

*Original Contributions.***The Church at Ephesus.**

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NUMBER VIII.

In our last paper we could not finish the first part of Sec. 2, of the particulars in the apostle's exhortation. Let us devote this one to that purpose including the thought from verses 13 to 21, chap. 3.

Our author declares that all these reprehensible things before mentioned are exposed by the light which makes them visible. (Therefore evil doers hate the light and shun it. See John iii: 19, 20) Therefore, "Awake you who sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you." Walk accurately, not as fools, but as wise men, employing the time. See Matt. 7: 24, 27. The days are evil, unjust, uncertain. It is by active efforts that we may understand the will of the Lord; not by stimulating with him, but filled with God's spirit. We are gratified with spiritual songs; singing and making melody in the heart. "Thankful at all times for all things, offering our oblations in the name of Jesus, subject to each other in reverence to God."

1. The command, "Awake thou sleeper," is a metaphor full of philosophical thought. This quotation or allusion of Paul is found in Isa. 11: 1. He uses a similar expression in Rom. 13: 2; 1 Cor 15: 34; 1 Thes. 5: 6. Sleep is here used to indicate the condition or state of peril of these in sin, or perhaps those who are slothful, careless, or not fully aroused to their opportunities, duties and privileges. The illustration is striking in its relevancy when we remember that it is a state of inaction, of inability, of elusion and peril. Indifference and idleness breeds sin which prostrates all our powers. Down to sleep, dreaming, is the opposite of awake, up and watching. In the former we are unprepared, unarmed and in danger of surprise. A great army in this condition has been broken and slain by an inferior force which would have given them but little trouble had they been awake, ready and watchful. Jesus commanded all to watch. Mark 13: 3, 7; and this can not be done when prostrated in careless sleep. So wake up, get up and watch.

2. We find this fully illustrated in the history of Jonah. God

directed him to Nineveh to warn them of their wickedness, and, contrary to duty, he paid his fare and took ship for Tarsus, when the mighty tempest of the sea alarmed

the crew, so they called upon their gods. The shipmaster found Jonah in the sides of the ship, fast asleep, and said: "O, thou sleeper, arise, and call upon thy God." When the tempest comes upon us we may be aroused and likely find that we have been sleeping in a vessel bound for Tarsus. It is a journey of our own choosing which we seek to make at our own expense, contrary to the one which God directed.

3. Sampson was a giant in strength. No bands would hold him; no power of the Philistines could overcome him, yet after slaying thousands he lay down in sleep, and the delicate Delilah directed the hand that cuts away his strength. To enjoy the blessed power of the Gospel of Christ we must stand and walk in its light, as active, energetic men. But its light shines in vain to those who sleep away their days in careless indifference to its mandates.

4. The alienated world is dead in sin or sleeping under its torpid influence. God's call to arouse them is made through the Gospel of Christ. (See 2 Thess. 2: 14). It first awakes men, second demands them to arise, watch and work. When the prodigal son "came to himself" he may be said to have wakened up. In that condition he was able to consider his destitute condition and remember the riches of his father's house. This he could not do while carelessly rioting away his means. But the highest or lowest place in his father's house would never have been enjoyed by simply arousing and thinking of them; he must arise and go; so men must become aroused not only enough to think of a better life, but arise and seek to obtain it. But while this is true of the sinner, let us remember that all these Scriptures to which we have referred were addressed to the disciples of the Lord. That it is made to them in view of the vices which they are to shun, and the virtues which they are to faithfully practice in life. These are set before us in this majestic exhortation in all their intensity and fervency. It is painful to observe their absence from the character of many professing Christians of our day. It may be that very few

keep them in memory as they should. When reading this section of Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians sing Bro. T. H. Janteson's beautiful song. (page 259, Revised Hymnal).

"Awake thou that sleepest,  
Arise from the dead;  
Shake off the dull slumber  
That circles thy head;  
The deep, chilly shadows  
Of death's gloomy night  
Will fly at the rising

Of Christ, the 'true light.'"

Or those of Dodridge:

"Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,  
And press with vigor on;  
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,  
And an immortal crown."

**"Doctor I Want a Spade."**

A good minister, now dead, once preached to his congregation a powerful sermon founded upon the words of Christ, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" (Matt. 20: 6). The sermon did good to many, among whom was a lady who went to the minister the next day, and said, "Doctor, I want a spade." Dear reader, are you looking for a spade? Do you need advice as to how you shall work for Christ, and the good of souls? Such advice we will try to give you.

Giving money to the cause of Christ is a good spade with which to work. Dr. Coke, an eminent missionary, used to say every guinea that was given to carry the gospel to the black population of the West Indies, had been the means of converting at least one soul to Christ. What a privilege for rich Christians to give of their gold for the producing of this sublime result—the eternal salvation of human souls! But the poor Christian can also work with this "spade." The two mites which the "poor widow" cast into the treasury were accepted by the "Lord of the temple;" so now while it is an act of condescension in the Great Being to employ in his cause the "gold and silver" of the rich, he accepts with pleasure the offerings of the poor for the carrying out of the plan of salvation, for the eternal benefit of lost souls. "Where are you going so fast?" said one youth to another, as they met on Westminster bridge. The reply was, "I am going with my father's dinner, for we are building the House of Parliament." The boy's part in the erection of the great building was not much, but he could say "we are building" the house, for it was something to feed those who

were actually engaged in the work; and so every pecuniary contribution to the cause of Christ, however small, will do something towards the erection of that spiritual temple, the church, which is to be the joy of angels, the reward of the Redeemer, and glory of God for ever!

The pious instruction of the young is another "spade" with which it is good to work. What a

noble labor Robert Raikes commenced when he gathered his first class of Sabbath scholars in the city of Gloucester! He is the benefactor, not of Britain only, but of Europe and the world. Hayden the great musician, said that he was never so conscious of the meaning of the word sublime, as when he heard the school children sing the Old Hundredth Psalm, under the dome of St. Paul's cathedral. What a noble fact it is that more than two millions of children are found in our Sabbath schools, gratuitously taught by hundreds of thousands of male and female instructors. Readers, why can not you engage in this good work? If you feel the love of Christ glowing in your hearts, go to the Sabbath school, and tell of him who said, "Suffer the little children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Visiting the sick is another "spade" with which to work in the Lord's vineyard. One does not need great intellect or eloquence in order to use this spade. You can surely call upon a sick person, and if he is poor, carry with you a little tea, or nourishing soup, or a nice white loaf, and tell him of the sympathy of Christ and the infinite mercy of God. You are guilty of a great neglect of duty if you do not sometimes visit the afflicted. What does the apostle James say? "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this; to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Oh, ponder well the words of Christ—"A cup of cold water, given to a disciple, shall in no wise lose its reward." "I was sick, and ye visited me." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Distributing religious tracts is another useful "spade" for us to work with. A pious servant once resolved to become a tract distributor. She did so, and persevered