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XXX.

OBEDIENCE, THE LAW OF THE WILL.

JAMES 1: 22 : "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

The general obligation of obedience is here stated with great emphasis. Indeed, the very design of James in this epistle, is to set forth what may be termed the doctrine of practice. Paul, for example, elaborates the principles upon which the gospel rests, with only an incidental and inferential application of these to the conscience. James, on the contrary, gives himself with a blunt directness to the assertion of these principles as the necessary elements of the christian life. There is no contradiction between the two, as some have supposed. It is the same gospel in both, approached from different sides. Paul's distinctive business is with grace as it lies in the doctrine; James' particular concern is with grace as it lies in the experience. Paul is the theologian, James is the casuist. Paul constructs the science, James points out its uses. Yet they both cross the separating line enough to show that they are entirely at one in Christ Jesus. Paul, in the sweep of his argument, will sometimes gather up the doctrine and hurl it upon the conscience with a directness and vigor which James could not hope to surpass. Again, James will pause in his exhortation to lay the basis of doctrine, with a precision not inferior to that of Paul.

A fine illustration is afforded in the context. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." (vv. 17, 18). Could Paul himself state more explicitly the sovereignty of Divine grace, or the necessity of the new birth in order to salvation? Yet see how the practical James fences both against Antinomian perversion: "but be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway

forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (vv. 22-25.) Here then James lays his doctrine of practice side by side with Paul's doctrine of faith: "and the reconciliation between the two is given by Paul himself, when he defines the faith by which we are justified as the faith which worketh by love." (Gal. v: 6). Nay, it is anticipated in the Gospels, in that striking phrase so often employed, "doing the truth." (John iii: 21; 1 John i: 6).

By this exposition, I am led directly to the last topic in this series of Discourses, to-wit: OBEDIENCE AS THE LAW OF THE WILL, the definite form in which its energy shall be expressed.

I. The path will be opened into this discussion by dwelling a little upon THE ESSENTIAL ACTIVITY OF MAN'S NATURE; the consideration of which is necessary to complete the view taken in the preceding Discourses. The survey of all the powers with which man is endowed, compels the conclusion that God designed him for action.

1. *This will appear*, in the first place, *from the very nature of the soul*. We know nothing either of matter or spirit, save from their properties: and perhaps the fundamental characteristic of the latter is that of *self-action*. Matter is inert, and is moved upon from without. True, God has displayed His wisdom and power by imprisoning within it certain forces; but these are held in equilibrium, so as to be in a state of repose. It is not until you disturb this balance by the intrusion of a foreign influence, that you witness the peculiar behavior in the properties of matter which it is the office of science to disclose. The calmness of this sabbath morn, for example, arises from the antagonism of forces which are quiescent simply because they are neutralized. Let this equilibrium be disturbed but for an instant, and the tornado, which but a few days since swept over a neighboring town, unroofs our dwellings and levels them to the ground.

But when you turn from matter to spirit, you observe not only that it is possessed of amazing energies, but that the development of these is spontaneous. It moves forward by an action from within itself, and with a consciousness of its own freedom and power. Indeed the contrast between the two is presented in our complex organization. For when the body sleeps, the dreams which we indulge prove the mind to be still in action. Through the locking up of the senses, the spirit's communication with the outward world may be cut off; but the ceaseless activity of mind

is shown through those mental processes which even sleep cannot interrupt, and which are sometimes as vivid as the thoughts by day. As soon therefore as you touch the spiritual part of man's nature, you find that which is essentially active, and which is always conscious of the spontaneity of its own movement. When we rise above man to beings who are still more spiritual, we discover an activity more conspicuous, because unembarrassed by the flesh; "who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire." (Heb. i: 7.) We ascend at length to Him who is "before all things and by whom all things consist;" and postulate a God who neither slumbers nor sleeps, whose essential life is the source of all activity in Himself and in the creature. You remember that word of Christ in which there is so much of quiet majesty, "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" (John v: 17), in which He puts Himself upon the plane of equality with the Father, and affirms His absolute divinity. But the point of comparison is that necessary activity which, in the highest sense, is the attribute of Him who is the Supreme Spirit: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth." (John iv: 24.) Just so far then as man gives evidence of a soul, do you find that God from the beginning intended him to be a creature of action.

2. This is further shown from *the tendency in thought and feeling to concrete into the external act, which is the natural product of both.* Here is man endowed with the faculty to know, placed in a world whose startling phenomena like shocks from a Leyden jar rouse the dormant mind to vigorous exercise. Thoughts multiply with a fecundity which would be oppressive, were it not for the marvellous facility of framing themselves into propositions and judgments—thus condensing into knowledge, the mind's furniture forever. The intellectual machinery once set in motion can be arrested by no earthly power, and the activities of the day are reproduced in the illusions of sleep by night. But we scarcely begin to wonder at this productiveness of thought, before we strike a greater marvel. This mental friction has kindled a fire which sets the heart aglow. Though a man should think in ice, yet science tells us there is latent heat in the cold icicle hanging from the eaves of a house; and all history testifies to the reserved power which lies in those silent men of thought, who at length burst from their quietude and like pyramids of fire set the world ablaze with their energy,

This leads me at once to the greatest mystery of the whole—all this thought and emotion flowing, through a decision or choice of the will, into some external action which stands before the eye the embodiment and

representative of both. What mean these mute, yet expressive gestures of the body, if they be not the natural signs for the interpretation of thought? And this wonderful endowment of human speech by which, through arbitrary and conventional sounds, we give bodily form and shape to our thoughts and desires—what is the significance of it, except that God did not mean thought to be always silent? Man was intended for action; and hence this mysterious necessity to translate what is within; this strange compulsion in man to produce himself out of himself—visibly represented to his own eye, and to the eye of others, in that which is the concrete embodiment of thought, passion, desire and will.

3. The proof of man's essential activity is almost complete, *when you observe him placed in the bosom of a thousand relations.* Constituted for action, as we have already seen, we discover the sphere in which this activity must be displayed. He is not placed upon an insulated stool with glass feet, to sever all connection with the earth upon which he stands. On the contrary, innumerable threadlike ties bind him to the race of which he forms a part; and in working out the problem of human history, each must be an integer in the equation—a unit in the vast total, without which it could not be reached. Man, as he moves, touches the secret wires which run through life in every direction, and gather to their centre at the throne of God.

What are we obliged to infer from these adaptations of man to his place in the social sphere? Born in a nest of relationships, he abides in them until death; nay, he multiplies them by his own choice, or else under the pressure of his surroundings, as they change from day to day. Yet, he is fitted by nature to fill these varied relations, just as clearly as the bird is fitted for the element in which it soars, or the fish for that in which it swims. Created by his Maker a free spirit, action is the necessity of his being; and therefore every faculty tends to express itself in outward form. Thought glides into feeling—feeling concretes into the visible and representative act—and the being who is under this law of development, finds himself in the associations which stimulate these tendencies, and draw them out in their manifestations. If the proof of design is not apparent here, then it cannot be inferred from any of the marvellous adjustments in the natural world. The being who finds himself in a net-work of relationships, through which he has the power to move, is shown by his fitness to the place that he was intended to fill it with all the activity which belongs to his nature.

4. The culmination of proof on this point, is found in *the sense of personal responsibility in man to the justice and law of God.* Would that I

had the power to represent the majesty, and yet the practicalness, of this suggestion ! Consider it well, and what can be more solemn than the necessity which is upon us to think ? And then, the equal necessity which is upon us to feel ? And then, the logical compulsion upon us to act ? All three moving in their respective spheres with the silent and resistless energy which characterizes all the operations of nature. The earth makes no noise, whilst it spins upon its axle, nor yet when it sweeps in a grander orbit around the sun ; yet all the planets yield unresistingly to that power of attraction which God has made the law to every particle of matter throughout the universe. So man, in obedience to that law of connexion established between the faculties of the soul, is evermore passing through the process by which thought and emotion crystallize into acts, which make up the history of his life. Whether he reck of it or no—to borrow a conceit from the ancient Schoolmen, the soul is perpetually throwing off the shadowy forms of itself. Thoughts, affections, activities—taking embodiment and shape in the words we breathe, in the desires we feel, in the deeds we perform—all bearing a shadowy resemblance to the nature from which they spring, going up before us to the solemn judgment, and standing there the silent witnesses of what we have been, and of what we are !

Great God, can it be true ? These images of ourselves, produced out of ourselves, shall they confront us there ? Shall these mysterious shadows of our own life be cast upon the curtain of the Judgment ? Shall our very thoughts take shape before us, to tell the universe exactly what we are ? No wonder that under this self-revelation before the Omniscient Judge, “every mouth shall be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.” (Rom. iii : 19.) Ah, my hearers, what shall we do in that day of exposure, if there be not a covering for our guilt ? How shall we endure the confusion and the grief, if there be no “Days-man” to throw the mantle of His righteousness over our shame, and hide it from sight forever ?

II. Perhaps it has not been necessary to submit these proofs of *the essential activity of man's nature*. Yet what is admitted without hesitation may profitably be held under arrest, if only to deepen the conviction of the truth. I wish now to show how THE GOSPEL ADDRESSES ITSELF TO HIS ACTIVITY, IN THE OBEDIENCE WHICH IT EXACTS OF THE WILL. This, you perceive, completes the circuit, and puts Christianity in direct connexion with every department of the soul. We have Truth informing the reason, Justice directing the conscience, Love actuating the heart, and finally Obedience expressing the energy of the will. Viewed from these four points of the compass, man will be recognized as capable at once of knowledge, of duty, of desire, and of action.

1. *This may be inferred from the fact that the Gospel speaks so directly to the understanding and the heart.* This consideration is simply initial, and gives the advantage of starting from the lowest plane. Upon the supposition that no command can be found in the Scriptures laying its authority upon the will, still the voice which speaks to the other powers speaks of necessity to this. I could not be asked to stoop to an admission lower than this; and yet with this conceded, it is clear how the Gospel lays its hand upon all the active powers in man. All those immense propositions respecting God, eternity, and the soul, coming by direct revelation from heaven, arouse and feed the intellect until man lifts his head above the stars, and holds communion with the angels in glory. Throughout the ages, too, in the great Hereafter, this truth will expand before us in the disclosures to be made of Jehovah in the splendor of His majesty, and in the tenderness of His love. Just so far then does the Gospel provide, both here and hereafter, for all the activity into which this knowledge will at length transmute itself. In like manner, the affections of the heart are stirred, when the Divine holiness is seen embosomed in grace—as the cloud which tempers its brightness to the human gaze. God is revealed to us in the tender relations of His covenant as the Father and portion of His people, and we are taught to “love Him who first loved us,” I John iv: 19.)

If then the Gospel did nothing more than to excite the affections by presenting an object infinitely worthy of their embrace, these affections tend, as I have shown, to express themselves in outward acts—revealing man’s nature on its active side, as distinctly as on its intellectual, or its emotional. The three are so bound together that, without any special injunction of obedience, it would be implied in all that the Gospel reveals either to the understanding or the heart.

2. *The practical faith which the Gospel demands, appeals directly to the human will.* It cannot be necessary to remind you how this call to immediate faith in the Redeemer sounds from every page of the sacred word. The one, simple direction to every sinner, is “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts xvi: 31.) Under every form of language, it is urged upon the sinner as the one thing to be done. Even the Old Testament economy, when we have the key to unlock the meaning of its types and shadows, points through them all to that faith in Christ which is more definitely expounded in the New Testament. “Before faith came,” says the Apostle, “we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed; wherefore

the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. iii: 23, 24.) In truth, as may be seen from the tenor of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, all the institutions of Moses served for the construction of a language,* in which the doctrines of redemption by sacrifice, and of sanctification by the Holy Ghost might be revealed to the faith of the Church.

But this faith by which the sinner is justified and saved, is the obedience of the will to the great command of the Gospel, and draws upon the whole activity of our nature. It is more than belief, or the mere assent of the mind to certain verbal propositions. It involves equally the affections of the heart and the determinations of the will, in the exercise of that trust which is really its essence. "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" asks the Eunuch: "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"—is the reply of Philip. (Aets viii: 36, 37.) Hear too the explicit testimony of Paul: "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x: 9, 10.) It is under the force of these and similar testimonies, that our Standards define saving faith both as a grace and an act: a grace, as the principle is implanted by the Holy Spirit in the new birth; (Eph. ii: 8,) an act, as it is performed in the use of our rational faculties. (John i: 12.) The Shorter Catechism gives this answer to the 86th question: "faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel." True faith then, under any definition of it, includes that operation of the will in which obedience is yielded to the claims of God as our redeemer, and to all the conditions upon which our salvation is suspended. In its fundamental requisition, therefore, the Gospel draws upon the whole nature of man, as a being of action.

I cannot dismiss this topic without recalling to your attention a thought, not sufficiently enlarged upon in the discourse of last Sabbath. I refer to the wonderful philosophy of the Gospel, in the urgency with which it presses upon the sinner the duty of immediate faith in the Redeemer. There is not a verse in the Bible which turns the inquirer back, to ascertain whether his convictions are sufficient to warrant his coming to Christ.

*See this admirably discussed in a work entitled "Philosophy of the plan of Salvation."

This would be to throw the creature into the maelstrom of his emotions, whirling in the fatal vortex by which he is sucked down at last and disappears in the gloomy depths. The Holy Spirit knows too well that no surer method can be devised to destroy feeling, than the direct effort to create it—that the subtle essence evaporates in the manipulation of it—and that it must be allowed to rush without stoppage to the concrete act in which it culminates. Hence the holy impatience with which, in the Scriptures, man is hurried forward to the act of faith, in which all pious thought and feeling are embodied at last. The Holy Ghost, to whom is assigned the office of applying the gospel to the heart, will not contravene the laws of man's rational nature. He puts Himself in accord with them; and works, with His omnipotent power, through them all. He enlightens the mind, and rouses the conscience, and stirs the heart, and subdues the will; and then produces all to the view, in the acts of obedience which this will renders to the commands of grace. It is by the reaction of all this upon the heart, that its affections are kindled to a warmer glow—which again seek expression in the outward life; and so by the action and reaction, the warmth of spiritual life is kept equal at the heart and at the extremities.

3. In this connexion, observe that faith must not only be exercised—but *Christ must also be openly confessed before the world*. “Confession with the mouth” is, by the Apostle, closely conjoined with “belief in the heart.” (Rom. x: 9.) Yet there are not a few who seek to evade the obligation to unite with the Redeemer’s Church upon earth. The reasoning by which this neglect is defended, is specious. “Is not religion after all only a matter betwixt the conscience and God? Is it not enough to repent of sin, and to embrace the Saviour, in the secrecy of my own heart? Why should I be subjected to the trial of changing front in the presence of the world, and of running the hazard of bringing reproach upon the Church by the irregularities into which I may possibly fall?” Such are the opiates by which an accusing conscience is sometimes put to sleep—the pleas, by which perhaps many persuade themselves honestly that they are free from censure.

The reply to all this special pleading is exceedingly simple. We can afford to set aside all discussion of the question, in this, whether connexion with the visible Church be an indispensable prerequisite to salvation? We are not required to tie the infinite and sovereign grace of God to any ritual, as the necessary condition of salvation. We may expect to find not a few in heaven, whose names were never enrolled upon the register of

the Church on earth. It is an immense relief to be discharged from the responsibility of deciding upon cases like these, by remitting them to the judgment of Him who alone has the prerogative. Still it remains true, that Christ has constituted His Church an organized and visible society; and that He has equipped her with laws and officers, with ordinances and sacraments, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv: 12.) It is still true, that He has commanded every being who accepts the salvation He has wrought, to make visible profession of his faith by union with this Church, in which the fellowship of the saints shall be constantly maintained. Without adjudicating any of the cases which God reserves for trial at the last day, we can take our stand just here; and say, that it is immensely perilous to refuse obedience to the least of God's commandments. Whether union with the visible Church be, or be not, essential to salvation, it may not be safe for us to pronounce. But we can say, that no man can live in neglect of any duty which the Saviour enjoins, even though it should be only through a misapprehension of the judgment, without serious detriment and loss to the interests of the soul. It must draw after it the forfeiture of many blessings, which might otherwise have been enjoyed. The decision has already been pronounced, "whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. v: 19.)

Even though one may work his way safely along the edge of the Church, in no way distinguished from the world, it must always be with a sense of degradation under the meanness and cowardice which it involves; it must always be with a sense of peril, from which in the nature of things it is impossible to be wholly divested; and it must be also with the sad forfeiture of many comforts and joys, which is not deplored simply from ignorance of what really has been lost. See then how the Gospel lays hold upon the active principle of our nature, in its requisition first upon the exercise, and then upon the profession, of our faith in Christ.

4. This line of proof is strengthened by the fact, that *every Christian is required to partake of the corporate life of the Church, and to assume his portion of the common labor and toil.* Beyond a doubt, God could dispense with all the work and anguish which He lays upon the Church in the evangelization of the world. He could, in the flash of an instant, convert the whole human race and not leave a single rebel against His grace. The Holy Spirit, who had the key to your heart and to mine, could as easily open the door of every other heart upon the face of the earth. But God has chosen to lay upon His Church this duty of pro-

claiming the Gospel by which the nations shall be saved ; and the burden which is laid collectively upon the whole body, is laid distributively upon each component part of that body.

Remembering now that "every beast of the forest is His and the cattle upon a thousand hills," one cannot cease to wonder that God should leave His Church to experience so much anguish in the propagation of the truth. What an expenditure of effort, to raise the sum which is necessary to support a few missionaries upon heathen soil ! How difficult to keep alive the feeble organizations in the scattered hamlets of our own land ! What sacrifices are imposed upon the heralds of the Cross, in the poverty and self-denial with which they proclaim "the glad tidings of great joy" to sinful men ! It seems one of the deep mysteries of Divine Providence, that all this should be entailed upon those who are engaged in His work who could so easily relieve the pressure; until we recall the fact that the discipline which is laid upon the individual believer, is needful also to the collective Church. One conclusion is certainly established—that, in all this work of toil and sacrifice in which the Church engages each of her members, there is a clear recognition of that active principle in our nature, upon the constant exercise of which our spiritual health, no less than our natural, so much depends.

5. Passing from these four connected points, let it be noted that *the Gospel does not dispense with any of the relations in human society.* It takes the sinner just where Providence has assigned his lot, and makes him "a new creature in Christ Jesus." It sanctifies all the relations in which he is embosomed, and converts them into means of grace. Ancient Sparta, you remember, destroyed the family that the State might be supreme. The youth were removed from parental care and control, given over to the public nurse and the public school-master, to be trained not for the home, but for the State. And it is the vice of many of the systems of modern reform, that they sweep across the web of natural associations in accomplishing their benevolent designs—and fail at last, because they cannot succeed in this disintegration of society. Christianity, on the contrary, comes down into the world, not as a law, but as a life. Conscious of its power, it seizes man in the midst of all the duties which he owes to his home, to the community, to the State, to the world. It does not relax any of these claims; but under their united pressure, it consecrates him to a new service superior to them all. Thus does the Gospel in its refusal to blot out any of our natural ties, respect the active feature in man's nature. It saves him in the heat of his action ; and then puts him down in the sphere to which he naturally belongs, to be a witness to those who know him best of the power and sweetness of Divine grace.

6. It is worthy of notice, that *the discipline, through which we are sanctified, falls upon us exactly in the sphere of our earthly activities.* It is not required of me to speak, just here, of the necessity for all this discipline. You recognize it as the key which unlocks the great mystery of human life, and without which human history would be a riddle. But every problem opens to us under this statement, “whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” (Heb. xii: 6.) Our probation, which originally was one of law, is now through the intervention of grace a probation of mercy. The virtues implanted in the heart by the Spirit, are by this discipline reduced to practice, and form the character suited to the unchanging life beyond the grave. You recollect that exquisite hymn of John Newton, in which the fulness of religious experience atones for the lack of poetic merit :

“I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love and every grace ;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.

’Twas He that taught me thus to pray,
And He, I trust, has answered prayer ;
But it has been in such a way,
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favored hour,
At once He’d answer my request ;
And by His love’s constraining power,
Subdue my sins and give me rest.”

Ah ! This is the way in which we would like the work of sanctification to be advanced, by the sweet influx of God’s grace into the heart, without the need of any conflict, or any sorrow !

“Instead of this he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more : with His own hand He seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe ;
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

Lord, why is this ? I trembling cried,
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death ?
’Tis in this way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thine all in me."

How rich the display of wisdom and love, which brings into harmony the inward and the outward in every Christian's experience—the inward grace, and the outward discipline which cultivates it into practical virtue! Just as the potter, who moulds the clay upon his wheel into the shape he desires, and then builds the furnace, filling its womb with the blazing fire, into the heart of whose flame he places the vessel which he means to harden for serviceable use: so God casts you and me into the furnace of affliction, heated seven times hot, and brings us out without the smell of fire upon our garments.

The general exposition of this truth, is not, however, what I now propose to your consideration. It is rather the fact, that this painful discipline overtakes us in the midst of the duties and activities of life. Here, for example, is one of yourselves toiling through a lifetime to build a fortune, which will fill your old age with plenty; and suddenly the whole tumbles down upon your head, overwhelming you with bankruptcy and ruin. Whatever may be the special lesson God has in this for you, others cannot look upon you driven back to work, when the elasticity and strength of youth have fled, without a profound conviction that life is meant to be one of toil even to the end.

In like manner, with our sorrows: God calls us to those tender offices of love around the beds of the sick. The mournful ministry is drawn out through weeks and month and years, during which, with a sweeter sympathy and a deeper affection, we fold the sufferers in our arms. Will this suffice? Ah, no! the heart must gather itself up for the last great sacrifice of love, when it bows before the altar and says, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job. i: 21.) Why is it, that these bereavements fall upon us just as we have made the largest investment of affection? Simply, because the discipline would not reach us, if it did not touch the point that was the most tender, and where the sensibilities are the keenest. But this is only another illustration of the way in which the Gospel recognizes the activity of our nature, and says: "be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

7. In the last place, *see the provision for all the activity of man's nature—in the great duty of worship.* God gives us His truth, which in quiet meditation, we revolve and inwardly digest, assimilating it to the

mind, so that it grows in stature almost equal to that of an angel. Then God reveals to the heart all that is beautiful and lovely in the person of His incarnate Son, drawing out our affections until we exclaim in the trustfulness of faith, " My Lord, and my God ! " Is this enough ? No : We must fall into rank with the whole "sacramental host of God's elect," and under the banner of the Church, subdue the nations by the truth, until all "the Kingdoms of this world, shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." Will this answer ? No : this overflowing energy of the sanctified heart must be gathered in from this wide diffusion, and pour itself forth in solemn and adoring worship, before "Him that sitteth upon the throne and before the Lamb."

We worship, whilst we live—we worship with that sublimest of all trust, when at death we convey the soul with the last breath to Him that redeemed it—and then we pass through the open gates and lay our worship, with that of angels and Cherubim in the censer of our High Priest above, that He may waive it forever before the throne of His Father in glory. Surely, a being, who has such capacity for worship here on earth, and such a life of worship lengthening through the eternity to come, cannot deny that God has created him for action, and has made ample provision for its exercise in the gospel of His grace.

What, my hearers, shall I say in the conclusion of this discourse ? Will you tell me what I ought to say ? Well this ; I do not know the length of your line, how far it reaches into the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord : but be that knowledge little or much, express it in your life. Whether you have scaled the heights of Christian experience, and from the Delectable mountains can descry the towers of the distant city—or whether you be struggling at the base beneath—whatever the measure of your hope and love and joy, I ask for the production of it in the sphere of action. Come out from your self. There is a monastery amongst Protestants, as bad as that amongst the devotees of Rome. It is when a Christian locks himself up in the solitude of his own thought, in the exclusiveness of his own experience—when he ties his hand to his side, and gives it to no form of productive labor. Look at that Stylite of the ancient monasticism, upon his pillar of stone, with arm stretched up to heaven until it has withered to its socket. Wherein are you better than he, if in this day of Christian effort you lie a drone in the Christian hive, and bear no fruit of honest Christian toil to the Master's feet ? Here are we in this great city, with thousands around us profaning God's name, and desecrating His Sabbath—what are you and I doing in the way of testimony against this abounding

iniquity, or in the way of effort to bring sinners to the knowledge of the truth? Lift up your voice in the service of God! I bind you to it, by the nature God has given you as creatures of action. I bind you to it, by the genius of Christianity which opens a sphere for your holiest energies. I bind you to it, by the faith you have professed in Christ, your Redeemer. I bind you to it, by the sacramental emblems through which you have recorded your vows—by the red wine which symbolizes the blood shed for the remission of sin—by the bread broken to represent the bruising of Him who died under avenging law to pay our debt to justice. By all these tokens of God's love to you and of your obligation to serve Him, come with a contrite heart and take the Lord's cross upon your shoulder, and the Lord's testimony upon your tongue. "Fasten yourselves to the chariot of your King, as he rides forth gloriously to victory. Then shall it be yours to receive the crown of life, with the benediction of the Judge," well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."