has done sore damage to the teachings of Jesus at this hour of leave-taking and heart-break. The separation was more bitter for the Master than for His friends; because they understood it less, and because He was the finer spirit. So His comfort was a call to them to believe in Him, even as they believed in God. As proof that their faith was founded well, He uttered the great words: "In My Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

Now "mansion" is a word that to-day means the residence of the rich; the palace of pride; the showplace of luxury. Many a sermon has been preached by ignorant men upon the splendorousness of the mansions of glory. The appeal has been to carnal pride, to the class consciousness, to the lower instincts of mankind.

What sensible person really wants a mansion, here or hereafter? Let the gross-grained new rich go in for that folly; the sensitive-spirited sinner will have none of it. Nor did Jesus ever promise anything of the sort to His friends. When the King James Version of the Bible was made that word "mansion" meant "home"; the changing centuries have given it the baser meaning.

Far more meaningful (as the Greek text shows) was what Jesus really said. His family, His home, His fellowship, was about to suffer the fate of all earthly homes—for it is the fellowship of love that turns a house into a home—and the members to be scattered. So the comfort of Christ was based on the impermanency of all earthly dwellings, and the involability of heavenly abodes. A fair translation of the original text is: "In My Father's heaven are many homes that never break up." Not a whisper about mansions of splendor; it was permanency that Jesus stressed. On earth homes go to pieces; in heaven they last forever and for aye, with never a pang of heart-break over separation. In the Father's house are "many" homes that last; there is an abundance of room.

Folks Easy to Live With.

Every phrase of this great passage is a diamond mine of comfort. Thus, the casual, "were it not so, I would have told you," is as a window into all the unannounced and unpredictable goodness that Love has made ready. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." The surprises of heaven are all pleasant surprises for the Father's children.

All the exquisite, thoughtfulness and courtesies that make love precious and fragrant mark the way of Jesus with His friends. So He assured them that heaven would not be an unfamiliar place—like the difference between a magnificent hotel, coldly impersonal, and one's own home, with its dear faces and familiar fittings—but that He was going ahead to prepare a place for His followers. Heaven is fitted to its inhabitants. Most wonderful of all, though, Jesus Himself will be there.

Congenial company—love and truth triumphant—everybody easy to live with—no misunderstandings and no selfishness—that is heaven. Just as missionaries make happy homes in the remotest foreign lands, because the families are together and affection reigns; so Christ's presence is the assurance of the heavenlyness of heaven.

The Climax of Comfort.

Before an ambassador may be received, his credentials must be presented. His stupendous words of comfort were attested by Christ by an assertion of His own authority that challenged attention. He had the right to promise heaven because He was one with God.

Whittled-down of Christianity, who would make it a sugar-and-water thing, a shallow sentimentalism, a rather maudlin social code, simply have not read the Bible. Jesus claimed not merely divinity, but absolute identity with God. "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The climax of comfort is this: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

James Smith, Dalhousie, died on Jan. 6th. Deceased was 84 years of age. A widow and two children survive. He resided on a farm near the head of Lake Dalhousie for over fifty years. He was a faithful member of Elphinstown Presbyterian church for over forty years and was highly esteemed.

Thomas Bailey died on Monday in the Brockville General Hospital. He was in his 95th year. He served with the 155th Battalion.

A Cheering Cup first thing in the Morning!



The freshness of Rideau Hall Coffee does not "leak" from the tin, but because of the Vacuum Sealed Can goes direct to the cup. The freshest Coffee, with all its fresh-roasted flavor retained.

RIDEAU Hall Coffee wins greater popularity year by year because, first of all, it is selected in the great coffee markets of the world by our own experts. They know good coffee and they choose only the finest flavored quality.

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GOLDEN WEDDING DAY.

A Pictou Couple Celebrated the Day on Jan. 11th.

Pictou Times.

On January 11th, 1875, Mr. and Mrs. George L. Morden were united in marriage at the St. James Episcopal church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After spending a few days in Columbia, Ohio, they came to Canada and made their home in Bellefleur, where they resided for about fourteen years. Then they moved to their farm on Big Island, where they spent about 20 more years, when the declining health of Mrs. Morden compelled them to retire and they went back to Pittsburgh in 1913 to spend the remainder of their lives with their only daughter, Mrs. Frederick Spielman. Mr. Morden left his mother, Mrs. Emily Morden in Pictou, in July, 1919. Mrs. Morden, Sr., had a stroke, and Mr. Morden was called back to attend her. A month later, Mrs. Morden came back and they have been making their home at "The Cottage," Ontario street, since that time. On Saturday, Jan. 10th, 1925, the golden wedding was fittingly celebrated, and the afternoon and evening saw a godly number of neighbors and friends assembled to wish them many more years of wedded happiness and leave tokens of remembrance, which were many and beautiful, including both cut flowers, potted plants, china and glass, besides a goodly number of gold coins and other gold articles from friends living at a distance. Over fifty sat down to refreshments during the afternoon and evening. At 8.33 the climax was reached when the bride and groom of fifty years ago once more stood side by side before a minister of the gospel. This time their son-in-law, the Rev. Frederick Spielman, of Pittsburgh, Pa., performed a ceremony appropriate to the occasion, asking that, if any present could state any reason why they should not abide together another fifty years, they kindly suggest a better way. The charge was that they look not backward, but forward to the consummation of their troth. When asked for a renewal of their vows to encourage, love, honor and cherish one another, each replied in a clear voice, "I will."

LUMBERING AT ARDOCH.

Dr. Goodfellow Kept Busy—Visitors From Barriefield.

Ardoch, Jan. 19.—The lumbering industry is being carried on extensively by J. D. Flake. Several loads of lumber and ties are being hauled daily to Robertville siding. Dr. F. Goodfellow, McDonald's Corner, recently made frequent professional calls here. Those under his care are: Mrs. Lawrence Schonauer, Mrs. John Fraser, Lucy White and Joseph Schonauer. Miss Lottie McKinnon who has lately been employed in Perth is renewing acquaintances here. The concert given on Friday night under the management of Miss Lillian Rodgers, was heartily enjoyed. The Misses Mary and Tess McCulloch of McDonald's Corners, visited Miss Rose Fraser on Monday last. Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Smith, of Barriefield are on a two weeks vacation with the former's parents here. Miss Greta Schonauer spent a few days at Geo. Salmond's, Myer's Cave. Mrs. John Gilmour of Western Canada is on an extended visit with her daughter Mrs. Charles Smith.

At the advanced age of eighty-three years and six months, Mrs. Donald McTavish, Drummond township and a life-long Presbyterian, passed away. She was a sister of the late Judge McTavish, Ottawa.

Wet the earth-around ferns every three or four weeks with water in which a little household ammonia has been added in the proportion of a teaspoonful to a quart. This will keep them green and glossy.

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