

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

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From Bro. James M. Mathes.

BEDFORD, IND., July 27, 1880.

T. F. Campbell:

DEAR BROTHER,—You have laid me under many special obligations by giving the Life of Eld. E. Goodwin such a good notice in the MESSENGER of 16th inst. I thank you for the copy of the MESSENGER you sent me. Your MESSENGER is a good paper, and true to the cause we advocate. It is a sound paper. I was much interested in reading the proceedings of your Sunday School Conventions in this number. And I see that my old brother, T. K. Dibble, who was a citizen of Indiana at one time, and afterwards of Missouri, is among you, doing battle for our Master as in days of yore. The Lord bless him.

And I also see among the honored names of your veteran soldiers, the name of my old time friend and fellow-laborer, Eld. John M. Harris. He and I were fellow-workers in our pioneer days in Indiana. I think he is a few years older than I, and was a young preacher when I joined the church, in Oct., 1828, 2nd Lord's day. I was immersed on that day, and on the next Wednesday night, at the prayer meeting, I made a public address to the brethren and sisters, nearly 52 years ago. He and I met at a general cooperation meeting in 1831, at the house of James McCollough, near Crawfordsville, Ind., and there I preached my first discourse from home, in the presence of Bros. John M. Harris, Michael Combs, Andrew Tuattin and James R. Ross, all the preachers present on that occasion, hence passed over the river, so far as I remember, except myself, Bros. J. M. Harris, Wm. Wilson (the blind preacher), and perhaps Bro. Ross. Old Bro. James McCollough, at whose house the meeting was held, was the father of our beloved Bro. Jas. H. McCollough, our efficient evangelist.

We had but few churches and preachers in Indiana then, and only a few meeting houses. Our preaching was done mostly in private houses, barns and in the groves. We did not wait to be invited to hold a protracted meeting, and by correspondence ascertain how much compensation we were going to receive for holding the meeting. The great question with us then was, Where can we get to hold a meeting? In what school house will they let us preach? Will farmer A. permit us to hold a meeting in his new barn? Will farmer B. consent for us to stand under the shady boughs of the sugar maple, near the creek, on his land, and proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ? These

were the great questions then.

But times have changed. From a small band we have become a great multitude. In Indiana alone we number near 100,000 disciples. Churches now are seen in almost every town, village and city, from Lake Michigan on the north, to the beautiful Ohio on the south. We now have perhaps 100 efficient preachers, when we had but one in 1831. The churches all over the land are able, and in many cases they are willing to sustain the faithful evangelists in their work, and it is their duty to do it liberally.

But, as I have said, our pioneers are nearly all gone. A few of us are "waiting till the shadows are a little longer grown." In Indiana, Bros. Thomas Lockhart, Wm. Wilson and myself; Bro. Jas. R. Ross in Illinois; Bro. John O'Kane in Missouri, and Bro. John M. Harris in Oregon, are about all that remain of the old guard who fought the good fight and established the cause of our Master in Indiana in the early days of the Reformation.

But this "old guard" did what they could, both with tongue and pen, from the pulpit and the platform, to enlighten the people, and establish the cause, and the blessing of God attended their labors. Who will say that they could have done more with their disadvantages and surroundings.

But our time of active labor must soon close now, and then how joyful will be the reunion in the sweet by and by.

I send my Christian greeting to Bro. John M. Harris, Bro. Dibble, and all the dear brethren and sisters on the Pacific slope. I am now in my 73rd year, but I am not superannuated, but able for duty yet.

Fraternally,
JAMES M. MATHES.

Miss Ellsworth's Letter to Lucinda.

BY MISS A. M. DIAZ.

My Dear Lucinda:

You ask what I think about the texts of Scripture which would place women under subjection to men, and especially about that one which forbids women to speak in churches.

In such matters we naturally look for guidance to our religious teachers and members of religious bodies. There is something curious in the way these seem to regard the particular texts you speak of. The same Paul who forbids women to speak in the church said: "I suffer not a woman to teach." Yet religious people employ women teachers. The text may be said to mean that women must not teach adults, especially adult men. But even thus explained, it is set aside by prominent religious leaders, who in conducting evening schools for adults of both sexes, include women among the teachers employed. They would smile at the idea of taking the text literally. Your own minister, if wishing information on some point in astronomy, would think it right to ask it of Maria Mitchell. He would not ask it of you; and if his question related to zoology, he would not probably put it to Maria Mitchell. The accepted meaning of this text seems to be, then that woman must not teach unless she is better informed than those to be taught.

We find other texts of Scripture which are not taken literally by religious leaders. Paul said; "Owe no man anything." Not many even of the stricter sort, obey this to the let-

ter and invariably pay at the time of buying.

Then, there are the texts: "The powers that be are ordained of God. Whoever resisteth the powers shall receive unto themselves damnation." This is a plain language; yet those who insist most earnestly on a literal interpretation of Scripture would not think it right to sin in obedience to the powers that be. The accepted meaning of the text is: Obey the powers that be when their commands do not conflict with the voice of conscience.

"Sell all that ye have and give alms," is a plain command. For every body to follow it is impossible, since, if property is sold, somebody must buy, and for the head of a family to

"sell all" for the purpose mentioned would be unjust to his family.

"Give to every one that asketh" is another plain command; but we all know that indiscriminate charity injures many who receive it. I suppose a millionaire could hardly do a worse thing for a place than to proclaim there "I will give to every man that asketh," thus taking away that necessity of exertion which is what develops the powers of a man and in fact makes a man of him. The conductors of charitable organizations—most of whom are religious people—beseech us not to give to every man that asketh. They tell us that many of these askers are lazy, unthrifty, improvident determined to live in idle dependence. They say that so long as people do "give to every man that asketh," so long will pauperism increase and laziness find support. The best and wisest in the land practice this text as if it were written: "Do not give to every man that asketh."

"Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." But religious people do not hesitate to insist upon the restoration of goods of which they have been unjustly deprived. Their usual interpretation of the text seems to be: "If any man taketh away thy goods, compel him to restore them and punish him for taking them."

"Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, nor for your body what ye shall put on." The much-abused tramps are about the only ones among us who follow out this command to the letter: Pious men, church members, ministers do "take thought" for these things, and seek salaries to prevent a lack of them. Some say the command means "take no anxious thought;" but if your minister were deprived of his parish he could hardly help taking anxious thought for the feeding and clothing of his family, and in these times of failures and shrinkages and embezzlements almost any persons having families depending upon them must sometimes take thought and anxious thought, and the strictest religionist would not condemn this anxious thought.

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Do you know any religious persons who obey this rule? Do you know any religious shopkeeper who asks his customers to trade at the shop over the way, rather than at his own? Any religious shoemaker who entertains people to get their shoes at another shoe-store? Any religious merchant who hastens to tell his fellow-merchants the secret news he has received of a rise in the price of goods? Any religious lawyers and physicians who, in obedience to the command, turn over their clients or

their patients to some other practitioners? Any clergyman who in want of a parish himself, recommends for a desirable situation some other candidate? The usual following of this text is: "Let no man seek another's but every man his own wealth." We find no rule more forcibly enjoined than that of the subjection of wives to husbands. The command in regard to this is given over and over and over, and always clearly. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands in everything." "Submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord." "As the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything." Plain, forcible, comprehensive; yet your minister told you that these commands are never to be followed when such following is disapproved by your conscience.

But, although these and many other texts may, it seems, be interpreted by the light of reason and conscience and are not to be taken literally, there is one text which we are told must be taken literally and literally practiced: "Let your women keep silence in the church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak."

I think no person has ever told us why this text is to have a literal rendering and those others not; but the distinction is made. The same men who invite "a woman to teach" in adult schools of both sexes; who always ask their wives at home before taking an important step; who would resist "the powers that be," if ordered by them to commit a sin; who seek their "own" wealth, and not "another's," who hold fast by "all that they have," and try to get more; who sue at law the person who "taketh away [their] goods," and seldom give to any "man that asketh," and take so much thought for their lives as to make the accumulation of property an absorbing aim; who "owe many men and pay reluctantly; who would blame the woman who obeyed her husband to do wickedly—these same men, having walked straight through, or gone around, or jumped over the texts quoted, find their way completely blocked by this one of Corinthians xiv, 34, and say: now, here is something which can neither be walked through, nor gone around, nor jumped over. "Let your women keep silence in the church." This means exactly what it says, and must be strictly followed.

If a woman should ask why must this be taken literally, and those not? they can offer no other reason than because we think so. If the woman says, My reason and conscience do not tell me to interpret and follow this text literally, they answer virtually: Your reason and conscience can guide you in the interpretation of any other text; but here you must lay these aside and be guided by ours. We think this text should be interpreted literally, and you must accept our opinion. If she asks why should I accept your opinion? the answer can only be: Because we think that in this case you ought to. If asked, why must we do in this case as you think we ought to? the answer can only be: Because we think that in this case you ought to do as we think you ought to. They can bring no higher authority, for they have already allowed that the texts making woman subject to man are not to be followed when her conscience tells her otherwise.

I ought to say here that I have myself no desire to speak in the church or in any public place—I should

shrink from doing so; but I do like people to be sensible and logical, and there is neither sense or logic in insisting that one Scripture command shall be followed literally, while allowing that many others are not to be.

A curious part of this matter is that the command thus insisted on is one with which man has nothing to do. There is no call for his interference. The word "let" is used here in a general sense, as in many other cases: "Let him that is on the house-top not come down," "Let him that thirsteth come." The command concerns women only, and its interpretation rests with her. Why should man step in between her and her creator? or even between her and Paul? Surely if her own reason and conscience may be trusted as guides in the many trying exigencies of life, they may also be trusted here; or did the Almighty make woman capable of comprehending every text of Scripture save this particular one? And if so, where has he indicated that here man's comprehension shall supply the deficiency?

Another curious part of the matter is that Paul himself directed how a woman should speak in the church, or, rather, how she should not—namely, "with her head uncovered." The word used is "prophesy." But "prophesy" here does not mean foretelling, but speaking from inspiration. "He that prophesieth edifieth the churches."

Your minister spoke truly. In questions of right or wrong, every human being should decide for himself or herself what is duty. A woman may be willing that a man should decide for her; may prefer that he should; may insist that he should; but when it comes to authority, that of her own reason and conscience is supreme.—Independent.

How to get Good Tomatoes.

Supposing that the plants are well-grown, we will begin to stimulate and repress. Water every third day with good, rich liquid manure, all through the season. This will produce an enormous growth of new shoots and close foliage, and enable the plant to bear well. Nip off three-fourths of these shoots, leaving those which bear the most flower-buds; tie the long, heavy stems up to laths stuck into the ground, exposing the fruit to the full sun; mulch heavily all around the main stem for three feet, and thin out the fruit where it grows too closely. This thinning out requires an amount of moral courage which few amateurs possess. The fear of not having enough tomatoes is a dreadful feeling; but, when we once learn that a few splendid large fruits are infinitely better in every way than a great many small, ill-shapen ones, we learn to look upon the excess as enemies to the plant, exactly as we view the great green worms, and then our courage comes.

Now for seed for next season. More moral courage and a repression of that curious longing for the first fruits which all amateurs experience must govern us, or our seed for next year will produce later and weaker plants. Select the earliest fine tomato; cut off every other one from the same cluster; tie loosely around its stem a white string as a mark and grow that particular fruit as if all your future enjoyment of tomatoes depended upon it; as it really does. When dead-ripe on the vine, pick it and at once wash out the seeds and dry them in the shade.—Rural New Yorker.