

# PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

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## THE MESSENGER

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### A Short Sermon on Life.

BY J. L. WIGLE.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." Gen. ii. 7.

First, let us understand that before "The breath of Life" was given to man it is unquestionably true that his body was as dead matter having no power, not even that of animal life, but was "as a machine constructed without the power of acting, without the power of answering the purpose of its construction. We know of no power except that given by the Spirit and its province is to give life to whatever it comes in contact with. Please notice I speak only in the radical sense for all scriptural arguments if we wish to arrive at the truth, must reach their ultimatum, their extreme. Notice too that it was the body that was formed, and only the body, and that the breath of life, (not the air which we breathe into our lungs, for if this was the life spoken of, when we by forcing air into the lungs, could give life to a dead body,) but it was that which gave him superiority over the beasts of the field. It was the likeness of his Creator which was breathed into his nostrils and this likeness, this superiority constituted by connection with the body a "living soul," capable of answering the purpose of his creation. Life was only transmitted, not created, transmitted by the Almighty to man and then through the parents to the child.

Now let us truly reflect: it was the body that was formed, not created, and it is the body that perishes or keeps if you please. It was the "breath of life" that was breathed into man and it is this breath of life, that can never perish or become still only as stilled by obstructions, as the pure stream of water is stilled by obstructions, and then like it, it becomes polluted and like it, there are means provided for its purification. "And breathed into nostrils the breath of life." Not life itself, for life is radical and can never be anything but purification. But the "Breath of life," and man became a living soul. Not a live soul, for life is radical and must necessarily be perfect. But a "living soul," capable of approaching nearer and nearer, to that state of purity of perfection existing and only existing in the fountain of life. But obstructions have been thrown in the way of the progress of this "living soul," and the means provided and the only means for the cleansing, for the removing of the obstructions is through Christ and permit the inference if the means are not accepted that "living soul," will only gather the more and the more filth, yet still retaining its existence and "Abiding in death." "Verily verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Not living, not the partible but the verb. Life "for as

the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." John x. 25, 26. Remember life is radical, is perfection, but living but living is not, unless applied to the Almighty. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, (future) in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." All is radical excepting none. "And shall come forth," shall come forth implies action, a living principle. They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, (perfection) and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection, of damnation." John v. 28, 29. Damnation is radical, is given to imperfection, to pollution. It is a truth, that there is not a food except there is an appetite for that food, nor an appetite, except there is a food for its gratification. Sleep is unconsciousness, and who has an appetite for unconsciousness. The reverse is true. Death if we define it to be annihilation, who has an appetite for it, but when we understand its true meaning, namely, its birth into a higher life, we find its terrors are dispelled, and with the light of revelation shining through it, sooner than part with the enjoyments of that life, we would part with this earth, and its treasures were they ours to give. Annihilation? Where is the appetite for it, or the law by which it can be brought about upon anything however minute.

### The Holy Spirit.

ITS OPERATION, INFLUENCE, BAPTISM AND INDWELLING.

NUMBER VII.

BY A. P. STONE.

In the foregoing number, we have only been looking at the what, and have learned nothing about the how. That the how of the Spirit in word, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit in power to confirm that word, for the conversion of a sinner, will not reach the how of this indwelling of the Spirit, in the heart of one who has been made a Son of God, by the Spirit in word and power, is self-evident. I know there are some who claim that the earnest of the Spirit—the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us—is the temper of, or disposition of Christ, like a man who manifests a good temper, disposition, or spirit: like the spirit of seventy-six, or of liberty, or patriotism. This is all right and what every citizen should manifest. But is this the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, the circumcision of Christ, the token of the covenant to us? The how of this I have never learned. If any one has found it in the word of God, I wish they would tell us where it is. Some one will say, it can be felt, not told, and therefore, it is not told in the Bible. But this is too uncertain, for every one feels according to his belief. If a man believes a falsehood, his feelings will never make that falsehood a truth, and the Catholic, and the Mormon, and the heterodox of all kinds, have just as good an assurance of an inheritance in heaven, by their feelings, as the orthodox. What, then, is the test? How do we know we have the Spirit dwelling in us? Matt. vii. 20, "by their fruits ye shall know them;" and "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22. The fruit can only grow without the tree to grow upon. Forty years ago two of our pioneer brethren, Wm. Hayden, and J. J. Moss,

were thought not to be orthodox, and at a meeting of preachers, committees were appointed to labor with them, and if possible, cure them of their heresy, and Bro. Matthew Clapp, brother-in-law of Bro. A. Campbell, was a committee of one to wait upon Bro. Moss. They had appointments to travel and preach together for two weeks. Bro. Moss having heard of Brother C's appointment to labor with him, determined to preach about anything but the Spirit. The last day together had arrived, and they had thirty miles before them to their last appointment, and early in the morning, Bro. C. introduced the subject. Bro. Moss stopped him, and said, "Bro. Matthew, answer me four questions, first, and then I will talk with you upon this subject." Bro. Clapp consents, and Brother Moss proceeds, "1. Did God ever command any one to believe in the Spirit?" After riding half an hour, in silence, Bro. Clapp answers, "I can't think of any text." "2. Is not the Spirit one of the promised blessings of the Gospel?" Ans. "Yes," and Bro. Moss observes, "That is the reason why it is not commanded, but we must, necessarily, believe in the Spirit, if we believe in God and Christ, but it is promised, not commanded," and then asked, "3. Upon what conditions are all the blessings promised?" Ans. Upon the conditions of faith in Christ, and obedience to Him." "4. If I truly believe in Christ and obey Him, will not God give me the Spirit, whether I believe in it just as you do or not; whether I understand it as you do or not?" Ans. Yes." Bro. Moss says, "I will talk with you all day about the Spirit, now if you wish." Bro. C. I have nothing more to say, and that (was the last Bro. Moss ever heard about his want of orthodoxy upon the Spirit. Yes that is it; understand that the Spirit operates upon matter, in the prophets, Christ, and the Apostles speak God's word, whether I comprehend it or not; understand that the Spirit operates upon matter in the baptism of the Holy Spirit in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, and in its gifts, thereby bearing testimony with those that spoke the word, to demonstrate and confirm that word, whether I understand its teaching, hearing it, believe, and being influenced by its motives; obey, and as certain as it is that God cannot lie, Heb. vi. 18, so sure is it that God's promise will be fulfilled to us, and that He will put His Spirit in our hearts, as an earnest of our inheritance whether we understand it or not, to say nothing of comprehending how God's Spirit can dwell in us; whether the indwelling of the Spirit is the baptism of the Holy Spirit or not. If it is the same, I pray God we may have—what?—a rebaptism, a deeper baptism, a more overwhelming baptism. How shall I pray? There is a great lack; how shall it be made up? There is a great want; how shall it be supplied? Is the failure on God's part or on ours? I am sure if praying for the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the part of man is necessary, the fault lies not there, for there has been earnest, fervent, sincere, honest prayer, and prayer in faith and fasting enough, to bring it upon saint and sinner the world over. Has God forgotten to fulfill His promise, or have we misinterpreted the Scriptures, and our prayers are not answered because we have asked amiss?

The Gospel is dispensed in churches, and dispensed with in saloons.

### Modern Church Service.

We do not think we overstate it in saying that four-fifths of the persons who attended the cruetic last Thursday evening were more impressed by the choruses than by anything else. The orchestral performances were fairly good the solo excellent—some of them superb—but the greatest effect was produced by the gigantic choir. There is a peculiar, indescribable something in the singing of a large number of people which nothing else can supply. It seems as if the soul goes out more easily, and mounts to a higher flight, on a flood of vocal melody than on the shallow stream of a single voice, however rare that voice may be. This is especially true of that class of music which appeals to the deeper emotions. Take the "Marseillaise" for example. Let Patti or Nilsson sing it with all the art that is in them, and the most appreciative audience would not be noticeably moved thereby. Let a thousand Frenchmen sing it with no art at all, and the dullest blood would leap quicker through the veins. Take "Old Hundred." Let the best quartette in the world render it in their best style, and nobody's heart would be perceptibly stirred. Let the congregation of a country church sing it, and that heart would be hard indeed which did not feel a thrill of sublime devotion.

Now we assume that the musical portion of public worship is primarily intended to arouse and stimulate the religious emotions. It is, indeed, one of the forms of worship; and unless it can and does touch these emotions it fails to fulfill its appointed mission, no matter how much of a success it may be in other respects. In the olden time, when religion was less of a fashionable amusement than it is now, the singing was done *en masse*. "Let the people praise Thee, O Lord; ye, let all the people praise Thee." We do not expect the olden time to return, nor do we anticipate that so antiquated a relic of by-gone days as congregational singing will ever be revived in those sanctuaries set apart for the pious proclivities of "our best society." Nevertheless, one can not help wishing that the church music at present in vogue was less scientific and more of a devotional tendency. Say what you will, it is impossible to draw much spiritual milk from the performances of two men and two women with an organ accompaniment. The basso, the tenor, the soprano and the contralto may each be perfect; the organ may be a masterpiece and manipulated by a master's fingers; the selections may be made with the most exquisitely refined taste—and yet, after all, it is only praising God by deputy, and never can be that genuine and general praise which belongs to religious worship. A first-class quartette is simply a first-class musical machine. It does its work well, but what does that work do for the hearers? Does it lift them any farther from earth, any nearer heaven? Does it kindle in any soul present a spark of that divine fire which is the essence of religion? Does any worshiper go home feeling that he or she has been made better by that portion of the service? Does any worshiper delude himself or herself with the idea that he or she has been praising God through the instrumentality of the organ and its male and female attendants? Does anybody imagine that the disciples, when "gathered together

of one accord in one place," did their singing by quartette? Is it likely that the early Christians assembled in the gloomy chapels of the Roman catacombs, contented themselves with the vocal pyrotechnics of the aforesaid basso and tenor, soprano and contralto? Does not everybody know that however much modern church music may exceed the ancient in art, it is vastly inferior to it in feeling? And what is church music worth if it lacks that subtle power which moves the heart.

Let us not be misunderstood. Looking at fashionable sacred singing from a secular stand-point; not a word can be said against it. We know of no more agreeable entertainment than listening to a well-trained quartette doing Sunday duty. It is the next thing to a fine operatic concert. It delights the ear, gratifies the intellect and spurs the imagination. It softens the fall of a heavy prayer, and sugar-coats a dry sermon. It is a powerful attraction to outside sinners, and fills many a seat that would otherwise be vacant. In short, it does everything except the one thing which church music—as we have been taught to believe—was designed to do: Quickens that spirit of devotion without which worship is a sacrilegious sham.—*St. Louis Republic.*

### Feeling is not Religion.

In times of special religious interest the attention of many is turned exclusively upon the state of their feelings. They look for an experience solely in the emotions. They lose sight of the truth that the real Christian experience is related to the emotional nature solely as cause to effect, not as effect to cause. For a person to endeavor to feel miserable or to feel happy without any special reason for it other than such, as has been the conventional way of entering upon the Christian life, is as absurd as though one should feel called upon to laugh without provocation, or to weep without cause for sadness. Our feelings follow nature's laws, as constantly as the mercury rises and falls in the tube. For us to attempt to regulate the temperature by rising or depressing the column of quicksilver would be just as sensible as to attempt to regulate our lives by lifting or depressing our feelings. We are responsible for what we do, not for how we feel. The state of our feelings may indicate in some measure what our actions are or have been. They cannot, in the least, affect their moral quality. The religious life is begun simply by a surrender of the will to God. It is needless to go through any preconceived process marked by startling experience. It is needless to look for an ecstatic vision breaking in and dispelling clouds of darkness and despair. A happy frame of mind may be the result, it can never be the cause, of an acceptance with God.—*Vermont Chronicle.*

Jonathan and Paddy were riding together one day, when they came in sight of an old gallows. This suggested to the American the idea of being witty at the expense of his Irish companion. "You see that I calculate," said he, "and now where would you be if the gallows had its due?" "Riding alone," coolly replied Paddy.

If a man is murdered by his hired men, should the coroner render a verdict of "killed by his own hands?"