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Miss Mary Stamp

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I Baptized Her.

Many years have passed to the left-hand of time, taking along with them full-fledged trains of human sorrow and disappointment; since the following episode in the writer's history happened. We were living at the time on Grand Island, Colusa county, Cal., on a small farm, we could call our own, and in a house erected by our own labor. I still remember with pleasure, a visit by our very highly esteemed brother A. W. Dewitt, about the time, we commenced to build our house. He was almost an entire stranger to us, never having seen him but once before. But, like a true and faithful man, joined in with us in our work upon the building.

Dear brother many have been the changes we have passed through, since the time alluded to above, your pathway along the journey of life, has been rugged and full of thorns, and in your bosom has throbbled frequently an aching heart, on account of the cold indifference of the professed friends of Jesus. One thing still gives me exquisite joy—it is this, none of these things move you from your duty to God, and to the cause of his dear Son.

I had finished my house, and was living as comfortable as many of my neighbors. The winter had almost passed, and the family had all retired to rest for this night. It was a still and dark night. I could not sleep, for what cause I am unable to say, and as I lay meditating, I heard the rattle of a wagon. It stopped in front of the house, and a man's voice was heard. I instantly got up and went out to ascertain what the man wanted. Upon inquiry, he said there was a sick woman out at the Sulphur Springs, that wanted to see me. I took the men in, for there were two of them, and lodged them the balance of the night. At an early hour in the morning, my faithful wife had prepared breakfast for the men and myself. As soon as it was over, we all set out for the springs away in the mountains, distant about forty miles. We passed over the wide plains, at that time almost uninhabited from the Siamore Slough to the foot-hills. We entered the hills, and traveled up a stream, some distance. Night came and we were still away from our place of destination. Sometimes the driver had to go before the horses, to feel our way for fear of falling into the dark unfathomable gulches below.

We at length arrived at the springs all safe, but cold and somewhat exhausted from the long drive. Supper was in waiting for us, and whilst we were partaking of the refreshments, word having reached the sick woman, that the minister had arrived, she sent immediately for us to come to the bedside, we entered the room where she lay, and found her upon the very verge of the grave. I can still call up from memories page, the lineaments of her very countenance, her eyes were sunk

en, her visage pale and thin, and the profoundest anxiety of mind was to be seen in all she said. She was waiting to hear words by which she could be saved.

So sensible was she of her condition, that she had said to a religious person attending on her, that if she died in her then condition, she would be lost. She seemed to inquire, "is there salvation for me, and how shall I attain to it?" Her husband had brought her from Montana, where but little instruction or Bible knowledge in the things of eternal life could be heard. Of one thing she was profoundly sensible, and that was, she was a sinner, and without God and without hope in the world.

Poor weeping woman, we can realize thy sad condition, thou knowest not what to do, that the burden upon thy heart may be removed. The responsibilities resting upon me as a minister of Jesus Christ, to give this weeping woman proper instruction commensurate with the worth of a soul. We had no time to trifle away, for what she had to do must be done quickly.

We will beg the indulgence of the patient reader just long enough to ask all ministers who may chance to read this reminiscence, what would you have done under the circumstances? The dying woman lay on her bed before me, and had sent for me to give her instruction upon the most momentous question ever propounded to man. I will not anticipate the answer to the question, but will proceed at once to inform you of the nature of the instruction given, and also of the result following therefrom.

In the first place, we read to her of Jesus who come into the world to save sinners, out of the New Testament.

In the second place, we read what Jesus said about saving sinners after his resurrection from the dead, and just before he ascended into heaven. This reading embodied the statement by Christ, viz. he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. This was accepted as true. My next reading I think was the second chapter of Acts of apostles, Peter's first sermon after Christ had said, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." His answer to the inquiring multitude was reached, in our reading these words, "Repent every one of you, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We had scarcely finished reading, when the sick woman expressed her desire to be baptized, and upon her openly confessing her faith in Christ, a large bathing tub was brought into an adjoining room, and filled with tepid water from the warm spring. The Divine blessing was invoked in prayer upon the pale penitent believer, two women took her in their arms, and sat her in the tub of water, we then approached her, and in the presence of nearly all of sojourners at the springs, and before God, at that late hour of the night, did we bury her in baptism; into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As we gently raised her out of the water, and seated her again in the tub, with almost super human voice she exclaimed, and said "glory to God." This was repeated three times, and concluded by saying, "I am not afraid to die now."

After she had been taken back to her room, and dry clothing put upon her, we went in to see her, we found

her calm and happy, enjoying peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Her joy was so complete in Christ, that she did not die. Dear reader, as doubtless you have been expecting to see, but lived for several weeks, to tell of the wondrous love of God.

In conclusion, dear friend, let me ask you, what think you of the instruction given, and the results that followed?

G. O. D.

Church Finance.

By request, I will attempt to say a few things on the above subject. This is a subject which has engaged the pen of many of our able scribes, and yet to my mind, few have thrown much light on one part of the subject, especially, as to the how the money is to be gotten, or transferred from the pockets of the brotherhood, and put into the pockets of the preacher.

There are a number of things connected with this subject, which seem to perplex many brethren of the church of Christ, as well as the various churches around us.

1. I will notice, how much shall I give for the support of the Gospel, or for the advancement of Christ's kingdom?

Let me say just here, nowhere that I can call to mind, in the New Testament, is paying for preaching called giving. But, wherever labor is performed in preaching or otherwise, there is a debt incurred, and the laborer is worthy of his hire. But I will refer to some Scripture on this part of the subject farther along. Some argue, we should pay one-tenth of our income, as the Jews were required to do, but I assert that the Christian is nowhere told just how much he is to pay, that is one of the unrevealed things that is left to the good sense or judgment of the brother, as there are hundreds of things of minor importance, to be decided by expediency, or common sense. The apostle Peter said the Jews had a yoke that neither they nor us, were able to bear, and I conclude this tenth constituted a part of said yoke, because Jesus said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The next difficulty I shall notice, is, How shall we raise the money? One good brother says, oh! you should not let your left hand know what your right hand does; so I will just take the preacher aside, and as I bid him adieu, will slip my dollar in his hand. That is his idea of the Scriptural way. I will just say, Jesus was talking of giving alms, and nothing else, and wished to put down that pharisaical spirit, not to sound a trumpet, &c. Matt. vi. 3.

But the stereotyped answer as to how, is, "Let every one of you lay by in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come."

I will close this week's article by saying, the apostle Paul had not the subject of paying for preaching, or any other labor in mind when he was talking to the Corinthians, but was talking about charity, to relieve the brethren in Judea.

A. W. L.

An old tobacco chewer finds that the Bible sustains his favorite habit. He quotes: "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Let every tobacco chewer take notice.

NORTH YAMHILL, OR.,

Nov. 13, 1877.

Bro. Stanley:

I see an inquiry in the present number of the MESSENGER, "Is the world morally getting better, or worse?" To which I answer, worse certainly worse. Paul says 2 Timothy iii. 13, "Fool men and deceivers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," and this is spoken direct to the church. He also says in Timothy, that men shall be without natural affection, and this is a fact now by them refusing to raise their offspring and follow such conduct as he did. Read Genesis xxxviii. 9, 10 you may add to this the two verses just as they read, if you wish. I would be glad if you do so. If men kind should receive the punishment that that transgression did, you would see whether the world was getting worse or not.

A. PAYNE.

Deacons—What are They?

It is commonly supposed that deacons are brethren whose duties pertain to the material interests of the church. To the men whom we call deacons is assigned the duty of passing the plate, distributing the bread and wine, and relieving the wants of the poor out of the funds of the church. Is this the work, or any part of the work, assigned to deacons in the New Testament? If we confine ourselves to the authorized version of the New Testament we can learn absolutely nothing relating to their duties. In Philippians i. 1 deacons are merely mentioned; in 1 Timothy iii. 8-12, their qualifications are given, but not a word about their duties. Deacons are mentioned nowhere else in our present version of the New Testament; therefore if our search is confined to it, their duties must forever remain among the things that are hidden from our eyes. Something is wrong. It can scarcely be believed that inspired men would tell us what kind of a man the deacon must be and leave us in utter darkness as to the kind of work he is to perform; but such is the fact, if our common translation tells it all. Let the reader search and see if this is so, and if it is, there is nothing left for us but to look up the Greek word for deacon—*diakonos*. By doing so the following facts appear:—

1. The Greek word *diakonos* (deacon) occurs thirty times in the New Testament.

2. Twenty times in our common version it is translated minister, seven times servant, and three times deacon. Our eyes must be opened to the importance of these facts before we are prepared to begin an enlightened investigation of the duties belonging to New Testament deacons. From the three occurrences of the word *deacon* as a translation of *diakonos*, as before said, nothing can be learned of the deacon's duties—in these passages his character only is set forth. From the seven occurrences of *diakonos* where it is translated servant, we learn that the word *diakonos* is applied in its broad meaning to servants generally, and to all the servants of Christ without distinction. Here are three examples out of the seven. "The servants (*diakonos*) of the church which is at Cenchrea." This free use of the word to servants generally throws no light on its use as applied to a class of men who are to have special qualifications, not required of servants generally. Phebe was in some special sense of the word a servant or deacon of the

church at Cenchrea, but what her special duties were we have no means of knowing, and if we had, little light would be afforded thereby on our subject, as the duties of men and women are not identical whether as private members or special servants of the church. The four remaining examples of the use of *diakonos* where it is translated servant, (Matt. xiii. 12, and xxiii. 11, Mark x. 45, and John x. 41) give us no further light. Thus far we have learned nothing of the work of the class of men called deacons, as a special designation distinguishing them from servants of Christ generally. Nothing is left for us now but to look at those passages in which *diakonos* is translated minister. As was said, this occurs twenty times. Paul and Apollos are called deacons—ministers, *diakonois*; 1 Cor. iii. 5. Timothy is also called a deacon, or minister, *diakonos* (1 Thess. iii. 2). What did Paul, Apollos and Timothy do? They preached the Gospel. This is the deacon's work. The preachers of the Gospel are the only class of men in the church who are distinguished from other servants of God by being called deacons—*diakonois*, properly translated as it is in such cases in our version, ministers. Paul calls Timothy a *diakonos*, tells him to "preach the word," and informs him how he can be a good deacon or minister (*diakonos*, Tim. iv. 6), and shows him what kind of a man a deacon or minister must be, (1 Tim. ii. 8-12), and finally exhorts him to commit the things which he has heard to "faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. ii. 2). These faithful men are to be appointed by Timothy to do the work that he has been doing, and like him are to be deacons or ministers of the Gospel. That Timothy might know whom to appoint as ministers or preachers of the word, Paul tells what a minister or deacon ought to be (1 Tim. iii. 8-12). Among other things he is to "hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," and there is surely a fitness in this requirement in regard to those who are to go everywhere calling upon men to repent. In the three places where *diakonos* is Anglicized into deacon, let it be translated into minister, as is done in twenty of our places in our common version, and all will easily see what deacons' duties are, by noticing what Paul, Apollos, Timothy, and Epaphroditus did, all of whom are called deacons (*diakonois*) properly translated ministers. This will account for the silence about deacons when it is said they appointed "elders in every church." Ministers of preachers of the Gospel are not for every church. They are to be sent everywhere preaching the Word. Thus a careful examination forces us to the conclusion that we have been deceived by the failure of our translators to translate *diakonos* in the three named. As a consequence we have been appointing men to see after the temporalities of the church calling them deacons, and comparing them with the qualifications which Paul requires of a preacher of the Gospel. It is likely wise enough and necessary to appoint men to see after such things, but this matter like the building of meeting houses and many other necessary things, is left to human wisdom to manage as experience may suggest. As the position taken in this article is not the one usually held, it will be proper not to receive it until it receives from some competent critic a searching examination. Will some one who has given the matter careful study give this article a thorough review and let us see if these things are so.—Bible Index.