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## — Sermons —

### MEMORY, WORK, AND ANTICIPATION.

BY MOSES D. HOGE, D.D., SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RICHMOND, VA.

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark.—PHIL. iii., 13, 14.*

WE are conscious of very different emotions when we pass from the known to the unknown in the journey of life. When we complete a work in which we have been interested and which has taxed our strength to the utmost, to commence another, hitherto unattempted, only sure of this, that it will be an arduous one; or when we leave a home endeared to us by pleasant associations to enter upon another where all our surroundings and experiences must be changed, these transitions awaken feelings of a widely varying character. The pensive, retrospective thoughts suggested by evening, differ greatly from those which catch the freshness of the dew, the brightening light, and the invigorating air of morning. So too the most inconsiderate cannot but recognize the contrast between the emotions awakened by the dying year—season “for memory and tears”—and those which spring up to hail the New Year, when hope celebrates its birth and tells a flattering tale of coming joys.

There are times then which are appropriate both to memory and to anticipation—times when it is “greatly wise to talk with our past hours,” and times when, forgetting the things which are behind, we should “reach forth toward those which are before.”

There was nothing of rhapsody in the sermon, and nothing of uncertainty in its results. On the contrary we are expressly told that the converts continued steadfast—a statement especially encouraging to us in these days when revivals are disparaged and their results are considered transitory.

### Desire for Communion.

BY T. D. WITHERSPOON, D.D., FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, KY.

With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.—LUKE xxii., 37.

The passage from Judaism to Christianity was as noiseless and unostentatious as the unfolding of the bud into the full flower, or the development of the gray dawn into the perfect day. There was no flourish of trumpets; no great convocation of ecclesiastical leaders; no blazonry of public proclamation to the world; but in the little upper chamber, where the Master and His twelve disciples were seated about the board, the passover was merged into the Lord's supper; the prefigurative gave way to the commemorative; the old dispensation joined hands with the new; and as, shortly before, circumcision had yielded its place to baptism, the Church of God, with its changed seals of an unchanging covenant, came forth to enter upon its new and world-wide career.

It is this relation of the Passover to the Lord's Supper which gives to the words of the text a peculiar significance for us, and should cause a lively response in every heart to the intense desire with which He desired to partake of the feast with His disciples. This desire arose, no doubt, out of various considerations connected with the feast which He was about to observe.

I. It was to Him what the Lord's Supper is to us, an ordinance, the observance of which was enjoined with peculiar solemnity, and He desired to keep it as the expression of His filial obedience. He would give one more evidence that His meat and His drink was to do the will of Him that sent Him.

II. The relation of this Passover to His

great mediatorial work now just about to be accomplished inspired His desire that it should be celebrated. He was the true "Paschal lamb." The blood sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels was symbolic of His blood; the flesh eaten with bitter herbs, of His flesh, which He would give for the life of the world. And as the Lord's Supper has the same significance, we should desire it that the same great spiritual realities may be exhibited and sealed to our faith.

III. In the companionship of the disciples at the table He could see even in advance the first fruits of the salvation He had come to secure. And in the faces of Peter, James and John He could see the earnest pledge of that great multitude whom no man could number, who would sit down at the ten thousand times ten thousand communion tables of all ages and climes. Therefore He said to them, and through them to us, "I have desired to eat this passover with you."

Finally, the words, "before I suffer," indicate His expectation to receive in this communion with His disciples and with His Father at the table strength for the baptism of suffering that was to follow. He was man, with all human sensibilities and all sinless infirmities. He needed strength and support and sought it here, as He did afterward in the garden, when He said: "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" If the Sinless One felt this need of strength through God's appointed feast, let us come with the assurance that we also may be strengthened for whatever conflicts, temptations and trials may lie along our path.

### The Barren Fig Tree.

BY REV. JOEL T. DAVES, M. E. CHURCH SOUTH, MARSHALL, TEXAS.

A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, etc.—LUKE xiii., 6-9.

I. THE ADVANTAGES THE TREE ENJOYED.—1. "Belonged" to a certain man. 2. "Planted in a vineyard." The interest; the protection; the cultivation of the owner. Apply to churches; nations; individual Christians; sinners.

II. THE OWNER'S EXPECTATIONS.—Sought, etc. Because of the advantages: