



FOR THE USE OF
CHURCH OFFICERS
IN THE VARIOUS RELATIONS OF
Evangelists, Pastors, Bishops and Deacons.
“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

F.M. Green

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THE CHRISTIAN

PREFACE

On its title page is a general statement of the purpose of this book. It is the outgrowth of a conviction firmly established in the mind of its author that it is needed. Several distinguished ministers of the Word have contributed directly and indirectly of their wisdom and research and labor to its pages. The author desires to acknowledge special help received from the writings of Alexander Campbell, Prof. J.W. McGarvey, F.M. Bruner, T.W. Brents, and A.B. Jones, and from the direct contributions of Thomas Munnell and Robert Moffett .

If used according to the design of its author, it will prove an efficient helper to the ministers of the church of Christ in their various official relations. It is intended as a hand-book for preachers and church officers, and while no Christian should allow himself to become a slave to forms and ceremonials, still enough attention should be given to them to insure decency and order in all church work. Its aim is to supply a practical want in a practical way.

If it shall be the means of assisting those for whom it is prepared to a better understanding and appreciation of their solemn and important duties, and to a higher and nobler consecration to the service of the Lord, in the ministry of His Word and the “perfecting of the saints,” the reward will be abundant.

F. M. GREEN.
KENT, OH, January 8th, 1883.

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INTRODUCTORY:

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER IS MORE THAN A PREACHER OF SERMONS.

The Christian ministry embraces every character and element which is necessary for the “perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” There are two great chapters in the life of every man who fears God and works righteousness. Faith and works are the striking and suggestive words which stand at the head of them.

Whom and what to believe, and *how to work* are the two great questions which concern every man who desires to “strike hard blows for God.” The first question God answers, and in His word He has expressed Himself so clearly that the simplest may understand, and none need misunderstand.

Jesus the Christ is the beginning, the middle and the end of the faith which saves; and His divine character and doctrine, power and glory, overarch the feeblest or the strongest faith of man.

The second question is left by divine wisdom largely if not entirely to the wisdom and discretion of the Christian man. God lays the foundation of the faith which saves in the Eternal Rock; but the foundation of Christian endeavor and enterprise is laid in the sanctified wisdom, the enlightened conscience, and the willing heart of the Christian man; hence very little is said in the New Testament concerning the “how” the commandments should be obeyed. “Go” is God’s command; “How to Go” is left to man’s wisdom. “Let all things be done decently and in order,” is God’s command; but the details of obedience must by necessity be left to the wisdom of man.

It is no ordinary combination of qualities, and no ordinary amount of grace is needed to make a man an “able minister of the New Testament.” For his work he will require:

*“A Father’s tenderness; a Shepherd’s care;
A Leader’s courage, which the cross can bear;
A Ruler’s awe; a Watchman’s wakeful eye;
A Pilot’s skill, the helm in storms to ply;
A Fisher’s patience, and a Laborer’s toil;
A Guide’s dexterity to disembroil;*

*A Prophet's inspiration from above;
A Teacher's knowledge, and a Savior's love."*

Added to these qualities and to this grace, a good method of work, and a minister is fully ready for his service. While method is not everything, yet it is "something with all," and with some it is almost "everything." In the "able minister of the New Testament" the truth will exist as a living experience, a glowing enthusiasm, an intense reality. The end of his work is divine manhood. To tell what manhood is and to inspire men to reach it, he unfolds the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the perfect man; and in this service his spirit is love, the inspiration of his life the living spirit of God, and his methods are the best he can obtain from every source.

THE EVANGELIST

In all ages of the Church of Christ there has been, of necessity, a division of labor in order to the edification and the perfection of the saints.

As in the age of the apostles there were “diversities of gifts,” and “diversities of ministers,” and “diversities of workings,” so it is now.

As then it needed a Titus to “set in order the things that were wanting,” so now the same incompleteness of church life and church management require the same kind of ministration.

The character of the duties and work of the evangelist may be learned from the following selection of New Testament passages. 1. God gave evangelists, as well as pastors and teachers to the church. (Eph. 4:11).

2. These evangelists were sent out by the apostles and the primitive church, and by the authority of the Holy Spirit, to “preach the word” — II. Timothy 4:2; Acts 13:2; to “appoint elders” — Acts 14:23; and afterward to visit the brethren to “see how they fare” — Acts 15:36; to “set in order the things that were wanting” — Titus 1:5; to “guard the truth” — 1 Timothy 1:3; to “assist the elders” — Acts 20:18-35; to “secure discipline” — 1 Timothy, 5:20, and Titus 3:10-11; and to “promote benevolent giving for home and foreign uses” — 1 Cor. 8:1-24, and Titus 3:13-14.

3. That the fields of labor of these itinerant evangelists were generally marked out by those who sent them is apparent from the following passages: Acts 8:14; 11:22; 19:22; 2 Timothy 4:10, 12, 20; Titus 1:5, and 1 Timothy 1:3.

4. Peter and Paul, besides their apostolic office, were general evangelists (Gal. 2:9), and reported their work to the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch (Acts 11:1-4; 15:27); Silas and Mark, assisted Peter (1 Peter 5:12-13), and Erastus, Timothy, Tychicus, Titus, Silas, and many others, assisted Paul in various districts in Asia and Europe.

They were, as their name signifies, “messengers of good tidings,” but they were more: they were administrative officers of the grace of good order to the churches where it was wanting.

Manifestly, what was needed then is needed now if the meaning

of the foregoing passages of Scripture has been rightly apprehended.

Therefore, the following questions and answers will not only suggest the business of the modern evangelist, other than that of preaching the gospel, but also a method of procedure.

WHEN IS A CONGREGATION IN GOOD WORKING ORDER? *Answer:* 1. When they support a regular minister a part or all of his time; when they keep up their weekly meetings in the absence of preaching; when the preacher, bishops, and deacons have their regular monthly meetings to examine the church register, to see to their finances, the discipline needed, the care of the flock, and all other business interests of the church; and when they pay all their debts according to contract.

2. A congregation is in good working order when the officers enlist every responsible member in giving their equitable portion of the current expenses for home and mission work, and see that it is collected in due time that there may be no “gatherings” when it is needed, or a long or short list of delinquents who do not pay until the next apportionment is made.

3. A congregation is in good working order when the officers see to it, that the deacons try diligently to collect all dues in time, and when there is no *public dunning*, “pay up, pay up, pay up.” It is not necessary that everybody should know all the little inside financial affairs of the church.

4. A congregation is in good working order, when they keep up a good Sunday school and prayer meeting, when sinners are being converted, when feeble saints are visited and comforted, and all new-comers are looked after at once, and, if possible, brought into the church, and when the church holds its own protracted meetings with their own preacher. And, finally, all these things will be done in the best possible way, if the members are taught to read the Scriptures, and pray in secret every day. Then will they “grow in grace” and possess the “life of God” which is the secret of success in every good word and work.

HOW CAN THE EVANGELIST FIND OUT WHETHER THE CONGREGATION HE VISITS NEEDS TO BE SET IN ORDER?

Or suppose he were to go to Kent, or Cincinnati, or St. Louis, how would he find out whether there was anything needed or not in these congregations. *Answer:*

1. He would inquire, in no offensive way, of the preacher or other officer concerning the condition of the church. Frequently these inquiries should be made of the prominent unofficial members of the church. Such questions as these should be asked. How many bishops and deacons have you in this congregation? Who are the bishops? Who has the church register? Do the officers have regular official meetings to attend to the business of the church? How many of your members pay anything toward church expenses? Are there any difficulties between members of the church? Is there harmony between the church and its officers? etc. etc.

Where it is found out that the church register cannot be found, that the officers never have business meetings, that there is trouble among the members, that the officers and members are not in harmony, it may be considered as a fact that that congregation is not in good order; for it might as well be expected that a bank would be well managed if its directors never met, or the government well managed without the meeting of the Cabinet, as to expect a church to be well governed without regular meetings of its officers. The following is a fair description of some things which transpire in such a congregation. A preacher is needed. The officers go before the whole congregation and ask the promiscuous assembly to nominate a man. Very likely several are nominated, and different parties are developed, each determined to elect its candidate, and trouble certainly follows; whereas, if the officers had counseled together and found out whom they could get, and all about him, and then unitedly recommended him to the congregation, no trouble would have followed.

When a congregation is found where the members scarcely know who their officers are; and when the nominal officers have only a faint recollection of when and how they became such; when seventy-five percent of the members never pay anything to the church treasury; and a large number of those who subscribe never pay their subscription, and no known remedy can be applied; when the monthly preacher has been going there for years, and taken no notice of these disorders; and when the preacher has an idea that the business of the church is absolutely none of his business, and that all he has to do is to preach his fruitless sermons, and takes no interest in the finances or the pastoral care of the members, or the discipline of the church — if he is a Gallio that “cares for none of these

things," the evangelists need go no further — that church and the preacher need setting in order.

IF THE EVANGELIST DECIDES THAT A CONGREGATION NEEDS TO BE SET IN ORDER, HOW SHALL HE PROCEED TO DO IT?

Answer:

1. Let the evangelist preach a sermon to as large an audience as he can get, on some such text as "Let all things be done decently and in order," during which subjects like those mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs are touched upon, and the working of a church in good order shown, the teaching of the sermon being illustrated and enforced in various ways.

2. Let a meeting of all the officers be called at some convenient hour Sunday afternoon, say at 2:30. At this meeting call out an expression of each officer on each of these questions, or on such of them as are necessary. The evangelist should say to the officers that he has come to them not to force himself or his opinions on them against their will or judgment, but simply to offer his services wherever they are needed, and that they must decide whether his services are needed or not. When the evangelist approaches them in this spirit, they will always be glad of his presence, and earnestly invite him to help them.

3. Begin at once, then, to point out to them clearly their respective duties and responsibilities, "opening and alleging" many things from the Scriptures concerning them. If additional officers are needed, help them to make the proper selection. Then proceed to consider the financial ability of each member and his equitable apportionment for the expenses of the church. Then revise the church register, taking down the names of members who are "walking disorderly," and who need to be seen at once; those who appear indifferent and need to be roused to action; those whose known characters are such that the church should immediately withdraw from them; and the good members who need instruction in more efficient service. Then establish regular monthly official meetings, and organize the board of officers by the selection of a chairman, secretary, and treasurer; teach each his duties, and how to manage the affairs of the Kingdom of God. The evangelist ought to remain long enough to carefully instruct the officers in their re-

spective duties.

The main deficiencies in disordered churches are three:

1. A lack of official meetings and management.
2. A lack of financial system.
3. A lack of pastoral care of the flock though there may be a pulpit man, the costliest ornament a church ever pays for.

THE BISHOP OR ELDER

It is quite generally conceded that in the church of Christ, the terms bishop, elder or overseer, and pastor refer to the various elements which are found in the same ecclesiastical office. In the first is the executive idea as presidency; in the second of oversight, moderation, and experience; and in the third that of feeding or tending as a shepherd the flock of God.

A few simple terms describe the various duties of the office:

1. "Presiding" and "laboring in word and teaching." 1 Timothy 5:17.

2. "Taking heed to" or "watching the flock," "feeding or tending God's congregation" — Acts 20:28.

3. "Leading," "speaking the word of God," "watching for souls," "Giving account" — Heb. 13:7, 17.

4. "Feeding or tending the flock of God," "overseeing it willingly as examples to the flock" — 1 Peter 5:1, 3.

5. "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound teaching both to exhort and to convince the gainsayer," "stopping the mouths of unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" — Titus 1:9, 11.

From such a view of it, it may justly be said, that the office is "love's grandest opportunity." He who desires the office, desires a good work, and the preservation and the growth of the congregation depend upon the proper discharge of the duties of the office.

The qualifications for the office of a bishop are all prescribed by the Apostle Paul in the third chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, and the first chapter of Titus. They may be divided naturally into six divisions, and they are distinguished as they relate respectively to experience, reputation, domestic relations, character, habits, and ability to teach and rule. These divisions deserve in their order a brief notice.

1. *Experience.* By this is meant experience in the life of a Christian. Paul says that a bishop should not be a new convert, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil — 1 Timothy 3:6. It is important that "pride of office" shall not characterize the eldership.

2. *Reputation.* The good which a church is capable of accom-

plishing in a community depends very much upon its reputation, and the reputation of the church depends much upon the reputation of its representative men. Most wisely, therefore, is it required that a bishop shall have a “good report of them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” — 1 Timothy 3:7. His moral and religious character must have a good report from men whose opinion is worth considering, and who know the habits of the bishop.

3. *Domestic Relations.* To Timothy and Titus both, the apostle prescribes that the bishop shall be the husband of one wife. It would, therefore, be unlawful to place a polygamist or bigamist in the office. Undoubtedly the bishop ought to be a married man, the husband of one wife, “ruling well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity,” “having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.” “For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”

4. *Character.* The traits which must enter into the character of a bishop when taken together present a very rare combination. He must be “blameless,” his character standing in fair comparison with the characters of other good men; “not covetous,” for a covetous eldership makes a covetous church, and a covetous church is a dead church; “not greedy of filthy lucre” or guilty of making money by base means; “not self willed,” for no man is fit to hold office jointly with other men, who is not content to often yield his own will to that of his compeers; he must not be a “brawler,” nor “soon angry,” but “temperate” and patient; he must be “sober-minded,” a lover of hospitality, “a lover of good men” and “holy,” for he is set apart to a holy office, and his official acts concern the most holy relations which bind men to one another, and to their God.

5. *Habits.* A man’s habits grow out of his character, but they also react upon his character, tending constantly to make it either better or worse. The bishop must be vigilant, and watchful, and not “given to wine.”

6. *Intellectual Qualifications.* He must be “apt to teach,” not only in the sense of being “capable of teaching,” because he knows what ought to be taught, but also because he is able to clearly and in an interesting and instructive manner tell what he knows. This specially is true of those bishops “who labor in word and teaching.” Each member of the eldership must be “capable of teaching” to the

extent that he knows what ought to be taught. Thus constituted the eldership will be respected by all, and its power acknowledged in the splendid triumphs of the church of Christ.

THE DEACONS

According to the apostolic teaching, the church officer was not complete without deacons, a class of ministers whose special duty was to attend to the wants of the poor and to the temporal interests of the congregation, but who assisted also in the spiritual ministrations of the church.

The duties of the deacons are suggested by such passages as Acts 6:2, 4: "It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve (minister) tables," and "we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word." So said the apostles, and it is, therefore, concluded that the deacons were charged with that class of cares which relate to the material necessities of the congregation.

While the saints are in the body, though possessed of a new life, still they are compelled to recognize their relations to a material world; and there is a noble service for loving hearts and hands in providing for those wants springing out of these relations, among the poor and in the general service of the congregation. Women also took part in this service. Romans 16:1-2; 1 Timothy 5:9. Notwithstanding the general character of their service (Rom. 12:7), still the deacons frequently rose to distinction as bishops and evangelists: "For those who serve well, win for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus," which was verified in a remarkable degree in the case of Stephen and Philip, Acts, 6:7 and 8:5.

The deacons should also see that the Lord's Table is properly furnished and spread, on the Lord's Day, and that its furniture is kept clean and bright.

They should look after the necessities of the poor and the sick, and report to the church.

They should give special attention to the finances of the church, and see to it that each member has the opportunity to do his equitable share in meeting the various and necessary financial obligations of the congregation. Usually from among them, the treasurer and church clerk should be selected.

Their number should be limited by the size of the congregation and the work to be done.

OFFICIAL MEETINGS.

The officers of every congregation ought to have Monthly regular monthly meetings for the consideration of church business. At these meetings, all classes of church officers should be present. The minister of the church who labors in word and teaching should be there, and also the superintendent of the Sunday school, and the trustees of the church property.

The meeting should organize by choosing one of the elders to preside. A clerk should also be chosen, who shall keep a record of the business of the monthly meetings. Where practicable, the church clerk should be clerk of the officers' meeting. The chairman and clerk may be chosen for one year. One of the deacons should be chosen to act as treasurer for the church. The officers may be divided into standing committees as follows:

1. COMMITTEE ON THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION AND NEEDS OF THE CHURCH: Whose duty it shall be to acquaint themselves with all accessible facts in regard to these matters.

2. COMMITTEE ON ERRING MEMBERS: Whose special duty shall be to look after delinquent and otherwise disorderly members.

3. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PREACHING: Whose special duty shall be to see that the pulpit is supplied.

4. COMMITTEE ON FINANCE: Whose special duty shall be to consider all questions connected with the finances of the church.

5. COMMITTEE ON THE POOR AND SICK: Whose special duty shall be to ascertain the necessities of these classes, and make provision to meet them.

The following is a good order of business for official meetings:

1. Reading the Scriptures and Prayer.
2. Reading of Minutes of last meeting.
3. Report of Treasurer.
4. Report of the Board of Deacons.
5. Report of Standing Committees.
6. Report of Special Committees.
7. Report of Sunday-school Superintendent.
8. Miscellaneous Business.
9. Benediction.

This order indicates quite sufficiently the nature of the matters

which will be considered. The report of the treasurer and board of deacons will bring the material necessities of the church before the meeting for its consideration. If some new enterprise is to be inaugurated; if repairs on the church property are needed; if a thorough canvass of the church for increasing the regular revenues is important; if the church is not sustaining as it should missionary enterprises; if the poor need help and the sick need visiting — all these several matters may be disposed of either by the meeting itself or by a reference to committees, instructed to report at the next meeting. The report concerning the spiritual condition of the church will bring before the meeting the names of members who should be visited and admonished. This report will be the report of a standing committee, and should be made by one of the elders (usually by the so-called pastor). The work of this committee may be distributed among the elders, or even assigned in part to good brethren and sisters who are not officially connected with the church, who will be expected to report at the next meeting. The report of the Sunday-school superintendent will bring before the meeting the condition and needs of the Sunday-school for action and advice.

LORD'S DAY MEETINGS.

The public meetings of the church on the Lord's Day should be conducted — except the pulpit services — by the senior bishop, or such other brethren as may be invited by the elders to officiate.

There should be a clear and distinct previous understanding between the elders of the church and the minister as to what is expected of each of them on ordinary occasions. Circumstances may require the minister to conduct all the Lord's Day services.

A good order for the public services of the Lord's Day is desirable. The following, which is subject to amendment, as circumstances may demand, is given:

1. An opening hymn of praise, or thanksgiving.
2. The reading of a Scripture lesson either by the preacher or as a responsive service.
3. Prayer.
4. Public collection and announcements of meetings, etc. etc.
5. Singing.
6. Sermon.
7. Invitation hymn.

8. The Lord's Supper.

9. Closing song and benediction.

Sometimes the general congregation may be dismissed before the "breaking of bread." This is usually done in the cities, and where the congregations are made up mostly of non-members of the church.

THE LORD'S TABLE.

Where the communion service immediately follows preaching, or social worship, the table should be neatly prepared before the services begin. The table should be covered with a clean white spread, upon which the emblems should be placed — the wine in a clean flagon and the bread on a clean plate.

There should be a flagon of neat pattern and of sufficient size for the wine, and at least two plates for the distribution of the bread, and two cups for the distribution of the wine. The number of plates and cups will depend on the size of the congregation to be served.

The best loaf of bread for this service is made like common pie-crust, well baked, but not dried or burned. The emblems should be placed upon the table in good order, and neatly covered with a clean white cloth.

In this country there is no excuse for having a soiled table spread, or for using decanters, demijohns, or common pitchers for the wine. The flagon, cups, and plates should all be cleaned carefully after each use.

The deacons should first wait on the minister or officers who preside at the table, then in order upon the congregation. When the congregation has been served the deacons should be seated together and waited upon by the presiding officer or his assistants.

If these suggestions are observed, the communion service will be a "service of joy" to each Christian heart "joying and beholding your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."

THE PRAYER MEETING.

The weekly prayer meeting of the church ought to be, for the church, a thoroughly good and valuable meeting.

It should be held regularly and promptly every week. It should be presided over by one of the official board, or by some member of the church, who is invited to do so because of his special fitness for

such a duty. To have a good meeting, each member should attend in the spirit of one whose “citizenship is in heaven; from whence, also, we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Each one comes with a Bible or Testament, and has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, an exhortation or an interpretation, a hymn or a spiritual song, upon which he has previously meditated, and is prepared to read or report.

An hour is spent in song and prayer and reading and exhortation, and the service is closed by the reading in concert of a selection from the Scriptures, the doxology and the benediction.

A prayer meeting of this character would never be counted dull or dry.

ORGANIZATION OF A CHURCH.

Three things are necessary in every human organization: First, persons who desire to work together; second, rules by which they agree to be governed; and, third, officers to execute and administer the rules adopted.

As the Christian congregation is the convenient and practicable method chosen by the disciples of Christ for individual edification in doctrine and grace; for social Christian intercourse; and for local Christian work, the details of its organization are left entirely to the discretion and wisdom of those who desire to form the local congregation.

The commandment to organize congregations could not be easily found; but good reasons for their existence are numerous.

1. They are the expression of the desire to come together, of those who are of the "same mind and of the same heart" in the Lord.

2. They are the expression of the well-known instinct of self-preservation and perpetuation which forever and ever decides that it is not "good to be alone."

3. They are the expression of the well-known fact that a division of labor is necessary to accomplish the greatest results.

4. And while Christ does not command his followers to organize themselves into local congregations, he does recognize the wisdom of such action on the part of his disciples.

The perfection of the individual life in Christ is what Christ is for and what the church is for. For a very good reason, therefore, Christ left his church, general and local, without a detailed system of organization and government; not that men might study out elaborate despotisms in his name, but that each believer might, under Christ, work out his own salvation through a self-controlled life. The conscience that must be regnant, triumphant, and responsive to the least of Christ's commands, is a personal conscience, and not a church conscience. And it is when the individual personal heart and conscience are right that the church, whether local or general, is "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

A CHURCH COVENANT

In every well-ordered congregation, there should be a well kept

and intelligible record.

This record should embody the register of the names of members, with the form and date their admission to the church; the reason and date of dismissal; matters of historical interest; carefully prepared reports of the annual and official meetings; and other matters which may be of interest or of legal value to the congregation.

A simple form of covenant or agreement ought to introduce the register of names, and the record of the church. The following is given as a suitable form:

WE, the undersigned, having been immersed upon confession of our faith in Christ, do unite to form a Church of Christ in _____; and having already covenanted with God in Christ, do hereby covenant with each other that we will keep all the ordinances and commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, agreeing to be governed in our personal conduct and in our Church relations and obligations by the Law of Christ, as taught in the New Testament, and pledging each other to do all in our power to promote the peace, unity, and prosperity of this Church, and to extend the kingdom of Christ in all the world.

In Testimony Whereof, we affix our respective names, on this, the ____ day _____, A. D. _____.

THE SELECTION OF OFFICERS

On the selection and appointment of church officers, the following suggestions are worthy of attention:

1. When the time and the necessity arise for officers, whether elders or deacons, or as in the case of a new organization, both the evangelist or other leader, should call the attention of the congregation to the general and specific qualifications which these officers must possess. These passages from apostolic directions should be carefully and conscientiously studied.

2. The congregation should then select from its membership the persons possessing these qualifications. Acts 6:3; and 13:1, 11.

This selection may be made by lot or by ballot. Acts 1:12, 26.

The final result should be, that whoever is selected should receive the unanimous support of the congregation.

3. When a sufficient time has passed, to “prove” their fitness to act permanently in the places to which they have been chosen, both

in ability to teach, and in willing and capable oversight, then let them be formally ordained with some appropriate ceremonies.

ORDINATION OF OFFICERS.

It is impossible to give a good reason why those who have been unanimously chosen to the oversight and service of a Christian community should not be formally inducted into the office to which they have been elected.

In the early church, the ordination ceremonies consisted in the imposition of hands, accompanied with fasting and prayer. Acts 6:5-6; 13:23; 1 Tim. 5:22.

On such occasions apostles, evangelists, and elders officiated or presided either alone or conjointly. Acts 6:5-6; 14:23; 1 Tim. 4:14. In those days

hands were imposed not always for conferring spiritual gifts; but also for devoting and separating persons to the work of the Lord. Persons of inferior standing in point of office, laid the hands of ordination on those who were their superiors in gifts and abilities, as well as in general standing in the estimation of the brethren.

Imposition of hands was essential to ordination, accompanied by fasting and prayer; and no excellence in the gifts of preaching, teaching, or of administering the affairs of the family of God, or call or qualification on the part of heaven, however clear and unequivocal, was allowed in the primitive church to dispense with these sacred forms of ordination. — A. Campbell.

The congregation having proved the abilities and capacities to teach and rule in certain of its members, and tested their characters as approved by those within and without, and selected them from among their brethren to fill the offices to which they have been called, appoints a day for their formal ordination to their respective offices, and for their solemn consecration to this special service in the Lord.

The following outline of ordination ceremonies may be used at the ordination of evangelists, elders, or deacons:

1. A sermon suitable to the occasion may be preached by some preacher chosen for the purpose.

2. A brief statement by the presiding officer to the church as follows:

We have met today to ordain A.B. as a minister of the word (or

elder or deacon, as the case may be). I submit to this meeting the following evidences of the fitness of this brother, (or these brethren) for the position (or positions) to which he (or they) has been chosen. (Here state the previous action of the church, (or churches if an evangelist) in “looking out from among them” this person (or persons) for the special service of the church. Now if there is a member here, who knows a reason why this ordination should not now take place, let him here and now give such reason or forever after hold his peace.

3. The candidates for ordination are invited to take seats provided for them in front of the congregation.

Do you still desire, and is it your wish that these brethren (name them one by one) shall be ordained as the unanimously chosen officers of this congregation? And do you acknowledge them as having full ecclesiastical authority to officiate for you in the office to which you have chosen them? (The congregation should rise in token of its assent.)

Before ordination, the following questions should be asked of the candidate.

(a.) A. B. Is it your desire to preach the word of God? *Answer.* It is.

Do you promise before God and this congregation, that you will study to show thyself approved unto

God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth? *Answer.* I do.

Do you promise that you will exercise the office, with which you are hereby invested in the name of the Lord, according to the true intent and meaning of the new institution as you shall give account to God at his glorious appearing and kingdom, and preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; that you will reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine; that you will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God; and that you will keep yourself pure, watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of thy ministry? *Answer.* By the grace of God I will so endeavor to live, and to do.

(b.) C.D. Do you desire the work of an elder? *Answer.* I do.

Do you accept it willingly, and will you strive to be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, hospitable, apt to teach, taking heed to yourself and the flock in the which the Holy Spirit hath

made you overseer. *Answer.* By the grace of God I will.

(c) E.F. Is it your desire to accept the work of a deacon? *Answer.* It is.

Will you assume the duties of this office according to the word of God and strive to live in all gravity and sincerity before God and before men? *Answer.* I will.

4. Prayer before ordination.

5. The candidates then kneel, and two or three evangelists or elders join in putting hands on the head of the candidate, one of them saying:

(a) A. B. We do hereby ordain you to the solemn and responsible work of the ministry of God's word. At your own request, and by the approval of the church, you are hereby set apart to preach the word and to do the work of an evangelist. May God give you wisdom to make "full proof of thy ministry."

(b) C.D. By your own willing consent and desire, and by the unanimous voice of this church, you are hereby ordained to the office of elder in this church. May God give you wisdom to "rule well" and to "feed the church of God which he purchased with his own blood."

(c) E.F. We do also ordain you to the office and work of deacon in this church. May the Lord give you wisdom to use the office well that you may purchase to yourself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Amen!

6. Prayer after the ordination specially for the candidates by one of the ministers participating in the service.

7. This may be followed by a brief address or charge to the candidate, that he may realize his responsibility, and with all diligence and fidelity to the Lord, and with all humility of mind, and affectionate concern for the brethren, exercise the office with which he has been invested by the cordial and unanimous choice of the church.

8. In like manner the church may be addressed by one of the ministers present, charging them to remember them whom they have chosen to rule over them, or to speak the word of God to them "and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith."

9. Song and Benediction.

BUSINESS MEETINGS.

No church is well organized or in good working order unless it has its regular business meetings.

These are of two kinds: General and Official.

The general business meeting of the church should be held annually at a regular time agreed upon, either the last of December or the first of January. It should be duly announced, and all the members urged to attend it. General meetings for business may be held as special reasons exist for calling them.

The object of the annual business meeting of the church is two-fold:

1. It is to learn, through the reports made by its various officers and servants, of the exact condition of the church in all its various departments.

2. It is to take such congregational action as may be deemed necessary and wise for the good of the church.

The clerk of the church should present clearly and distinctly the minutes of the previous annual meeting, or any special church meeting which may have been called, why it was called, what was done, etc. He should give the number of the officers' meetings held during the year, when they were held, and the important action taken. He should give the exact condition of the church register, the number received into membership during the year and how, the number dismissed during the year, how and why, and the number at present on the roll. He should state whether the church has held a protracted meeting or not, and the results; if any officers have been chosen, who they are and to what office, and anything else which may have been considered worthy of record during the year.

This report should be made by the chairman of the Board of Trustees, and should be a clear statement of the condition of the church property, together with any recommendation that they may think necessary for the church to consider.

The treasurer should not simply report a summary of the amount in the treasury at the beginning of the year, the receipts during the year, and the expenses, with a statement of surplus or deficit; but he should present a balance sheet, giving in detail from whom money has been received, and in detail for what it has been expended, and showing the exact condition of the finances to date of settlement.

This report, with all other reports concerning the finances of the

church, should be referred to a committee of unofficial brethren for examination and audit.

This report should state the financial condition of the church in general, and also make such recommendations as may, in the judgment of the deacons, be necessary in order to the raising of money for special or ordinary expenses of the church. It should also give the necessities of the poor, the infirm, and the sick in the church, and when and how they have been aided during the year, and whether help is any longer needed or not.

The report of the Sunday school Superintendent should give the full statistics of the school for the year, with such requests and recommendations as in his judgment the church ought to hear.

The elders should prepare a report, setting forth clearly and faithfully the moral and spiritual condition of the church. This should be a real pastoral address, and when properly prepared and presented, showing thereby that the elders have indeed exercised a vigilant and faithful watch-care over the congregation, and have not simply been figure-heads of no value, but rather a detriment or open disgrace, the value of such a report upon the church will be untold and incalculable.

The reason why so many elders have not respect shown to them is because they do not deserve it.

While the annual business meeting should be presided over by one of the elders, or other person who may be chosen because of his fitness to preside; and while the business should be conducted in the best of order, still there should be given the utmost freedom, consistent with good order, for the members generally to express themselves with reference to any matters which may concern the interests of the church in regard to either methods of work, or the work itself.

These meetings have been already described, but their importance is emphasized by this second reference to them. They are necessary to the vigorous life and healthy growth of the congregation. In them every important matter should

be carefully and thoroughly canvassed, and a unanimous decision reached by the officers before presentation to the church. With this precaution, nearly every difficulty — if not every one — which threatens the harmony and prosperity of the church may be satisfactorily adjusted or avoided.

CHURCH LETTERS.

A church letter of commendation or dismissal ought to state the facts and tell the truth concerning the member who receives it. Usually, however, the same general form will answer for nearly all the members of the congregation. In its form, a church letter is quite largely a matter of taste. The following form is used quite extensively, and is a good one:

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

At _____

To the Church of Christ, wherever this may come, Greeting:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY

That the bearer, _____, is a member with us, in good standing and full fellowship, and as such we cordially commend to your Christian love and oversight.

By order of the Church, this ____ day of _____, ____
(year)

_____ (signature)

When it is necessary to state special facts, the following is a good form:

To the Church of Christ at _____, Greeting:

The bearer of this letter, _____, united with the Church of Christ at _____ in the year _____. For one year or more his deportment was such as became the gospel of Christ. He then removed from this neighborhood, and we have learned — [Here state the facts learned]. We commend him only so far as his life among us gave us an opportunity to know of his character and conduct.

Yours respectfully,

_____ *Elders.*

DIFFICULTIES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

A wiser than Solomon has said: "It is impossible but that occasions for stumbling should come. Take heed to yourselves; if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Luke 17:1-4.

It is not possible to wholly avoid misunderstandings and difficulties. Usually, however, these may be cleared away and settled without any public notice or investigation. Where the things are studied which make for peace by the membership, and where the spirit of Christ thoroughly prevails there will be but little use for extreme or elaborate methods of settlement.

If the instructions already given concerning the management of the church are followed, there will be rarely an occasion for public reproof or discipline.

In cases involving the actions simply of an individual, the elders make investigation as a church grand jury, and find a true indictment against the offender. When the offending member is charged with it he usually pleads guilty, but will not promise to reform. The elders having examined the case thoroughly, decide that the hand of fellowship should be withdrawn from the offender. This action is endorsed by the Board of Officers at their next regular meeting.

At a subsequent public meeting of the church one of the elders should make substantially the following statement:

Brethren: It gives me great sorrow to bring to you the statement which I am now authorized by the full Board of Officers to make. The elders have used every proper endeavor to restore Bro. A. to Christian life and purity. He has been repeatedly visited and admonished with tears. He refuses to hear the word of God or to regard the wishes of his brethren. Therefore, at the last meeting of the officers of the church the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That we recommend to the church to withdraw the hand of fellowship from Bro. A. on account of — [Here state the charge in full]. This charge he freely admits. Now, if any member here knows any reason why the hand of fellowship should not be withdrawn from Bro. A. let him make such reason known to any one of the officers before the next officers' meeting. And, if at that time no reasons have been given against the action, the clerk will be di-

rected to enter upon the records that the church has unanimously approved of this recommendation. *Let us pray.*

If reasons are assigned why this action should not be taken, the officers should consider them at their next meeting. If the reasons are sufficient, in their judgment, to justify delay, they should so state at the next public meeting of the church. If not sufficient, in their judgment, they should so state, giving the reasons, and ask the church to endorse their recommendation to withdraw fellowship. If, after delay, the member makes confession of his faults and promises reformation, the fact should be stated to the public meeting in his presence, followed by an earnest prayer in his behalf.

There are cases where the elders are expected to sit as a jury and judge, and bring in a verdict and sentence according to the testimony and the law of the Lord. For this reason the elders should not allow themselves to become involved in such cases; but if they have, in the ordinary work of the eldership, learned so much about the case as that they might not be strictly impartial in hearing and deciding, they ought not to sit on the case, especially if the accused denies the charge and specifications. In such cases they should join with the accused in selecting from the membership certain persons to hear and decide the matters at issue. If there are no members who are competent to this duty, a selection should be made from neighboring churches.

It may be found that the latter way is the only wise way: for the parties to the trouble may lack confidence in either the elders or the membership to decide the case; or some of the elders may have been involved in the trouble; or the church members may have taken sides on the question; or the elders and the church members may be too near the difficulty to see it as it is. In such cases it is always wisdom to invite such a committee from abroad as will meet the wishes of all parties in the case. The elders should so state the case to the church, and get its consent to send for such a committee. The church should agree to be guided by its counsel. The parties should agree in writing to abide the decision of this committee.

The committee or council called from abroad, when it comes to hear the case, should organize by choosing a chairman and clerk.

If there are charges and specifications, they should be presented to the committee in writing, and signed by both the parties at issue.

The committee should require the parties at issue to sign an

agreement that they would abide their decision.

The usual rules for the examination of witnesses should govern in the investigation.

If possible the sessions of the committee should be private, none being allowed to be present except the parties and the necessary witnesses, and where practicable the witnesses should not be allowed to testify before the other witnesses.

Each side may be represented by counsel who also may conduct the examination of witnesses.

The greatest freedom should be allowed to each side in the statement of its case; but good order, of course will be maintained by the committee at all times.

When the testimony is in, to the satisfaction of both sides, and the case is placed in the hands of the committee, they should dismiss the parties and proceed to make up their decision.

The report and decision of the committee should be full and explicit, embracing the following heads:

1. A brief statement of their reasons for hearing the case.
2. The question or questions in dispute, as presented by the parties at issue.
3. The agreement of both parties to abide their decision.
4. The names of the witnesses called and examined, and the testimony they gave.
5. That both parties were satisfied with the examination of witnesses.
6. The findings.
7. The recommendations.

All these points, and especially the findings and recommendations should be clothed in language not liable to misconstruction. It often occurs that efforts to settle difficulties by the presence and decision of a mutually chosen committee fail, because the committee fails to be full and explicit in their findings and recommendations.

It is always better to so manage a church, as that such a committee as described shall not be necessary; but if it becomes necessary, then the greatest care should be taken in the formation of the committee.

If the case is one of great prominence, and importance, such as an investigation into the conduct of an evangelist, or preacher, or

elder, those who serve on the committee should be men of well-known reputation for wisdom and justice, whose decision will have weight when it is given and wherever it is known.

In some cases which ordinarily would be decided by the elders, it would be wise in them to submit them to a committee outside of the church for which they officiate, selected by themselves and the other party.

It is believed that these rules are sufficient for the guidance of those interested and concerned.

QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS.

There are two classes of questions which arise in the management of a church.

1. Those which can be settled by the application of general principles of order and discipline.

2. Those which require special treatment.

The following questions and answers will illustrate the two classes of questions.

If a man puts his wife away for fornication and marries a sister in Christ, will she, thus marrying, in the light of God's holy word, commit adultery?

If the crime was proved, and a divorce obtained on that ground, the man is at liberty to marry again, and the woman marrying him is free from the imputation of adultery in doing so. It is the one exception to the rule forbidding married persons to enter into a new marriage contract (Matt. 5:32), and the only scriptural ground of divorce.

For the past year our congregation has on Lord's day mornings attended to the "Supper" exercises before preaching, and while most of the brethren think it conducive to good order and impressiveness, one or two brethren seem to think that our practice is unscriptural as regards the *time* for the observance of the Lord's Supper.

The New Testament settles nothing as to the order in which the different services are to succeed each other. This must be settled by the church and its rulers, in view of all the circumstances of the church. The primitive churches met to break bread when they had no preaching; and in Corinth, where there were inspired prophets and interpreters (I. Cor. 14), they came together to eat the Lord's Supper as one of the distinct objects of assembling; but whether the

supper was first observed, before the prophesyings and exhortations, we are not informed. There ought, therefore, to be no difficulty, so far as scriptural authority is concerned.

As a general rule, we are in favor of the observance of the Lord's Supper before preaching. It can be observed with more deliberation. There is no unseemly haste required — none of the disturbance and distraction of mind occasioned by the lateness of the hour and the desire to get away, which those who have household duties to perform are apt to experience after the hour of noon has passed. But this each church must decide for itself, and we do not see how, on scriptural grounds, any one can insist on any particular time.

For several reasons, we should prefer to have a special meeting for the breaking of bread, when the disciples could come together for this one purpose. But, in the scattered condition of the membership, alike in city and country, this does not seem to be practicable.

Will you please give your views as to the scripture teaching of the qualifications of an elder — in one particular, *i.e.* whether or not he shall be a married man, or will his being unmarried disqualify him?

According to the teaching of Paul to Timothy and Titus, the bishop must be a married man. The reason given is, that he must have proved his capacity to rule in his own family before he can be regarded as competent to rule in the house of God. This is sufficient. But there are other reasons that will readily suggest themselves in support of this one, especially this: An unmarried man is uneducated in many things which it is essential he should know in order to deal with many questions and many cases that will come before him.

In an organized congregation, where there are elders, bishops, and deacons, and also ministers who labor in word and doctrine, who is charged to feed, to overlook, to take care and rule the flock?

In a properly organized church, the elders or bishops are the rulers and teachers. See Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Tim. 3:2-5; Tit. 1:9-11; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:17. It does not follow that they are to do all the teaching themselves, but, being rulers as well as teachers, any others who teach should do so at their suggestion. It is only when a church is not properly organized that it is proper for an evangelist, or minister of the word outside of the eldership, to take charge of the teaching.

Is it right for a member of the Christian Church to call on a Baptist preacher to marry him while it is possible for him to have a Christian preacher perform the same duty? Is it not disrespectful to the Christian Church to act in this way?

The New Testament teaches nothing on this subject. While, as a rule, brotherly courtesy would require that a Christian brother should be preferred to perform the ceremony, circumstances may justify an exception to this rule. The conventional usage is to respect the bride's choice in this matter. But, apart from this, personal friendship may properly dictate the selection. If the selection is made to show disrespect to one's own brethren, it is censurable; but it is best to allow persons to make their own choice, and wise on the part of others not to meddle in matters that do not belong to them.

Does the apostle mean that women must not speak in the social meeting when he says: (1 Cor. 14:34-35.) "Let the women keep silence in the churches, etc?"

No!

MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL AND THEIR DUTIES

Preaching does not mean simply pulpit work. He who goes into a community, goes to hunt up the "lost sheep," and to guard the ninety and nine that have never strayed; who visits and talks with them, man by man, and household by household, making himself literally a shepherd — that man is a true preacher in the highest and best sense of that term.

Of the different figures used in Scripture to describe the ministerial office, none is more beautiful than that which is compared to the peaceful, but laborious calling of the shepherd. The Holy Spirit frequently employs this figure of a "flock," when speaking of the Church of God. Men are described not merely as "sheep," but as "sheep" that "have gone astray;" and the Son of God is spoken of as the "great shepherd of the sheep," "the good shepherd," "the shepherd and bishop of souls," who counted not his life too dear a price to pay for the recovery of his flock.

But this Almighty Shepherd is now in heaven, while his sheep are still upon the earth; and though he could feed them from thence as easily as if he were still going in and out among them in person, yet he is pleased to employ men to act the shepherd's part, and take charge of his beloved flock. This, then, is the office of the Christian pastor. He is an under-shepherd, and responsible to Christ, the Chief-Shepherd. It is a solemn and dignified office.

The Christian pastor's commission is not of man; for while the ceremonial of the church accredits, it is the "anointing of the spirit" that designates.

The elders of the primitive church were its divinely accredited, qualified and commissioned pastors, or shepherds. The elders of the modern church ought to be its shepherds now; but how frequently are they found to be the veriest obstructions to all Christian growth and activity, incompetent, stubborn, noisy, and in character utterly powerless for good. Why this is so, let those who have minds to consider, consider.

The duties of the Christian pastor belong to "the very foundations and roots of human life." By his ministry he is brought into contact with whatsoever is serious and important. He is a messenger, a watchman, a steward of the Lord. He is "to teach and to

premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world that they may be saved through Christ forever."

Happy is the Christian pastor if he is kept from that cold, calculating, carnal spirit that would feed the flock of God only for the sake of the shekels.

Happy is he if he is preserved from the woe which was pronounced against the shepherds of Israel; that did feed themselves instead of the flock: "Ye eat the fat, and clothe you with the wool; ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock."

Happy is he if while one by one his children pass before him to their endless rest, he looks for sure reunion, when they shall be his "joy and crown" forever.

While preaching is not wholly pulpit-work, still pulpit-work, or public preaching, constitutes a very important part of the pastor's duties. Therefore a clear idea of what a sermon is, and what it is for, is essential to the highest success of the Christian pastor. "Apt to teach" is God's demand upon him who desires the office of the pastor because its work is a "good work," and he cannot teach with power who does not have, at least, a fair and clear knowledge of the methods he employs.

Prof. Austin Phelps defines a sermon thus: "An oral address to the popular mind, on religious truth contained in the Scriptures, and elaborately treated with a view to persuasion."

This definition is comprehensive, and suggestive of the character of the food which the Christian pastor and preacher is to prepare.

It is not the purpose of these pages to discuss the technical differences or agreements of the words bishop, elder or overseer, and pastor. Each is a New Testament word, and he who has no declared theory of church organization or government to defend or advocate may easily learn what each word means. That they do not mean identically the same thing, or cover identically the same ground, though possibly referring to parts or features of the same office, is as clear as that the sun, moon, and stars are not the identically same bodies, though each has some relation to the great subject of light.

But whatever may be his name, the suggestions which now follow are made for him who does the shepherd's part in watching,

feeding, tending, and defending the flock of God.

THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

In his work, the Christian minister will be called upon to administer the ordinance of baptism to penitent believers in Jesus Christ.

There are some needful preparations which should be made for its proper and efficient administration:

1. Every congregation should provide a convenient and suitable baptistry. This baptistry may be in the house or not, but it should be convenient and suitable.

2. Robes large and long enough to cover the entire person should be provided for men and women. These robes should be made of good material, and kept where they can be easily found.

3. Every congregation should have a “baptizing suit” for the administrator.

4. The deacons and deaconesses of the church should be well-instructed in their duties, in regard to the preparation of the candidates for baptism, and in the help they are expected to render in the administration of the ordinances.

If these suggestions are observed, the often wretched and even offensive work done on the occasions of public baptisms will be avoided, and the divine command will be obeyed, “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

1. The administrator of baptism should thoroughly understand his business.

2. He should be provided with suitable garments, so that his personal appearance may not attract attention from the ordinance itself.

3. He should be calm and thoughtful, and thoroughly determined that the administration of the ordinance shall add to its power, and beauty, and solemnity.

As no formula of baptism is given in the New Testament, ministers are left free to choose that form which corresponds most nearly with their ideas of its proper administration. The following forms are given as appropriate:

1. Upon confession of your faith in Jesus the Christ, and by his authority, I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2. By the authority of Jesus the Christ, you are baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

3. In the name of Jesus the Christ, and upon profession of your faith in him, you are baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

4. By the authority of the Great Head of the Church, and upon profession of your faith in him, I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you. Luke 22:14-20.

For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we who are many are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread. 1 Cor. 10:16-17.

Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils. 1 Cor. 10:21.

The emblems having been properly prepared, and the table neatly spread, the disciples should be seated as near together as practicable.

This is for the sake of good order and convenience. The conduct of all the disciples during the service should be that which becometh saints, and those who feel their helplessness and dependence upon their divine Savior.

A long address before the breaking of bread is not necessary; nor is it usually either desirable, or in good taste or profitable.

An appropriate Scripture lesson, like those already indicated, may be read by him who presides at the table. The prayer and thanksgiving which precede the distribution of the emblems should be appropriate, and bear upon the great sacrifice and the great salvation provided by the Lord.

The following are suggested as suitable forms for thanksgiving at the communion service:

1. Merciful Heavenly Father, we thank thee for thy goodness and thy faithfulness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We do not presume to come to this thy table trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. Wilt thou refresh and comfort thy people while they meditate upon a bleeding Savior. May this great sacrifice represented to us in this broken bread and wine strengthen our faith, encourage us in the practice of good works, give us victory over our sins, and perfect us in charity, patience, humility, obedience, and all other virtues.

We ask all for Christ's sake. Amen.

2. Our Heavenly Father, we look to thee as the source of all our strength. Thou dost give us food day by day, and thou dost furnish to us the Bread of Life upon which our souls may feed and live forever.

While we contemplate the greatness of the suffering and sorrow of our Savior for us, may we be willing to suffer on behalf of thy

cause as well as to believe on thee; knowing that if we suffer for thee we shall also reign with thee.

Let this cup of blessing which we bless, be to us the communion of the blood of Christ; let the bread which we break be the communion of the body of Christ.

O that we may bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body. And as the hart pants after the water-brooks, so may we thirst for the water of life flowing from the cleft rock, Jesus Christ, to slake the thirst and refresh the strength of pilgrims, journeying through a wilderness world to a land of eternal rest.

We pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The benediction at the close of a religious service is always proper. As to their form the Apostolic benedictions will usually give a sufficient variety to meet all demands.

1. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Romans, 16:20.

2. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. 1 Cor. 16:23.

3. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. 2 Cor. 13:14.

4. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness. Amen. Eph. 6:23-24.

5. Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Heb. 13:20-21.

6. Grace, mercy, and peace abound to you, and the whole Israel of God throughout the world, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

7. Grace be with us all, enabling us, by faith, to receive the great salvation, and ever pray and labor for its diffusion till it is made known to the ends of the earth. Amen.

THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY.

“The Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone. I

will make him an helpmeet for him. And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife.” Gen. 2:18, 21-24.

Have ye not read, that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh? So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Matthew 19:4-6.

Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Heb. 13:4.

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor from the Lord. Prov. 18:22.

And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

Yet, ye say, wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously. Yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore, take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. Malachi 2:13-15.

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES.

The institution of marriage is co-eval with the family of man. Our Creator himself is its author, and it is subject to the directions and sanc-tions of his laws. He saw that it was not good for man to be alone, even in Paradise; and formed and gave him woman for his companionship and solace, in a union so intimate and tender that they are regarded as "no more twain but one flesh."

This union, like that of the body and the spirit, is to be broken only by the hand of death. It is a relation, therefore, not to be lightly or hastily entered. A congeniality of mind, a mutual esteem, and an affection which transcends every other earthly love, are indispensable to the happiness which the relation is designed to impart.

In the Sacred Scriptures, which are the lamp for your path in every other relation, you will find the directions which you need in this; and which, if strictly and cheerfully obeyed, will continue to give freshness and vigor to your joys when youth and beauty shall have passed away. Deeming it sufficient on this occasion to refer you to their instructions concerning the duties you will henceforth owe to each other, I will proceed to receive your plighted faith, and seal your marriage vow. You will please take each other by the right hand.

Do you, **A. B.** take the lady whose right hand you now hold, to be your lawful, wedded wife, promising in the presence of God and of these witnesses, that you will keep her in health and in sickness; in prosperity and in adversity; that you will be to her a kind, affectionate, and faithful husband; and that forsaking all others, you will keep yourself to her and to her only, till death shall separate you?

Do you, **B.C.** take the gentleman whose right hand you now hold, to be your lawful, wedded husband, promising, in like manner, in the presence of God and these witnesses, that you will continue with him in health and in sickness; in prosperity and in adversity; that you will be to him a kind, affectionate and dutiful wife; and that forsaking all others, you will keep yourself to him, and to him only till death shall separate you.

I do then, in virtue of the authority committed to me as a minister of the gospel, by the laws of this State, pronounce you, *Husband and*

Wife; henceforth in interests and destiny, as in affection **ONE**.

A brief prayer.

Form II. The marriage institution is as old as the human family, and it is authorized, and guarded, both by divine and civil law. It is pointed out alike by the word of God, and the relations and experience of our race, as eminently conducive to human happiness. It is especially fraught with beneficent designs to the parties seeking its honorable association; and those entering upon this intimate and endearing union with congenial dispositions, and mutual affections,

find it replete with blessings.

It is also the source of the purity and permanency of domestic, social, and civil institutions. Wherever it has been dishonored, the fountains of domestic affection have flowed with the mingled and bitter waters of jealousy, alienation, and strife; the education and happiness of the rising generation have been neglected; the sanctions of private and public impaired; and the strong bonds of society sundered.

In the relations of this institution, you are about to become one in your temporal interests and destinies. In token therefore of a due consideration of the laws of the marriage state, and of your mutual and decided choice of each other as partners for life, you will please to unite your right hands.

You now solemnly promise before God and these witnesses to take this woman to be your lawful, wedded wife; to love and respect her; to defend, support, and cherish her, in health and in sickness; in prosperity and in adversity; and leaving all others to cleave only to her, so long as you both shall live.

You in like manner solemnly promise to receive this man as your lawful, wedded husband; to love, respect, and obey him, and leaving all others to cleave only to him, so long as you both shall live.

By virtue of the authority vested in me as a minister of the gospel, I pronounce you *Husband and Wife*; and what God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

A brief prayer.

Form III. The marriage relation is one both of natural and scriptural appointment.

It has been authorized and guarded under all forms of civil government, and every dispensation of religion. Its nature and duties are set forth, and its beneficent designs commended in the scriptures.

Read the scriptures.

In token of your due consideration of the nature of the obligations of the marriage relation as thus pointed out, and of your mutual and decided choice of each other, as partners for life; you will please to join your right hands.

You hereby promise before Almighty God and these witnesses, to receive each other as husband and wife; and to practice with

mutual fidelity all those offices of affection and kindness which God has enjoined upon those united in this relation.

Agreeably to the laws of this State, and the laws of God, I pronounce you *Husband and Wife*; and what God has joined together let not man put asunder.

A brief prayer.

Form IV: I hold in my hands a license to solemnize matrimony between A.B. and C.D. Marriage is the oldest institution in the world. When God made man, He made them male and female, woman was created from the man's side, and placed at his side to indicate that she was to be neither his master nor his slave, but a helpmate for him.

For this reason he was to forsake all kindred and cleave unto his wife, and they two were to be one flesh.

God has given you in his book all the instructions concerning the new relationship into which you are about to enter. I, therefore, commend to you the word of God, and especially the epistles of Paul as the guide of your lives.

And, now, if before God and these witnesses, you do each pledge to the other to live together as husband and wife according to the word of God until death shall separate you, you will signify the same by joining your right hands.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the State of _____, as a minister of the gospel, I pronounce you lawfully married; and what God has joined together let not man put asunder.

Prayer.

FORM V: I am authorized by this license to solemnize the marriage contract between Mr. A. B. and Miss C. D. You have, doubtless, carefully considered this question, and freely, and willingly have plighted yourselves, the one to the other. I only remark that those who are united in the holy bonds of matrimony should pledge themselves to each other for life, as husband and wife, to love, nourish, and cherish each other as such, and cleave to none other until death parts them.

If you Mr. A. B. and Miss C. D. do thus solemnly pledge yourselves to each other, you will join your right hands.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by law, as a Minister of the Gospel, I pronounce you *Husband and Wife*. You are now legally and scripturally married and what is joined together by the

appointment of God let man not put asunder.

Let us pray.

And, now O Lord, Our Heavenly Father, be pleased to sanction and confirm with thy blessing this solemn and important transaction.

Grant to these persons now united in marriage, grace to be faithful always to the holy and blessed vow they have taken upon themselves. May they be ever faithful and affectionate to each other. In all times of prosperity and in all times of adversity, may they be sharers in each others joys, and sympathizers and supporters in each others sorrows.

May thy grace dwell in their hearts, and may they be one in Christ now. And may thy divine and gracious blessing rest upon them through this life and unto life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

After death there comes, first of all, the preparation for the burial of the dead. The good Jeremy Taylor once said: “When we have received the last breath of our friend, and closed his eyes, there is a time to weep and lament as he is worthy. Something is to be given to custom, something to nature, and to civilities and to the honor of the deceased friend. When thou hast wept awhile, compose the body to burial; which that it be done gravely, decently, and charitably, we have the example of all nations to engage us, and of all ages of the world to warrant, so that it is against common honesty, and public fame and reputation, not to do this office.

“It is good that the body be kept veiled and secret, and not exposed to curious eyes; or the dishonors brought by the changes of death discerned and stared upon by impertinent persons.

“Let the body be buried after the manner of the country, and the laws of the place, and the dignity of the person. For so Jacob was buried with great solemnity; and Joseph’s bones were carried into Canaan; and devout men carried Stephen to his burial, making great lamentation over him.

“And so our Savior was pleased to admit the cost of Mary’s ointment, because she did it for his burial. In this as in everything else, as our piety must not pass into superstition, or vain expense, so neither must the excess be turned into parsimony and impiety to the

memory of the dead.”

The following excellent directions concerning funeral services are condensed from the “Young Pastor’s Guide” by the late Rev. Enoch Pond, D.D. and for many years Professor in the Theological Seminary at Bangor, Maine:

1. A minister has no option; he *must* attend them. They are matters in which his feelings, duties, and interests are equally involved.

2. The mode of attending funerals is different in different places. But the services embrace always *an address and a prayer*. In the country they are often of more general importance than in town.

3. The services, including hymns and Scripture, should be appropriate. Sameness and uniformity should be avoided as far as possible, but the peculiarities of the case must direct the minister how to adapt his services.

4. The manner of the speaker should be sympathetic, subdued, tender and faithful.

5. The services should be short, for there must be time to see the face, to attend the body to the grave, and to return.

6. The true object of funeral addresses is not so much to eulogize the dead as to instruct, comfort and benefit the living. It may be proper to speak of the *vices* of the deceased, but only in the way of charity and kindness, if at all.

7. Consolation can be drawn often from the character of the dead. Mourners are always partial friends, and they love to hear a kind word from their minister. But the minister must keep soberly within the truth.

SCRIPTURAL SERVICES.

There are no words like the words of God for those who sorrow and who desire to lay deep in their hearts the foundation of eternal hope; for, in the beautiful language of Bishop Hall, “But for thee, O Saviour, the gravestone, the earth, the coffin, are no bounders of thy dear respects; even after death, and burial, and corruption, thou art graciously affected to those thou lovest.”

A SALUTATION.

(Psalm 20)

The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of

Jacob defend thee: send thee help from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion.

(John 11:25-26.)

I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

WORDS OF COMFORT.

(Psalm 23)

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

THE BREVITY OF LIFE.

(Selections)

Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.

Behold thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth and mine age is as nothing before thee.

All our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four-score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away. We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

Lord what is man that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man that thou makest account of him? Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. When I awake I am still with thee. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way

wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Amen.

I. SERVICES FOR A CHILD.

(a) (Matthew 18:1-6.)

1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

6 But, whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

(Matthew 19:13-15.)

13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

(b) (1 Kings 17:17-24)

17 And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him on his own bed.

20 And he cried unto the **LORD**, and said, **O LORD** my God hast

thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the **LORD**, and said, O **LORD** my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

22 And the **LORD** heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house and delivered him unto his mother; and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the **LORD** in thy mouth is truth.

(c) 2 Samuel 12:15-23.

15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the **LORD** struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.

17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth; but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the **LORD**, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me that the child may live?

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

(d) (2 Kings 4:18-37.)

18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother,

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

21 And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? it is neither new moon, nor Sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.

24 Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.

25 So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite:

26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the **LORD** hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.

28 Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

29 Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said, As the **LORD** liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The

child is not awaked.

32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

33 He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the **LORD**.

34 And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

37 Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

II. SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

(a) (Eccl. 12:1-14.)

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low:

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit

shall return unto God who gave it.

8 Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

9 And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

10 The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

(b) (Mark 5:35-42.)

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha-cumi: which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee), arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

(c) (John 11:17-35)

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave

four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: But Mary sat still in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She said unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.

34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

(d) (Luke 7:11-16.)

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up and began to speak: and he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

III. SERVICES FOR CHRISTIANS.

(a) 1 Peter 1:13-25

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

17 And if he call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth

through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

(b) (1 Cor. 15:35-58)

35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain.

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, and last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory.

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as **ye** know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord,

(c) (Heb. 12:1-13.)

1 Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand **of** the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction **of** sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

(d) (Acts 9:36-42.)

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas; this woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose, and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa: and many believed in the Lord.

(e) (II Cor. 4:7-18.)

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are per-

plexed, but not in despair.

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

(f) (II Cor. 5:1-10.)

1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from

the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

(g) (Luke 12:37-40.)

37 Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

(h) (Rev. 21 and 22 Selections)

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

IV. GENERAL SERVICES.

(a) (Psalm 90)

1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God,

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.

6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our

years, as a tale that is told.

10 The days of our years are three-score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four-score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

(b) (Job 4:7-21.)

7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an

image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,

17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

19 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

20 They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish forever without any regarding it.

21 Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.

(c) (Matthew 25:31-46.)

31 When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty,

and ye gave me no drink;

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

(d) (Psalm 20)

1 The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.

2 Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.

3 Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice. Selah.

4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfill all thy counsel.

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfill all thy petitions.

6 Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

8 They are brought down and fallen: hut we are risen, and stand upright.

9 Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call.

(e) (Psalm 49)

1 Hear this all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

4 I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever:)

9 That he should still live forever, and not see corruption.

10 For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless man being in honor abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish.

13 This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave: death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul, (and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself,)

19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

20 Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

V. AT THE GRAVE.

After the body has been laid in the grave, the minister may say:

Forasmuch as it has pleased our Heavenly Father in his wise providence to take out of this body the spirit that inhabited it, we therefore commit its decaying remains to their kindred element — *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*; looking for the general resurrection through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose coming to

judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be made like unto his own glorious body; according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

ANOTHER FORM: We have come here to lay our dead out of sight. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope. In the hope of eternal life, we commit all that is mortal of this our *Brother* to the earth whence he came — *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.*

And to Him who sitteth on high, in whose hand are the keys of death and hell, we look for that resurrection of the body whereof he was the first fruits from the dead.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE SICK ROOM

The following selection and classification of passages from the scriptures will be appreciated by those who have frequently found difficulty in making suitable selections for the sick room.

Blessings of Affliction

(a) (John 15:1-8)

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abideth not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

(b) (Rom. 5:1-5.)

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, though our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience hope;

5 And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is

shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.

(c) (2 Cor. 12:7-10.)

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

(d) (1 Peter 1:3-9.)

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, through it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Patience and Trust

(a) (Psalm 3)

1 Lord, how, are they increased that trouble me? many are they

that rise up against me.

2 Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

3 But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

4 I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

5 I laid me down and slept; I awoke; for the Lord sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

7 Arise, O **Lord**; save me, O my God; for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

(b) (Psalm 18:1-19)

1 I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

2 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.

10 And he rode upon a cherub and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about

him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

12 At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail-stones and coals of fire.

13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire.

14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightning, and discomfited them.

15 Then the channels of water were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath thy nostrils.

16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.

19 He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

(c) (Psalm 121)

1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for ever more.

(d) (James 5:7-11)

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receiveth the early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the door.

10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Divine Mercy and Sympathy

(a) (Isaiah 53::1-12)

1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief:

when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

(b) (Psalm 25:12-22)

12 What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

13 His soul shall dwell at ease and his seed shall inherit the earth.

14 The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.

15 Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look upon mine affliction, and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

(c) (Psalm 34:15-22)

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

16 The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them

out of all their troubles.

18 The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

(d) (Isaiah 54)

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3 Incline your ear and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6 Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the

eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Recovery of Health

(a) (Psalm 116:1-11)

1 I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:

11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.

(b) (Isaiah 38:9-20)

9 The writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

11 I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of

the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

13 I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me.

15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

16 O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

17 Behold, for peace I have great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

20 The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

(c) (Philippians 2:25-30.)

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29 Receive him, therefore, in the Lord with all gladness; and

hold such in reputation:

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

(d) (Psalm 30:2-12)

2 O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

5 For his anger endureth but for a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

7 Lord, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

8 I cried to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication.

9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

10 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever.

The Dying Christian

(a) (1 John 3:1-2.)

1 Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

(b) (2 Timothy 4:6-8.)

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

(c) (Philippians 3:20-21)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

(d) (Philippians 1:20-23; 6:24)

20 According to my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I know not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ.

6:24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

(e) (Psalm 16:8-11.)

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

FUNERAL SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

In the scriptures, four things may be found, which are of great value to the Christian Minister: "Precepts for life, doctrines for knowledge, examples for illustrations, and promises for comfort."

Death and Judgment.

Text: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." — (Heb. 9:27)

The question is often asked, if there is a God, why all the suffering that is in the world? Why does death reign triumphant over all? Why does the innocent suffer and the cold blooded murderer go free? Is there no justice to be meted out to man?

A judgment day is often spoken of in the Bible. That day is necessary for God to vindicate his character before angels and men as a God of justice, mercy and love.

(1) Men are called upon to repent in view of that day. Acts 17:31.

(2) The demons expected such a day when Jesus was upon the earth, Matthew 8:29; wicked angels are doomed to that day, and unjust men are reserved to that day, 2 Peter 2:4, 9; All will be there, Rom. 14:10-12; Our words will be brought up, Matt. 12:36-37; The secret things will be judged, Rom. 2:16; Sodom and Gomorrah will be there, Matt. 10:15; It is after the spirit leaves the body that we are to be judged, 2 Cor. 5:8-10; and therefore after death, Heb. 9:27.

(3) To accomplish this, Jesus will come again. He will come personally, Acts 1:11; When he comes, the saints will meet him in glory, Col. 3:4; When he comes he will change the bodies of his people like unto his, Phil. 3:30-31; When he comes he will raise the dead, 1 Thes. 4:13-16, and 1 Cor. 15:23; The righteous will be revealed at the resurrection of the just, Luke 14:14; Paul looked for a crown of life at the Lord's coming, 2 Tim. 4:1-8; and when the Lord comes in judgment he will reward the righteous and the wicked, 2 Thes. 1:6-10.

(4) From this judgment there is no appeal. Blessed is he who can stand the trial of the last great day.

Christian Ripeness.

Text: "Thou shalt come to thy grave in full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season. (Job 5:26.)

The shock of ripe corn is a beautiful symbol of a completed and ripe Christian life.

1. To produce the shock of corn there must have been seed sown, for nature does not produce corn otherwise.

2. The seed must have contained the principle of coming life.

3. The soil must be proper and well prepared and cared for.

4. There must be gradual growth and development.

5. The plant must be supplied with nourishment from within and from without.

6. In growing it was exposed to many changes. Cold, and heat, drouth and flood and tempest, come between the seed time and the harvest, and it must have the sunshine to ripen it.

7. So the Christian's life passes through similar changes from the planting of the good seed of the word of God in the heart until the ripened life is ready for the eternal garner.

The Dead Child.

Text: "They all wept and bewailed her, but Jesus said," etc. etc. (Luke 8:52.)

The history in which these words are found records one of the most distinguished miracles of Christ. Notice: —

- I. The sorrow at the death of the child.

- II. Christ's consoling view of death: "she is not dead, but sleepeth."

- III. Christ as the great awakener. No one but Christ could have awakened that maid.

Christ makes the grave the door through which we pass into a better life. Through him the sting and victory of death and the grave have passed away.

The Certainty of the Resurrection.

Text: "Thy brother shall rise again." (John 11:23)

- I. Jesus said so and it came to pass.

- II. Jesus has power over the grave, and the forces of death are obedient to him.

- III. He surrendered himself to death in its most terrible form and

freed himself unharmed.

IV. Hence the resurrection is possible, for there is one who has power over death.

V. The resurrection is certain, for he who has power over it has promised it, and his word is truth.

Death will not end us.

Text: "I am the resurrection and the life. (John 11:25.)

Let us notice: —

I. Christ proved his power over death by going through the grave and back again.

II. Death is the breaking of the shell that gives the bird a world instead of a narrow cell, and powers of flight and vision of which no revelation could have given it an adequate conception.

III. The grave more even than the cradle marks the commencement of eternal life. As we stand by the graves of dear ones we have a right to say: Believing in the midst of our afflictions that death is a beginning and not an end, we cry to them and send farewells that better might be called predictions. They are foreshadowings of the future thrown into the unknown.

Human Life.

Text: "What is your life? (James 4:14)

I. Life is the gift of God. The cradled baby breathes involuntarily because its breath is in God's hands.

II. Being God's gift it should be devoted to great purposes. The mere lapse of time is not life. The end [goal] of life is to be like God, and in this way do we glorify him.

III. This life is the period of our preparation for a higher and a better life. There is no perfection in this life. The oldest and wisest man is as a child, and is full of imperfections.

IV. This life is transitory and uncertain. It is like a vapor; It is like a voyage; It is a pilgrimage; It is a drama; It is like a rainbow; It is a valley of shadows and a vale of tears.

"Gently, Lord, O gently lead us

Through this gloomy vale of tears

Through the changes, thou'st decreed us.

Till our last great change appears."

The Glorified Dead.

Text: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me write," etc. etc. (Rev. 14:13.)

This language suggests the interest of heaven in the glorified dead.

By the voice and on the written page will their memories be perpetuated.

I. The character of their death is blessed, "In the Lord." There is a complete union between the Christian dead and Christ.

II. Their condition after death is blessed. "They do rest from their labors," not in inaction and indolence, but perfection in service and honor.

III. The influence of their lives is blessed. "Their works follow them," ever widening, ever deepening, ever rising.

"The afflictions of life are brief and light,
While faith looks beyond the dark Jordan's strand,
Where splendidly shine the mansions bright,
Which Jesus prepares in that Glorious Land."

The Grandeur of the Christian's Death.

Text: "Death is swallowed up in victory." (I. Cor. 15:54.)

The sting of death is sin. The only thing that gives death any power over us is sin. In the case of the Christian sin is pardoned, and so the sting of death is withdrawn.

I. Death to a good man is only the gate that opens into a higher life, and a better state of being. Through Christ he has wrested the dart from death's hand, and it has now no power over him. Over death he is a conqueror, and to him it is the grandest triumph, for it is all gain.

II. At death the Christian lays aside this fleshly body with its lusts and its appetites, its pains and its passions.

His soul is delivered from bondage to enter upon the joyful freedom of heaven.

He is introduced into holy society, and into scenes of glory and everlasting blessedness.

"Where golden harps are ringing."