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## →\*SERMONS\*←

### CHRISTIAN HOPE.

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NEW YORK.

*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.—ROMANS xv., 13.*

LIVY, the Roman historian, died in the eighteenth year of the Christian era. Thus his life was in part cotemporaneous with that of St. Paul. Livy placed on record the fact that there stood at one time in Rome a temple dedicated to Hope. He added significantly that this temple was struck by lightning and consumed. He probably shared in the feeling that prevailed in his time that human hopes are delusive; that if Hope is a deity at all, it is a deceitful deity, and one whose temple ought to be struck by lightning.

It was not long after this, probably about half a century, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans. The Christians at Rome were a miscellaneous company. Part were Jews, part Gentiles. Some of them lived amid the squalor of the Ghetto; some of them were slaves, some of them freedmen. Among them were none of the great and prosperous. All apparently had little to hope for. But St. Paul sends to them a message of hope. Their lives so dreary to all outward appearance were to be triumphantly hopeful. This was their privilege as followers of Jesus Christ. "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Here we see at once that there is a difference between Christian and

community. Men who will no more regard the moral interest and welfare of their fellow-men than deliberately to pursue a business that they know will debase them. And they know also that the more successful their business is, the more do they injure and destroy the community in which they live. And they know also that their plans and efforts to increase their business, are just so many more methods to impoverish and corrupt and destroy their fellow-men. It cannot be otherwise. The business is essentially bad within itself. With all the saloons in our city and State, will any one say where the results to those who patronize

the saloons are not bad? Point out a single such place if you can. Point out a single such individual if you can or point out a single other business carried on by a man who does patronize the saloons, where both himself and his business are not injured thereby. He may not think so, but he is simply mistaken. And he is mistaken also when he thinks that the community does not think so—and even the drinking part of the community also. His friends will soon begin to say: "He has but one fault." Or he himself is his worst enemy. They may not tell him so, but they tell each other so about him.

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## HELPFUL HINTS FOR WORKERS

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### **Trust and Beneficence.**

BY JOHN HALL, D.D., LL.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), NEW YORK.

We have many restless working people to-day, looking out from factory windows in which they toil, or from lanes in which they loiter in enforced idleness, on the carriages or the costly surroundings of their rich employers, and chafing in discontent. We have associations with a name linked with chivalry—"Knights of Labor"—calling for better conditions for their class. While they do justly, no one can blame them. But, oh! if they could only learn this divine plan, "Trust in the Lord and do good," how much it would tend to lighten their burdens and secure their welfare! Then they, too, would "dwell in the land and verily be fed."

And if the attempt to do good sometimes seems to fail, it is worth while asking, is there no failure in the trust? The Hebrews when they saw Pharaoh's host on their track, cried out in terror to the Lord, and Moses no doubt, while speaking words of cheer to the people felt his helplessness and lifted up his voice to Jehovah: "Why criest thou unto Me? speak unto the children of Israel that they go

forward." There is a time when prompt action in the way God orders is not to be set aside even for prayer. And God uses means where human power can do His work. We can roll away the stone under which the dead souls slumber in ignorance, and let them hear the word of the Saviour, and when He has quickened them into spiritual life, we can unloose the garments of evil habits and bad surroundings, and in obedience to the Master's words, "loose them and let them go." For if the trust fails, so does the love; and without the love, there is no right labor. Listen to the word that Peter hears when, after he lost his trust and deceived his Master, he is being restored. "Lovest thou Me?" "Yea, Lord." "Then feed My lambs." Love, the child of trust, is in time the mother of service. Christian reader, guard your heart and see that it be all right. Have you heard of the watch, which no skill or repair could keep uniformly right, until it was found that its wheel of polished steel had been magnetized and the presence near it of even a bunch of keys, marred its motion and prevented its serving its chief end? Is your heart right? Is this the order of your life—trusting the Lord and doing good?

This column will be read by thousands who in God's goodness are well-to-do in the world. Are you doing good? or are you indifferent to the "blackness of darkness" in many a soul about you, to the wail of woe that is so often going up, the inarticulate cry for help that is ringing out from crowds threatening in their numbers, even if unreasonable in their pleas? Can not you do something? The coats and garments Dorcas made seemed of no great account, but they meant something when the weeping wearers showed them with many a grateful tear, by her dead body. We need to inspire love and trust in these struggling ones by our practical sympathy. The Samaritan in the parable did not make great sacrifices.

"Two pence" was not a great deal of money to a business man riding on his way. But he gave personal effort, he gave pity; he gave his ready money; he gave the benefit of his credit; and the Master holds him up as an ideal of a good neighbor. Those poor neighbors of yours—what can you do for them with the sympathies, effort, means and credit you can employ? When you love your children you are always giving to them. God loves you and you are always getting from Him. You are looking to Christ's cross as the means of your salvation. As you gaze, catch from it an inspiration that will make you more like Him who hung upon it, and who on earth, went about doing good.—*Independent.*

## Prayer Meeting Service

### The Prayer of Presumption.

BY REV. FRANK H. WHITE (BAPTIST),  
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It has been well said that "there is no religious duty more acknowledged, no religious exercise more profaned, and none more easily counterfeited, than prayer." "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips, when their heart is far from Me," said the Lord in His day. Is it not greatly to be feared He would say the same in our day if He were on earth? Yet there may be prayer that is no prayer (even though it be not the prayer of a downright hypocrite)—powerless, ineffectual, fruitless prayer. Oh, how much of such praying there must be from year to year.

What is so needed is "the prayer of faith," such prayer as Elias, "a man subject to like passions as ourselves," prayed: "the effectual fervent prayer, that availed much" (James v., 17). Let us remember that such prayers are of "a kind." There is the "prayer of faith," and there is the prayer which is not, *cannot*, be of faith—the prayer of presumption.

What is the prayer of presumption?

1. It is the prayer that is not **RIGHTLY GROUNDED**, not based on that one only ground that a holy and a righteous God can hear and answer. True prevailing prayer must be prayer in the name, and for the sake of Christ, "that the Father may be glorified in the Son"—prayer grounded on the Redeemer's one perfect obedience unto death—prayer offered, not only in full view of His once for all finished propitiatory work on the cross, but of what He is now doing in Heaven itself. In praying, we need to eye Christ as set forth in the ordinance of the Golden Altar, to have respect to the preciousness of His one meritoriousness, ascending at this moment before the Father. No prayer that is not grounded can be aught else but presumptuous prayer. (John xiv., 6.)

2. The prayer of presumption is prayer that is not **RIGHTLY GIFTED**. True prevailing prayer is the immediate fruit of the Holy Spirit's prompting, as the "Spirit of grace and of supplications." As we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we shall abound in prevailing prayer, "praying in the Holy Ghost." All real accept-