

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

This we know is a question often asked among our friends and enemies. Our terms on DAWNS, tracts, etc., to our readers and to colporteurs, made very public, convince all that we are not selling the truth for gain; and as the work keeps on and on, the wonder increases. Strangers surmise that many wealthy folks are interested in the work; but those intimately acquainted know better, that the Apostle's prediction is fully verified, – that among the interested are not many rich, not many great, not many whom the world esteems wise, but chiefly the poor of this world. – See 1 Cor. 1:26-29 and James 2:5.

We can only answer: The work is the Lord's and the workers are his, wherever they may be laboring in the harvest field. He is caring for and providing for his own work. As for ourselves, we do not live out of the work, nor accept any monetary compensation for our service for the Master and his cause, that our time and effort may be an offering of sweet savor unto the Lord, acceptable to him through Christ Jesus, our Redeemer. We mention this, not as a reproof to any whom God has differently situated, but that the friends may know how this part of the Lord's harvest work is conducted.

While our personal accounts and affairs are kept separate from those of the general work – "The Tract Fund" – yet we thank God that we have *nothing of our own*; that we left all to follow him; that having given ourselves entirely to him, we were enabled to realize that, if we are wholly his, all that we have and are is his also. Hence, though our personal accounts are kept separate and distinct from the general Tract Fund account, yet both are governed and used under the same general principles, of which care and economy are parts, coupled, we trust, with heaven-

directed judgment as to how best and most to reach and bless and set free the true sheep, by so dispensing the harvest message as to lead them out of error's bondage and sectarian slavery into the liberty of the truth, and to let all who have an ear hear the voice of the great Shepherd.

Some have said to us (and many have written the same in substance): "If you ever get short and need a little help, be sure to call on me, and I shall be glad to assist." We thank all such, and realize their good intentions and appreciate them, but we never have asked and never will ask money for the Lord's cause. The *nearest* we ever came to asking money from any convinced us that such a course is wholly contrary to the Lord's will. That instance was in 1881, when over a million copies of "*Food for Thinking Christians*" were published and circulated. We then remembered a Brother, who was well-to-do, and who had repeatedly shown a deep interest in the cause, and who had said to us, "Brother R_____, whenever you see something good, something specially calculated to spread the light and needing money, something in which you intend to invest, let me know of it – count me in on all such enterprises;" and we merely laid the matter before him, explaining the plan and the amount of money that *could* be used, without making any direct request. The Brother gave liberally, yet apparently the offering brought him only a partial blessing. And, perhaps from fear that we would call further opportunities to his notice, and from a lack of full appreciation of our motives in the matter or of the light in which we regarded it (as a favor toward him to let him know of the opportunity), that Brother has gone backward and lost much of his former interest. How much the above circumstance had to do with his decline of interest we know not, but it doubly strengthened and guarded us on a point [R1173 : page 2] on which we were already well settled, namely, that no direct and personal appeals should be made to any in our Lord's name. All

the gold and silver is his. He neither begged nor commissioned any to beg for him.

As he increases the supply of the means, we will sow the seed of truth the more bountifully and liberally, and yet economically and judiciously as we know how; and if he withholds the funds, we will still be thankful and seek to make what is supplied go as far as possible, by practicing the more rigid economy; and if the supplies stop entirely, instead of asking man or even asking the Lord for more, we shall be content to stop the work entirely, believing that such a course would thus be indicated to be the Lord's will.

Ah! it is a great mistake, dear friends, to hold on to a money-talent, or any other talent of which we may be possessed, and to say, When I see that *my talents* are needed, when I see that the Lord's work has been crippled and interrupted for lack of what I have, – then I will give and give liberally, if *need be* to the last dollar or the last breath. Such a love of the Lord, though far better than many have, is not of the sort our Master will accept and honor as worthy to be of his Bride. Such a spirit analyzed means, I am selfish, I love my plans and schemes in which I find use for every dollar. I do not appreciate the privilege of *self-denial*, but if God should speak from heaven and demand *all*, I would promptly give all, or if I found God's plan likely to fail utterly for the lack of what I could give, if it took the last dollar, I would rescue the Lord and his cause from failure.

The proper course is, to realize that God is abundantly able to carry out all his plans without our aid at all; and that instead of our gifts of time and energy and money being necessary to help God along, he is *favoring us* amazingly, by granting us the *privilege* of co-working with him in using what little we may have. This is a privilege which all may enjoy. The poor widow and the poor laborer of ever so small income, as well as the more

highly favored in this world's goods, should appreciate the privilege of bringing some present to the Lord – something that will testify their love, and show what is in their hearts to do, were they possessed of larger talents and opportunities. The two mites or two cents of the poor widow may cost as great self-denial as ten dollars would cost a mechanic or merchant, or as a thousand dollars would cost a wealthy man, or as a hundred thousand dollars would cost a millionaire. One may deny himself a yacht or a new residence, another may deny himself an extra carriage, or a trip to Europe, another may deny himself an extra suit of clothes or a usual "summer outing," and the widow may deny herself an extra table relish. It is self-denial in either case, and when done for the cause of our Redeemer, it is appreciated by him, not according to the amount but according to the self-denial, which gauges the love as truly in one case as in the other.

Could each one fully realize his present *privileges*, the conduct of each would declare –

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus,
All my being's ransomed powers,
All my thoughts and words and doings,
All my days, and all my hours."

The consecrated condition voiced by the Apostle is, "For me to live is Christ:" and wherever that sentiment is even partially shared by God's people to-day, there is such a desire to tell of his mighty love, that time, talent, voice, purse and every other thing are valued specially because they enable the adorer to show forth the glories of the Adored One who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

To such, the *one-tenth* of all increase, which the Law commanded the Jew to consecrate, and which some Christians observe, would seem an offering far too small to satisfy the demands of their love-inspired zeal. Such must and will do more

– not of constraint or command, but to testify to the Redeemer their love and devotion. These will take pleasure in cutting short the time previously spent in the reading of light literature and daily news; they will be less careful and less energetic in pushing business so as to lay up treasure on earth for their children or others to quarrel over and be injured by; they will spend less time in foolishly endeavoring to shine on earth by "putting on style," in dress and home and road equipage. And they will not only thus save moments and hours, and dimes and dollars; but they will *use them also*, which some forget to do who are adepts at saving.

How shall we *spend* our savings of time and money? becomes an important question. We answer, if you and all that you have are the Lord's, *you* are God's steward in this matter, and must consult *his will* and not your own nor another's will. In other words, you must act up to *your own conscience* and light in this matter, no matter who or how many offer you advice. You will be advised and urged to give time, influence and money to support great Babylon in some or in many forms – as to assist in employing a worldly, unbelieving choir to displease God by praising and chanting with their lips while their hearts are far from him. ("Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing that thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." – Psalm 50:16,17.) Or perhaps you will be asked to contribute toward the support of a minister who, either ignorantly or stupidly or for money, devotes his time to misrepresenting the character and plan of our God, and thus blinding the very eyes that he should be opening with the eyesalve of truth. Or perhaps you will be urged to give money to assist the Foreign Missions in carrying the bad tidings abroad, or to help Home Missions to teach the Indians of the West and the Negroes of the South, directly or indirectly, the very errors from which, thank God, you have gotten free through the truth – to help put upon others the chains of error from which you have just gained freedom.

Can you spend either time or money in those channels, conscientiously believing that thus spent it will most glorify God? If you have come to a knowledge of the truth, you certainly can do nothing of the sort. Better far to waste the time, and waste or destroy the money, than to use it thus to fetter others with error and to dishonor our God.

If your giving and sacrificing are from the right motives, you will need to be just as conscientious as to how you spend your time, influence and means for God and truth, as you are to economize and save these from self and worldly things. The world and the devil are continually begging. Beware of those who beg in Christ's name. Be suspicious of them. Scrutinize their objects closely. God never begs. The most he ever *asks you for* is your heart – "My son, give me thy heart." When our hearts are fully his, we begin to urge him more and more to *accept* our little offerings. And as we become anxious to serve him and intelligently seek how we may best do so, he graciously *gives us the privilege* by letting us see where and how we may co-work with him in the spread of present truth.
