

AN INTERESTING SERMON.

By Rev. Israel Putnam.

Text: St. John 1, 4: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Light is the first born of creation, the crown and glory of the visible world; and so far as is known, the most beautiful and glorious of all the material things in the universe of God: And what this light is to the material world, Jesus Christ, the light of men, is to the social, industrial, political and religious world.

When we would describe an awful scene of desolation and death we say there is no light there. When we would describe an awful scene of religious desolation and death we say there is no Christ there.

The life of Jesus Christ is, and must ever remain, the loftiest and most fruitful study of men. It is admitted, by other religions, that He was a great Teacher, and next of all, a living and active example of what He taught. The Moslems give Him the high title of Messiah and Josephus thought it not lawful to call Him a man, while the Rabbinists confess admiration of His character and words: Nor is there any hesitation among the great intellects of different ages whatever their special relations to Christianity; whether its humble disciples, or open opponent, or the carelessly indifferent, or vaguely latitudinarian.

Lowly reverence is paid to Him in passage after passage by Shakespeare, Bacon, Galileo, Kepler, Milton, Newton and may others of the same type of men, not the name of Jesus Christ above every other. Jean Paul Richter said: "The life of Jesus Christ concerns me because He was the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy: And that with his pierced hands He had lifted Empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still rules the world." Spinoza the brilliant metaphysician of the Israelites, called Him "The symbol of Divine wisdom." Jacobi and Kant hold Him up as the ideal of perfection. And Schelling and Hegel as that of the union of the Divine and the human. Goethe said: "I esteem the Gospels genuine for there shines from them the reflected splendor of a sublimity proceeding from the Person of Jesus Christ of so Divine a kind as only the Divine could ever have manifested on earth." Rousseau said: "How petty are the books of the philosophers with all their pomp when compared with the Gospels.

Writings so lofty, so deep, and at once, so simple and sublime cannot be the work of beings so weak and unholly as the best of men are. Can He whose life they tell be Himself no more than they who tell it? Is there anything in his character that tells of ambition as set forth in the lives of men? What firm sweetness in his disposition? What purpose and purity in his ways! What touching authority and grace in his teachings! What loftiness and loveliness in his maxims! What profound wisdom and knowledge in his words! How appropriate and noble his rebukes! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in all his replies! What an empire over his passions! His bitterest enemies never cast a stone at his character, for He was holy. Where is the man who knows how to live and suffer and die for those who hate him without weakness or desplay?

The Jews could never have struck so high a tone of morality and the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness and Spirituality, so grand, so striking and so completely unimitable, that their inventors would be even more wonderful than He whom they attempted to portray. If the life and death of Socrates, or any other, be that of a sage, the life and death of Jesus Christ is that of God manifest in the flesh.

Thomas Carlyle said: "Jesus of Nazareth our divinest symbol! Higher has the human thought not yet ascended." Mathias Claudius wrote to a friend concerning Jesus: "It is a holy form which rises before the poor pilgrim like a star in the night, and satisfies his innermost cravings, his most secret yearnings and hopes."

Nepoleon strode the earth like a Colossus—a gigantic intellect. At St. Helena he said, one day: "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and myself have founded Empires, but by what? By force, but Jesus Christ founded his by love and today millions would die for Him. Men wonder at the conquests of Alexander, but there is a Conqueror Who draws men to Himself for their highest good, Who unites to Himself, incorporates into Himself, not a nation, but the whole human race." DeWette wrote in his commentary: "This only do I know that there is salvation in no other name but the name of Jesus Christ."

Thus we see that from his critics and enemies come words of high respect and reverence: But what is it when we turn to those who believed in Him? What religion ever saw a vast army of martyrs willingly dying for personal love for the founder of their faith? Yet this has always been true

of Christianity. It is said when Peter was led to crucifixion be continued for considerable time to exclaim: "None but Christ! None but Christ!" Also that the aged and saintly Policarp about to be burned to death in the amphitheater at Smyrna, answered the Governor, who sought to make him revile Christ; "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me wrong, and how can I now blaspheme my King Who has saved me?" Thousands of such illustrations could easily be produced.

Why the religion of Christ attracted such permanent admiration is not very hard to be understood. Principally religious teaching of that day was set forth in the doings of John the Baptist. He was confined largely to the ascetic solitudes of the desert. Christ brought light into the homes and everyday life of the people. For the mortifications of the hermit He substituted the labors of active benevolence. For the fears and gloom which shrank from men He brought the light and example of piety which made each act of everyday life religious. He found the domain of religion fenced off as something distinct from common duties: And He threw down the wall of separation and threw open the whole world to the true light from Heaven. He lived a man among men, sharing their joys and sorrows, dignifying the humblest details of life to be used to give glory to the Father.

Henceforth the grand revolution was inaugurated which taught that true religion does not lie in selfish, or morbid devotion to personal interests, whether in the temple, or in the desert; but in loving deeds of self-sacrifice for the good of others. The absolute unselfishness of Christ's character, is, indeed, its most lofty and inspiring charm. His own life was self-denial throughout, and He makes the same doctrine the test of all truly Godly lives. It was He Who said these very uncommon and most remarkable words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It was He Who taught us that life, like the corn, produced fruit only by its own death Who gave us the ideal of life in his own absolute self-oblivion.

We feel instinctively that this Gospel of love alone is Divine, and that we cannot withhold our homage from the only perfectly unselfish life ever lived on earth. He demands repentance from all, but hints at no need of it for Himself. In his matchless lowliness He set forth personal claims which is a mere man would be the very delirium of religious pride. He was divinely patient under every form of suffering He met. He was a homeless wanderer without a pillow. Yet all things were his. He was hungry and thirsty, worn and weary. He endured craft and violence, pride and poverty, the taunts and jeers of enemies, and betrayal of friends, and at last died an ignominious death. Concluded next week.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

(Publisher.)
Department of the Interior,
U. S. Land Office at La Grande, Ore.
June 22, 1908.
Notice is hereby given that Catharine Brown, of Duncan, Oregon, who, on June 13, 1901, made Homestead entry, No. 10,321, for SW 1/4 SE 1/4 Sec. 30, W 1/2 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NE 1/4 Sec. 31, Tp 2 N, R 36 E, W M., has filed notice of intention to make final five year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before Frank Saling, County Clerk at his office, at Pendleton, Oregon, on the 12th day of August, 1908.

Claimant names as witnesses:
Ephraim S. Wilkie, Ben F. Brown, William A. Brown, Carl E. Strom, all of Duncan, Oregon.
F. C. BRAMWELL, Register.

Proposals Wanted.

Proposals for painting the roof of the Athena public school building are invited by the board of directors of District No. 29. Bids will be opened at 8 p. m. July 6, 1908, the right being reserved to reject any and all bids. Specifications of the work to be done, may be had by application to the clerk of School District No. 29.
School Board Dist. No. 29
By B. B. Richards, clerk.

Bids Wanted.

Sealed bids will be received by clerk of school district No. 29 for 25 cords of dry, split fir and tamarack wood, to be delivered at school house grounds, Athena Oregon, on or before September 10, 1908. Bids to be opened at 8 p. m. July 6, 1908. Right is reserved to reject any and all bids.
School Board Dist. No. 29
By B. B. Richards, clerk.

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10:08 a. m.	Walla Walla - Pendleton Special	10:08 a. m.
3:45 p. m.	Fast Mail for Pendleton, LaGrande, Baker City, and all points east via Huntington, Ore. Also for Umatilla, Heppner, The Dalles, Portland, Astoria, Willamette Valley Points, California, Tacoma, Seattle, all Sound Points.	3:45 p. m.
3:25 p. m.	Pendleton - Walla Walla Special	3:25 p. m.

E. M. Smith Agent, Athena.

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