REBUKED BY ST. PAUL

Address to the Corinthians Concerning the Lord's Supper.

THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE MEANING.

Two Words Whose Significance Has Changed With Time.

THE APOSTLE INTENDED NO THREAT

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

There is a sentence written by St. Paul which might profitably be made the subject of a sermon, at least, once a year. The sentence which I have in mind was never meant to worry the consciences of good Christians. Nevertheless it does trouble a great many good Christians very much. The church at Corinth needed advice, and even rebuke from the Apostle Paul on several accounts. Among other things he found it necessary to make some comment, and this not of a complimentary nature, upon the behavior of the Corinthian Christians at the celebration of the distinctive service, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And in the course of his remarks upon this matter he took occasion to say this:

Whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

This is the sentence upon which, as I say, it would be a good plan to preach a plain sermon at least once every year. For all that this sentence needs is explanation. It does frighten people. But it is like some of the strange sights and sounds which alarm the nervous after sunset; it only needs to be looked into.

Let me begin, then, by remarking that all the sensation of fear which is connected with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is derived from this one sentence. If some old copyist had forgotten to write this down, or if the First Epistle to the Corinthians had been lost, as no doubt other epistles of St. Paul were lost, the Holy Communion would never have stirred alarm in anybody's heart. Nowhere else in the Bible is anything said which even remotely suggests that anyone should be afraid to come to the Supper of the Lord.

THE DIVINE DIRECTION.

The words of the Lord Himself about this sacrament are words of invitation and encouragement and promise. Only once did He associate any reason for fear with it. And even then the question is one of doubtful answer whether He was thinking of this sacrament at all. And, even if He was thinking of this sacrament directly, the warning has nothing to do with the approach to the Lord's Supper, but rather with the departure from it. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," He said.

We take His words at the institution of the sacred feast, "Do this in remembrance of Me." This was our Lord's simple and affectionate request. He asked the apostle to do that. "This do"—this simple act, this plain, simple, almost commonplace, and altogether homely act—"this do in remembrance of Me."

There they sat at supper, the Master and the disciples. The next day He was to die. He was to die for them. He was to give His life for love of them. And when the quiet meal was ended, or nearly ended, He took a loaf of the coarse bread on the table, and poured a cup of the simple wine, and, blessing, gave to the disciples, and asked them to do that when they were among themselves, and He was gone, as a reminder of Him. What could be more plain? What could have in it less that should—I will not say frighten anybody—but even put anybody out of ease?

It has come about I know, by nature and by necessity, in the course of the centuries which have passed between that day and this, that the love and reverence of Christians have made the memory of that sacramental supper beautiful. The rude table has been cut in wood and stone, and lifted high in the chancels of churches. The coarse cloth has been made fair with embroidery and radiant with color. Amid the blaze of light and the smoke of incense and the sound of music, men have celebrated the Supper of the Lord.

THE EXPRESSION OF DEVOTION.

And I have no word of disapproval for all this. It has all grown naturally as the expression of devout and reverent Christian love. I have no word of disapproval, except so far as the splendor of the service makes us forget the real simplicity and the homeliness of the sacrament which Christ ordained, except so far as the remoteness and the ceremonial of celebration make people afraid to draw near.

But in the mind of Christ there was no thought of this. It was the simplest thing in the world. It was a sacrament of love and blessing, of help and remembrance. It was as if He said: "When I am gone, don't forget me. And when I am gone, when I am out of sight, be of good cheer; I will be with you. Wherever you meet thus, friends to one another and to me, I will be with you. I will bring you close to Me."

So far as the gospels go, so far as the mind of Christ concerning this, His own sacrament, is revealed, there is nothing about this simple and loving act to keep anybody away. Indeed, I do not see how anyone, remembering these circumstances, can find it in his heart to stay away. Whoever loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and is willing, in recognition of His dying for us, to join in a service of memorial, may draw near. Suppose a great national hero dies, and when, after preliminary services, the moment of the act of memorial arrives, a great crowd of people get up and go out of the building. What would that mean? It seems to me that it would mean that that crowd, at any rate, cared little for that hero. But the Holy Communion is just such a memorial service. Christ asked us to hold such a service in memory of Him. And when the time comes for the service and half the people in the church turn about and go away—you may see how it looks. It is not possible that any considerable number of these departing people intend any disrespect. Indeed, it is not likely that any of them mean that. The explanation is that they either do not quite understand what the Holy Communion is, or that they are afraid.

ST. PAUL'S REAL MEANING.

Nobody would go away if this text had never been written. All the reason for fear is just here within these words. Let us look at the words carefully and see if they do really mean what some people think. The sentence seems to be plain enough. St. Paul says that the punishment of damnation will fall upon the head of him who partakes of this bread and of this cup unworthily. That would seem to be enough to frighten anybody. But let us see exactly what that means.

Here is a threatened punishment. It is described in the good, strong word—"damnation." Here is a state of guilt which deserves that punishment. That penalty will fall upon his head who is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Here is the sin which leads into this state of guilt. It is described as the act of eating and drinking the Lord's Supper unworthily.

Now God forbids that we should take away from Holy Scripture even the dotting of an "i" or the crossing of a "t." God forbid that we should prophesy smooth things, when the voice of God is stern, or cry "peace, peace," when there is no peace. But woe upon us, on the other hand, if we are sterner than our Master. Woe upon us if we threaten where He has not threatened, or what He has not threatened. God forbid that we should put a stumbling block in any man's way where God has set no barrier; or that we should make the wall higher or the ditch deeper than He has made them.

WORDS CHANGE WITH TIME.

Now let us see what the sentence actually means. The word "damnation," in the first place, does not mean damnation. That is, it did not mean from the pens of translators of the English Bible what it means in our ears to-day. Words change their meaning sometimes as the centuries pass. The word "prevent," when the English prayer book was set in its present shape, meant help. The literal meaning, of course, is "to go before." But the purpose of going before was taken in those days to be for help. It is taken now to be for hindrance. Here is a word whose meaning has quite turned about. A similar change, though not so great a change, has taken place in this word damnation.

It does not mean whoever come unworthily to a simple service of the Holy Communion will be damned, as we say—will be punished forever in the unquenchable burnings of the pit. What a conception of our Heavenly Father people must have who can believe that! Why, there is no sin in the whole catalogue of crime for which, and for which alone, a man will go to hell. The "unpardonable sin" of which we read, is not a single act, but a persistent continuance in sin in the face of full knowledge of the truth. No man will be damned for a single sin. Indeed, there is only one thing for which a man will be damned, and that is refusal to follow the light he has, and to repent and turn to God.

The word damnation here is a common word in the Greek of the New Testament. In other places it is translated "condemnation;" it ought to be translated condemnation here. In the Revised Version the word is "judgment." Whoever partakes unworthily will be judged. Of course he will be judged, as every man will who does any wrong or unworthy thing whatsoever. Whoever tells a lie will be judged. Whoever comes unworthily to the Lord's Supper will be judged.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER.

But here is another word, the word "unworthily." What does that mean? St. Paul himself gives us his own definition. We have no need to turn the pages of the dictionary. Indeed, there are two definitions of unworthiness here. One is in the text, the other is in the whole chapter. That is, we know what unworthiness means both by explanation and by illustration. We know the meaning, first, by what St. Paul wrote in definition. And we know the meaning, also, from the account which is given here of what the Corinthians, to whom he was writing, had been doing.

St. Paul said that unworthiness consisted in not "discovering the Lord's body." "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself"—why? What has he been doing?—"not discerning the Lord's body." Now, to discern means to make a difference. The Revised Version translates it "to discriminate." He comes unworthily, then—and here we get at the very heart of the matter—he comes unworthily who makes no difference between this bread, which the Lord called His body, and common bread. He comes unworthily, that is, who comes to the Lord's Supper just as he would come to his own supper, just as carelessly, just as lightly, with no thought that one supper was any more solemn than the other.

That is the whole meaning of this formidable sentence. Of course, such people were guilty of irreverence, guilty of slighting the body and blood of Christ, guilty of caring nothing for that pain of the cross which was there symbolized. Of course, such people ought to be judged for such an act.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE.

And when we turn from the text to the context, the chapter bears this out entirely. The Corinthians had been doing just that very thing. The sacrament followed, as it did upon the occasion of its institution, after a social meal. The Corinthians brought their food into a common place, and ate together. It was a kind of church social. But the Corinthians were not quite such good Christians as they might have been. And it came to pass that the rich ate dainties, and the poor ate crusts, and one was hungry and another drunken. And then, at the end of this disgraceful scene of disorder and ungeemliness, and actual intoxication, they had, as a sort of last course—what? Why, the Lord's Supper.

No wonder that St. Paul said sternly that that was no way to eat the Lord's Supper. "What shall I say to you?" he says. "Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." And he rehearses the words which Christ used at the first supper, as if he would remind them of the sacred associations which gathered about it. This the Lord called His body, and this His blood. Will you turn this sacred feast into a mere social merry-making, into an occasion of evil? And then he brings in the sentence about unworthiness. And at the end he suggests that hungry people, who have no thought except for their suppers, would better eat at home.

And so we come both by precept and by example to the same definition of unworthy reception of the Lord's Supper. It is as if there came to the Corinthian church, that disorderly rout of those hall-converted pagans, it is as if that were the picture, and beneath it as a title or an explanation this text was written: He comes unworthily who comes as those Corinthians came. That word unworthily means irreverently, and it means nothing more.

THE REAL MEANING AT LAST.

And here, then, is the whole significance of this sentence. Whoever comes irreverently, carelessly, with no thought of sin, with no thought of Christ, to the Supper to which the Lord invites him, he shall be judged for that.

"What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper? To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death, and be in charity with all men."

"Repent ye truly for your sins past, have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ, our Savior; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of these holy mysteries."

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WANTED—THE PUBLIC TO KNOW THAT the largest and most complete stock of trusses, elastic stockings, shoulder braces, etc., can be seen at the store of ARTIFICIAL LIMB M'F'G CO., 999 Penn avenue, near Ninth street, Pittsburg, Pa. no16-56-SSu

WANTED—EVERYONE TO KNOW THAT PEARSON, the leading photographer, of 96 Fifth ave. and 43 Federal st., Ally., is making a life size crayon portrait, beautifully framed, and one dozen cab. photos, all for $8; all fine work. mh13-53

WANTED — AGENTS—OWN A HOME—WE will buy you one anywhere, and let your rent pay for the property; no security required; no mortgage taken. Address GRANITE STATE PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION, 169 Broadway, New York. oc15-WFSu

WANTED—BIDS FOR THE SUPPLY OF 12,000 (twelve thousand) bushels of the best soft lump coal, to be delivered on and after November day, January 27, in loads of 25 bushels each, in the cities of Pittsburg and Allegheny. Bids must be handed in by Thursday (January 23) morning at GUSKY'S, 200 to 400 Market street. ja19-81

FOR SALE—IMPROVED REAL ESTATE.

City Residences.

FOR SALE — $2,100, GIST STREET, NEAR Locust, good brick house, 4 rooms; a bargain. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—MARION ST., BRICK HOUSE, 9 rooms, hall, vestibule, bath, range, hot and cold water, both gases; house in excellent repair and a bargain. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—$1,800—ON WYLIE AVE. CABLE, frame house, 5 rooms, hall, good dry cellar, house in good repair; lot 20x112; rapid advancement sure to come. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—WYLIE AVE., NEAR FULTON, brick house, 6 rooms, hall, vestibule, both gases, slate mantels, inside shutters, side entrance, all in first-class order and a bargain. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—$4,700 — MARION ST., BRICK house; 7 rooms, hall, range, bath, both gases, double parlors, laundry, cemented cellar, and all the conveniences, making it a convenient home. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—$5,150—WILL NET OVER 9 PER cent, No. 152 Forty-first street; property, lot 25x150, one two-story frame, two 2-story bricks; satisfactory reasons for selling. Address owner, F. K. HAFFEY, 131 Irwin ave., Allegheny. ja18-46

FOR SALE—$30,000—ON TAYLOR ST., SIXTEENTH ward, at terms to suit; lot 40½x107 feet, corner property, 5 almost new brick dwellings in first-class repair, now renting for $1,008 per annum; will net over 8 per cent. THOS. MCCAFFREY, 350 Butler st. de14-1-WSSu

FOR SALE—AN ELEGANT CENTER AVE. residence, 8 rooms, hall, hallrooms, bathroom, laundry, hot and cold water, marble and slate mantels, inside shutters, all conveniences; lot 18x165 feet; property bound to appreciate; $13,000. D. BEHEN & SON, 412 Penn ave. ja18-8

FOR SALE—BLUFF ST., NEAR CHESTNUT st., pressed brick dwelling, 9 rooms and bath, vestibule, hall, laundry, both gases, etc.; nice front yard; lot 21 ft. by 152 ft. to a street; desirable property; room to build facing Coward st. ALLES & BAILEY, 164 Fourth ave. Tel. 167. ja19-53-WSSu

FOR SALE—COLWELL STREET, NEAR MILLER, a 2-story pressed brick dwelling of 6 rooms and finished attic, hall, bathroom, w. c., slate mantels, both gases, china closets, fine pantry, front porch; lot 22 in front, 47 in rear, 88 deep; terms easy. BLACK & BAIRD, 95 Fourth ave. jz-94 ja19-33

FOR SALE — WEBSTER AVE., NEAR Roberts st., desirable new brick, mansard, 8 rooms, bath, w. c., laundry, vestibule, hall, slate mantels, tile hearths, both gases, electric bells; all modern improvements; sewered; lot 20 ft. by 81 to Enoch st., but a short distance of Court House. ALLES & BAILEY, 164 Fourth ave. Tel. 167. ja18-51-WSSu

FOR SALE—MAIN STREET, SEVENTEENTH ward, convenient to cable cars, new two-story and mansard brick dwelling 6 rooms, 2 finished attic rooms, hall, vestibule, bath, inside w. c., stationary washstand, hot and cold water, natural gas, inside blinds, rear porch, slate roof, slate mantels, side entrance, etc.; lot 24x132 feet to alley; price $4,700; easy terms. L. O. FRAZIER, Forty-fifth and Butler sts. ja16-53-ThSSu

FOR SALE—IMPROVED REAL ESTATE.

City Residences.

FOR SALE—AN INVESTMENT ON FIFTH ave.; 66 ft. front by 100 deep to alley; 4 brick houses of 7 rooms each; price $10,000. THOS. LIGGETT, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-83-TTSSu

FOR SALE—GRANT ST., NEAR CATHEDRAL, 79 feet on Grant st. by 117 ft. to an alley, with 4 3-story brick buildings; investors please note location. J. C. REILLY, 77 Diamond st. ja19-38

East End Residences.

FOR SALE—$1,500 WILL PURCHASE A FINE lot on Broad st., corner of St. Clair, with small house of 3 rooms; this is a good business corner. THOS. LIGGETT, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-53-TTSSu

FOR SALE—$2,600 EACH, IN TWENTIETH ward, one half square from Fifth ave. cable, two handsome 5-roomed dwellings, with large lots. MELLON BROTHERS, 6349 Station st., E. E. ja19-72

FOR SALE—ONLY $2,250, TERMS TO SUIT purchaser—substantial brick dwelling, containing hall and 6 rooms; lot 25x140 feet; desirably located in East Liberty. W. C. STEWART, 114 Fourth ave. ja12-83-su

FOR SALE—ON BOQUET ST., OAKLAND, near Forbes ave., 2 new frame houses of 9 rooms each and all the modern improvements; lot 20x96; price $4,200; terms to suit. THOS. LIGGETT, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-53-TTSSu

FOR SALE—$6,600—TERMS EASY, A SUBSTANTIAL press brick dwelling, containing 9 rooms, bath and all improvements; lot 24x140, with warehouse; well located in Shadyside. W. C. STEWART, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-77-su

FOR SALE—CHEAP, ONLY $3,800—SUMMERLEA st., near Hump station, new and elegant frame dwelling of 9 rooms; modern and complete in every detail; lot 43x105; easy terms. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—ON OAKLAND AVE., NEAR Forbes ave., new brick house of 10 rooms and all the modern improvements; house elegantly finished; lot 50x120; price $11,000; terms to suit. THOS. LIGGETT, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-53-TTSSu

FOR SALE—NEW FRAME HOUSE, 6 ROOMS, hall, attic, inside shutters, double parlors, hot and cold water, tile hearths; all improvements; lot 25x77; Walnut st., Bellefield; a bargain at $4,000. D. BEHEN & SON, 412 Penn ave. ja19-8

FOR SALE—$4,500—TERMS TO SUIT, FOR A Meyran ave., Oakland, dwelling of 6 rooms, hall, bathroom, w. c., hard wood staircase, sliding doors, china closets, front and back porches, nice lot. BLACK & BAIRD, 95 Fourth ave. jz-90

FOR SALE—$41 SOUTH HIGHLAND AVE., A modern brick residence with all conveniences, 10 rooms; lot 65x140 to alley; get to cable cars at door, ride direct to business; a great bargain. Inquire JOHN H. CRATTY, Commercial Gazette.

FOR SALE—$6,000 FOR THAT WINEDDDLE ave. dwelling, near Liberty st., containing 8 large rooms, bathroom, w. c., furnace, natural gas, laundry, etc., all conveniences, front and rear porches; lot 50x196. BLACK & BAIRD, 95 Fourth ave. 4a-102. ja15-33

FOR SALE—EDWIN STREET, TWENTIETH ward, one square from cable lines, new Queen Anne residence, with 7 large rooms, laundry, bath, electric bells, gas, etc., and fine large lot; price $4,500. MELLON BROTHERS, 6349 Station street, E. E. ja19-73

FOR SALE—$11,000—TERMS TO SUIT PURCHASER, a substantial new and attractive brick dwelling, containing 12 rooms, all conveniences; is nicely papered; lot 55x175 feet; the best piece of property in Shadyside for the money. W. C. STEWART, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-77-su

FOR SALE—HERRON AVE., 2 MINUTES from Wylie ave. cable line, house of 8 large rooms, large porch, hall in center of house; this is a splendid investment, and will enhance rapidly; the location is the best in the city; size of lot, 60x155; price low to quick buyer. COOPER & PETTY, 107 Fourth ave. ja19-105

FOR SALE—$5,000—FOR 10-ROOM DWELLING within 5 minutes walk of Roup station and Fifth ave cable road; hall, front and rear stairs, case, bath, w. c., h. and c. water, natural gas, slate mantels, rooms finished in oak and cherry, front and back porch; lot 33x140. BLACK & BAIRD, 95 Fourth ave. 3a-122 ja19-34

FOR SALE — GROSS ST., TWENTIETH ward, two minutes walk to Ben Venue station, F. R. R., new modern frame dwelling, 5 rooms, finished attic, hall, vestibule, front and rear porches, inside blinds, side entrance, slate roof; lot 24x163 feet to alley; price $2,800; easy terms. L. O. FRAZIER, Forty-fifth and Butler sts. ja16-53-ThSSu

FOR SALE — $30,000 — TERMS $10,000 CASH, balance in 5 years at 5 per cent, will buy one of the largest, finest and most home-like places in Shadyside; house contains 12 large rooms and all the conveniences; lot 114x400 feet; is located on one of the main avenues, paved and sewered; is worth $35,000. W. C. STEWART, 114 Fourth ave. ja19-77-su

FOR SALE—WARD AND ZULEMA STS., Oakland—Elegant brick dwelling 8 rooms, bath, w. c., vestibule, hall, porches, inside shutters, cemented cellar, good stable and carriage house; lot 27 ft. by