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THE PLEASURES OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE

Rev. O. J. Chandler Preaches Sermon at Methodist Church Sunday.

Rev. O. J. Chandler of the Methodist Church preached the following sermon at the services Sunday morning. Mr. Chandler's text was:

"Rom. 14:19 Let us follow after the things that make for peace; and things whereby one may edify another."

"1 Cor 10:23. All things are lawful for me; but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."

Some Good Reasons.

There are several good reasons why I have selected these passages of the scriptures for our study this morning; but one will suffice, and that is, we are entering upon that season of the year when we are most active in intellectual pursuits and along social lines. We are planning our winter's work and winter's recreations.

This is the season of the year when the daylight is shortened and the darkness is lengthened out; the time when the distance between the hour for ceasing to labor and the hour for retiring is greatest. These long winter evenings are to be spent; and how to spend them is a matter that concerns us.

The people who have never named the name of Christ and are strangers to the love of God are planning to spend them in a way that will furnish enjoyment to those whose source of happiness is no higher than to extract it from the gaudy, giddy whirl and vanity fair of earthly amusements; and the tournament of entertainments that they are planning will lower the moral tone, and dull the moral sensibility of all who engage in them, and the community will be the worse from every point of view because of these wends of entertainments.

People of the Church.

But the people of the church must remember that theirs is a higher calling, and that they are invited to a more exalted fellowship; that they have been set to be ensamples to all those who are strangers to the holy associations to which they have been invited.

But while that is true, their evenings embrace as many as the evenings of the non-believers, and they must spend them wisely. Now because of their association with the church and the world, are these hours to be spent in idleness and strenuous, or in some recreation during the seasons of so-

I am sure that no one who has formed any just conception of the attitude of the Savior of the world toward his children will hold for a moment that the Christian's hours and days must all be strenuous and serious; but on the contrary, that all men must be able to see in the church the brightest and happiest and most joyous life of which this world knows anything about.

The church must plan its enjoyments, and times for the exchange of social courtesies. And because I appreciate the fact that the people of God may enjoy the highest privileges in this regard and because I want to help my people in selecting such pastime and social pleasures as are right and that tend to peace and whereby one may edify another, I want to discuss the theme, "The border land of the doubtful," or between the allowable and the harmful.

Is Not Personal.

I hardly think it necessary for me to say that I am not going to be personal. It is an easy thing to stand up in the pulpit and abuse people but quite another thing to help them to live better lives, and to give them such spiritual advice as will safeguard them in their actions.

Now, if there is one supreme peril that besets a Christian who is not willing to commit deliberate sin, it is in that which may properly be styled the border land of the doubtful, or between the allowable and the harmful.

A Peculiar Risk.

It is a difficult matter to get even a Christian to feel and see the peculiar risk which lies in an open question. But the risk is three fold. He is most sure to give himself the benefit of the doubt, and there is that in the fact that it is a question which of itself dulls the edge of spiritual sensibilities. Then he loses the capacity of always being pleasing to God.

The danger to the man who really wants to keep his hold on God, and his rights to the privileges of his church does not come in the form of things that are flagrantly wrong, but it comes in the form of the temptation to do the thing that at the time does not seem to be wrong, but when he more calmly considers his course he is convinced that it is on the carnal side of the line; in that form of conduct that admits of question. The things that may be lawful, but are not expedient. The things that may be lawful but do not edify.

Was Not Right to Say.

A Christian man does not have the right to say, I am going to pursue a certain course because it does not hurt me; he must remember that he is not the only man in the world, that there are others who may be injured by his conduct. Paul says here in effect meat will not hurt me, but if meat will wake

my brother stumble I will eat no meat. Better far that I should deny myself a little than destroy my neighbor eternally.

Gives a Final Rule.

But I must give you a final rule. It is always safest to choose the path which imposes self-denial rather than that which invites self-indulgence.

You may object to this and say that that makes our enjoyments a serious matter, and indeed it does; but all of life is serious and pleasure is unworthy to be the end of life.

HEROIC ELEMENTS OF TRUE FAITH

Dr. J. J. Porter Talks on True Heroism at the Baptist Church.

At the Baptist Church Sunday morning, Dr. J. J. Porter delivered an interesting and instructive sermon on "Some Heroic Elements of Faith." Dr. Porter's text was taken from the 11th chapter of Hebrews. A synopsis of his sermon is in part as follows:

"Paul had a religious ambition. He wanted to be a hero in the strife for God. He was strong in faith. The first element of faith is sacrifice as illustrated by Abel. By faith Abel offered unto God."

Service to God.

1. The humblest service when offered unto God is ennobled. The best picture of Murillo is the one representing an angel in the kitchen. An old blacksmith when he was making the sparks fly from his anvil said: "I am preaching the gospel to the regions beyond."

2. Abel offered such a sacrifice to God as he would accept. Cain, like the Pharisee who prayed unto himself, offered unto himself. "Did you not know Johnny that when you were eating these preserves," said a mother to her son, "that you were doing wrong?" "Yes, mam," he replied, "all the time I was eating, I prayed the Lord to forgive me."

One Life for Country.

3. "By faith, Abel being dead yet speaketh." Men will not let self-sacrifice die. Beneath the bronze statue of Nathan Hale of New York are these words: "I regret that I have only one life to lose for my country." True heroes like Abels, and Nathan Hale may be cut off while young, yet it can never die, but to die soon is to live long.

Second Element of Faith.

The Second Element of Heroic Faith is Continuance in Well Doing.

1. "Enoch walked with God." He did not contend that God should go his way, but he went God's way. Many agonize trying to bring God their way.

2. Enoch was a constant everyday hero. He walked all the time with God, and that is harder than to run or fly.

3. It is easy to be a hero on great occasions, as seen by Elijah on Mt. Carmel. Jonah was quite a hero in Nineveh. John Clough was a missionary hero when he baptized 10,000 Telugues in one year.

Walked With God.

4. Enoch's heroism is seen in that he walked with God while the multitudes walked away from God.

5. A colored man in the South was charged with stealing chickens. "What is your defense," asked the Judge? Well, replied Sambo, "I had a cook book which said take one chicken, it did not say whose chicken to take, nor where to take it, so I set out and took the first chicken I came to." That cook book was not authority in that court. So, the spirit of the age is not authority against the Bible.

Third Idea of Faith.

The Third Idea of Faith which we get from our lesson is fear.

"By faith, Noah moved with fear prepared an ark for the saving of his house." The fear of God makes a hero. Noah was a hero of the true type. I admire a man who is a hero in spite of his cowardice.

Napoleon said the difference between Marshal Ney, and Marshall Brune was, "Ney never knew danger, while Brune, conscious of his danger went trembling into battle, and still faced the enemy and death."

Our Fourth Element of Faith is illustrated by the Obedience of Abraham. "By faith when Abraham was tried he offered up Isaac." The command belongs to us and the promise of God. Charles Wesley said, "If God should give me wings I would fly." John Wesley said, "If God should bid me fly. I would attempt it and expect that God would give me wings."

Last Element of Faith.

The last element of heroic faith is, Self-Denial as Illustrated by Moses.

"By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, preferring to suffer the afflictions of the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

1. Moses felt that honor at the expense of virtue was dishonor.

2. A boy 14 years old was asked by a merchant, where he was clerking in a dry goods store, to stretch his cloth, this he refused to do and lost his position. The boy became Adam Clark.

3. The need of the age is faith to do right. To refuse all evil temptations then our heritage will be heroic faith with victory.

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