

NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR GOD'S SERVICE.

"If there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame or blind, or have any ill-blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the Lord thy God."

– Deut. 15:21. –

SUCH an injunction to the house of servants under Moses is, perhaps, more necessary to the house of sons under Christ (Heb. 3:5,6), than many are apt to suppose. Inborn selfishness generally suggests that it would be a pity to sacrifice the best things, which could be used to advantage in so many other ways. And it is because this is generally done unconsciously that we now discuss this subject, with a view of helping the true-hearted out of the difficulty. Truly our hearts are exceedingly deceitful and require constant watching as respects their real motives, which they sometimes hide even from the loyal-hearted sons of God.

How often we have seen Christian parents, lovers of the Lord and his cause, who at times would bemoan their own inability to be actively engaged in the Lord's service, and who loved and admired the sacrifices of brethren and sisters in the colporteur service, who, to their injury, held back their own sons and daughters. Their reasoning seems to be that the work of the evangelist, as a colporteur, is good enough for those who have no education, or for such as are untalented; but they would have their children aim *higher* in life; – they would accept the Lord's bounty and expend it upon their children to give them an education, and then point them to medicine or law or literature or school-teaching as honorable and remunerative fields for their talents and education.

What a great mistake! what a sad mistake! How ashamed they will feel, if they ever get into the Kingdom, when looking back they will see how lightly they esteemed the wonderful privilege of being co-workers with God in this present time! How vastly different will be their views then, respecting the *importance* of medicine and law and schools and literature and marriage! How ashamed they will be that they ever thought

that the lean and the lame and the ill-favored were good enough to sacrifice to the Lord! – that none should think of colportearing but those who had no capacity for "worldly prosperity!"

On the contrary the consecrated parent should consecrate to the Lord not only his firstborn, but all of his children; and from infancy should be instilling into their minds and hearts that the proper course for all of God's people is to devote themselves in largest possible measure to the divine service. They should be taught to regard all of life's affairs with a view to rendering their all to his service in any possible capacity; and to pray that the Lord would accept and use their time, talent, influence – all – in his service, the most honorable service imaginable, and ultimately to be the most highly rewarded. The Apostle's teaching respecting marriage (1 Cor. 7:27-40) should be brought to their attention with the thought of the Apostle that it is not a condemnation of marriage in others, but one of the incidental sacrifices of those anxious to be most fully used in the Lord's service.

Not only so, but the Christian parent who discerns present truth should encourage his child not to strive for the higher education, but to be content with a common school education; because (1) to qualify himself for a profession would be to put before himself a temptation in that direction which would last through life; (2) because the higher education of the present day in all colleges is so impregnated with the Evolution theory and Higher Criticism that the strong probability is that, like others, he would fall into skepticism, which will kill his devotion to the Lord, and he could only be induced to serve the Lord, even outwardly, by an honorable position and a good salary – if, indeed, it left him anything but morality as a substitute for religion!

On the contrary, every man and woman favored by the Lord with some knowledge of present truth [**R3148 : page 53**] should at once appreciate the true situation; – that the most talented and best educated have nothing worthy a place on the Lord's altar, – nothing worthy of acceptance in the Lord's service; and, forthwith, each should proceed to

devote to it, daily and hourly, the *best* that he has and the *most* that he can, as being the greatest privilege that could ever be offered to angels or men – to be collaborators with God. Some, thus rightly appreciating the matter, are glad to leave medicine and business and schools to engage in the much grander and more important service of the gospel, as colporteur-evangelists; – to carry the printed message, of glad tidings of great joy, to all who have hearing ears. They rightly feel that they have not too much education or talent for so honorable a service as ambassadors for the King of Kings, but that if they had more and yet more, it would be to the interest of the work.

Would you have a young man or a young woman dash all the prospects and ambitions of the present life, and enter the colporteur work, – simply because they have accepted present truth and because you urge them to this service? No, indeed; we hope that none so minded will enter the work. The Lord seeketh not such for his service and representatives, and, hence, we do not seek them in his name. He seeks such as "count it all joy" to serve him and his at any sacrifice. Those entering the work against their will would, undoubtedly, do poor work and soon fall away from the truth.

But would you recommend a man of means, – a business man, for instance, – to dispose of his own business and go about colporteur-ing? living on the interest of his money, or, perhaps, on the principal? Why not? Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by his words: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The Lord's true saints have no business of their *own*, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord – not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death; for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-26.) If he can provide for the comfortable necessities of the present life for those dependent upon him, why should he do more for them, or for any cause longer delay to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of

darkness into his marvelous light" – in the best manner open to him? Alas, how few of those who recognize their trusteeship are faithful to it and will be able to render their report with joy, and to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Before "the harvest is past and the summer is ended,"* let us get awake, dear brothers and sisters, to our privileges and opportunities and use them thankfully. But let us not be misunderstood as commending anything impracticable. Only exceptional ones can do more than provide for their own personal comforts – even at the very liberal terms granted to colporteurs; and "he that provideth not for his own household is worse than an unbeliever"* is the Apostle's argument. Those hampered by family encumbrances must show their love and devotion by some other form of sacrifice.

Let us give a concluding word to some of the humble and small-talented ones who have engaged in this service. They may, perhaps, be inclined to feel that they are of the *blemished* class of ill-favored ones represented in our text as unacceptable. But not so, dear brethren: the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin – covers all our natural blemishes [R3149 : page 53] and makes us worthy and acceptable in the Beloved. A cipher alone has no value, but it is a power indeed, when it follows 1; and so it is with us when we follow Christ – his merit gives us association and cooperation with him; gives us weight and influence and power for God and his cause. "Ye are complete in Him;"* "accepted in the Beloved."*

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