

## Original Contributions.

## BIBLE TALKS.

BY M. R. LEMERT.

NUMBER IX.

Half way down the stream of time from Adam the first, the father of the human family, to Adam the second, the Savior of the same, in bold relief stands Abram, the father of all the faithful, the grandest man of the race, his name signifying a high father. This, though honorable and significant was not sufficiently so in the estimation of him who meted out heaven with the span and weighed the mountains in scales; and he changed his name to Abraham—father of a great multitude—father of many nations, when as yet he had no children. To him the Lord said, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Abraham obeyed, left his country and kin and went into the land of Caanan, the land designated. After arriving the Lord told him his seed should be as the stars—innumerable, and to them he had given all the land from the Nile, the river of Egypt, to the Euphrates; also that kings should descend from him; and Abraham believed it all.

God is no respecter of persons. In his impartial, all-seeing eye, all men stand upon their merits—stand in their true character—as children of Abraham, earnestly desiring to make our calling and election sure—to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling—we wish to ascertain what traits of character Abraham possessed which gave him such a high standing with God and secured for himself such blessings, that we may pattern after them, secure like favor from God and like blessings.

It may be safely asserted that Abraham's faith, (belief) out of which grew his faithfulness, includes all. His faith and faithfulness stand to each other as cause and effect. Abraham's consisted in a full belief in God and of all that he said—believed that whatever he had promised he was able to perform and would perform, no matter if it was contrary to nature,

nor how impossible it might seem; with him nothing was too hard for God as he was the Almighty. This faith was counted to Abraham for righteousness, or justification. Cannot we all have this same faith?

We certainly ought to. If he is the Almighty God, he can do all things; and if he is truthful he will do all he says he will. We may here stand side by side with Abraham, the friend of God. He also obeyed in all things—complied with every requirement, even to the offering his only, his beloved son Isaac a burnt offering, though he had been promised a numerous posterity through him. He thought if he slew his son when *bidden* that this would not hinder God from keeping his promise, as he was able to raise him from the dead. Grand old man! What a worthy example he set us, both of faith and obedience! What earnest efforts we should make to imitate him, and honor the relationship we sustain to him, as his children; then oh, what joy it will be to sit down in the kingdom of God with him. Nothing that we have ever done or suffered will then seem too hard; no sacrifice too great, so rich will be our reward. Awake my soul, stretch every nerve, and press with vigor on.

Abraham's faithfulness was manifested in all his intercourse with others; he was hospitable, just, generous, without the love of money, honorable, even to admiration, accepting no gift, but giving to others, conferring favors for which he would take no compensation, nor would he accept even a burying ground as a gift, but would pay the full worth; and took no advantage in bargain. He was religious and honored his profession, honored God, and all men, commanded the respect of all who knew him, and finished his course without a stain upon his character. So God was not ashamed to say, "I am the God of Abraham."

## ANSWER TO QUESTIONS.

Bro. Floyd:

In the HERALD of the 18th ult. there are some questions propounded by Bro. Peterson, of Mound Ranch, to myself, suggested by my first article on Christian Coöperation. As I said in my letter to you I do not intend to be drawn into a discussion of these themes; but these questions are so kind and of such a nature as to afford me an opportunity of saying some other things that I think need to be said.

As to identity I will say I profess to be a *brother* to all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, and try, with the ability he has given me, to preach his gospel. The only reason for leaving off the real name was that the articles might be judged upon their contents.

1. I think the religion of Christ a perfect religion; that it was never intended to have additions or subtractions. Still I think it possible we may have mistaken its peculiar spirit or genius. I fear that some think of Christianity as being wholly comprehended in a code of laws, comprehending ordinances and observances, while I think of Christianity as a principle of life, entering into all the ramifications and minutia of every day practical life.

2. Certainly.

3. The quotation is not exact. If they meant that I am to require of another in order to Christian fellowship nothing but what is clearly taught, then they were right so far. If they meant that I am to withhold fellowship from one who is using any means for carrying out the service of Christ, though the means be not specially designated, then they were wrong. To illustrate. We are commanded to "neglect not the assembling of ourselves together." Now no brother has a right to make it a question of fellowship whether that assembling be in a private house, a hall, a grove, or house built purposely for the assembly. The location, the kind of house, &c., are frequently made questions of division.

4. The religion of Christ is called "the faith." I think we wholly misinterpret Christianity when we make it a *system of worship* wherein we must have a *precept, example or legitimate inference*. When Christ was upon earth he permitted men to approach and follow after him by different requirements, because he knew the human heart and could readily discern what interposed between man and him. But when he left earth he gave his gospel with certain conditions of acceptance, which were intended to wholly bring the heart into fellowship with him. These conditions were faith, confession, repentance and baptism. The one who by these accepts Christ with the whole heart is *regenerated*. Such an one is adopted into God's spiritual family. These conditions have nothing to do with the one who

has not the gospel, or who does not know or cannot understand the conditions. To such an adopted child God has given certain *helps* in the *new life*. But understand these *helps* are not the new life, but they are simply aids in our endeavors to live unto God; among these I name the assembly of the saints, prayer, the Lord's supper, praise, teaching, exhortation, &c. There are certain *associated duties* also. As to keep the monumental evidence before the world in the Lord's supper, to preach the gospel, to bear one another's burdens, &c.

5. If we do anything without a conviction of its rightfulness it is sin; so he that doubteth is condemned. Now let us come to the broader view of the Christian life.

It is certainly not made up of what we do in the "house of the Lord" in the assembly of the saints. "Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Col. 3: 17. "Whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Col. 3: 23. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10: 31. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which you have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me do; and the God of peace shall be with you." Phil. 4: 8, 9. From these and kindred passages it will be seen that the religion of Christ enters into every fibre of life, and that its *details* are not revealed. It is barely possible that we have in the canon of Scriptures some things unauthorized, and certain it is that the apostles taught much that has never reached us. The Apostle Paul was three years in Ephesus, a year and a half in Corinth, and more than a year in Antioch. Reference is made to letters written that we have not. The reason why I refer to this is to show that we should not exalt the writings above the intention of the writers. Now if you expect to find the *details of conduct* in the Christian life laid down in the New Testament so that you may do nothing not found enumerated there, you are mistaken. If you