

SUNDAY SERMON

A Scholarly Discourse By Rev. Wm. T. Best

Rev. W. T. Best's notable sermon, entitled "Christian Prosperity," was preached here on a recent Sunday by the eloquent divine, the Rev. William T. Best. He took for his text, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree," and said:

Look at the wonderful way in which the Holy Spirit works on a man. Just think of a man whose throat is an open sepulchre, his mouth full of cursing, his feet swift to shed innocent blood, his heart deceitful and desperately wicked, spreading himself like a green bay tree in a tree that is good for nothing, but to keep the sunlight out of the marsh, the very place where it ought to shine, and then think of the Holy Spirit taking hold of that man, bringing him "from darkness to light," from the power of sin and Satan to God, giving him a "new song" in his mouth, placing his feet in the "way of peace," taking away the "stony heart" and giving him an "heart of flesh," changing him from a hard, fruitless, good-for-nothing bay tree into an upright, useful, victorious palm tree. It is wonderful! wonderful! but that is not all.

"For God will give him all things." Christ will never leave nor forsake him; the Holy Ghost will lead and guide him into "all truth"; the angels of Heaven will have charge concerning him to keep him in all his ways. "He shall be like the tree that is planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." "He shall flourish in the courts of God," he shall flourish "like the palm tree," he shall still bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing.

The palm tree is the prince of the vegetable kingdom, so named from its noble aspect; it sometimes rises one hundred feet, unbroken by branches, bearing at its summit a magnificent and graceful crown of large, fan-shaped, and firm, green leaves, in the shadow of which are suspended great clusters of fruit. No tree can look more lordly or beautiful. It is not, however, only beautiful, for, from the bottom of its lowest root to the top of its highest leaf, it is useful from its leaves, which are used for many purposes; from its trunk, fences, cages, poultry cages, building material and fuel are obtained, while from its fibrous web, which is procured, which may be twisted into ropes and rigging. It furnishes food, shelter, clothing, fibre, paper, wood, sugar, oil, wax, tanning materials, resins, and a host of other things, in all making three hundred and sixty. In Egypt, Arabia and Persia many of the inhabitants subsist almost entirely on its fruit. For more than one hundred years it maintains its vigor and beauty, and there is no tree in the world more majestic than this king among the trees of the plain, "as it looks far away in the distance and gazes into the face of the sun, a symbol of life in the midst of a world of death."

The Christian may be compared to the palm tree in the following respects: I. The palm tree grows in a sandy soil, its stem being thick in proportion to its height, and is not more complicated in structure than that of the common butcheroom. Sometimes it produces a series of adventitious roots, which thrust themselves into the soil and serve to strengthen it. On account of its weakness, Pliny says, they will sometimes plant three or four of them together, forming one strong, lofty and beautiful tree. They were planted in the courts of the temple.

Christian lives in the Spirit, walks in the Spirit, and draws his life, light and power from this secret source, or in other words, he is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. This opens up the way to the next heading. II. The woody fibres produced in the interior of the palm tree are regularly pressed outward, giving a uniformity of thickness throughout. It is therefore straight and very lofty, always growing upright, and has not failed to attract the attention of writers in every country where it is indigenous. If the palm tree Christian is saved, sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost, he must work this salvation out, so that there may be a uniformity of thickness between his profession and possession. He must therefore be straight in all his dealings with the children of men. A great many Christians are in doubt as to whether their lives are straight or not; now the only way a man can tell whether he has a yard of cotton or not is to place the supposed yard of cotton alongside of the yardstick, and if the one is just as long as the other he comes to the conclusion that he has a yard of cotton. The only way a man can tell whether his life is straight or not is to place himself alongside of the Word of God. Take, for instance, the passage found in Matt. 5:44: "Love your enemies." Now someone will say: "I can forgive, but I never can forget." Well, then, you are not straight. "Love your enemies." Someone says: "I do not know how to do it." A minister, while preaching, once said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., and then said: "It does not mean that, for no man can do that; but it means we are to try and do it." How would that brother like to put "try" before all the other commandments? Would he be willing next Sunday to get up before his people and say the Bible says: "Thou shalt not kill," but of course it does not mean that, for no man can live without killing; but it means you are to try and not kill. The Bible means what it says, or else it does not mean anything.

IV. The palm tree is an evergreen. "It grows slowly but steadily, uninfluenced by those alterations of the seasons which affect other trees." It does not rejoice overmuch in winter's copious rains, neither does it droop under the drought and burning sun of summer, nor is it in any way influenced by the winds which sweep it aside from perfect uprightness. Someone has said there are four classes of Christians: 1st. The sleepy Christian, who wakes up to everything when it is too late. 2d. The fair weather Christian, who serves the Lord when the sun shines. 3d. The grasshopper Christian, who takes a leap every revival. 4th. The palm tree Christian, whose path is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. One of the great troubles in the Christian Church today is that there are too many grasshopper Christians. They are greatly warmed up in a revival meeting, but after the meeting is over become cold and indifferent. The palm tree Christian must set his face "like a flint," for he professes to be following Christ and doing as Christ would do under every circumstance, while it is true that everything changes, he must never change from the "highway" to the "broadway." When he is plowing and the plow-point strikes a stone, he is a Christian. When the cow gives a pail of milk and the milk is spoiled, he is a Christian. When he is putting up stoves and the fall is, he is a Christian. When they are taking up the missionary collection, he is a Christian. In all places, at all times (without a single holiday, not even election day), under all circumstances, and at all costs, he is a Christian.

V. From antiquity the palm tree has been regarded as the choicest of fruit trees. It has been known to produce 900 pounds of dates in a year. "Its fruit is abundant, pleasant, medicinal and exhilarating," those who only know the date from the dried specimen shown beneath a label in shop windows, can hardly imagine how delicious they are when eaten fresh. Pliny says: "When they come from the trees they are so delicious that they are eaten most greedily." It is a staple article of commerce, and a Moslem tradition says: "They are the chief of all the fruits of the world." If the life of the palm tree is saved and sanctified, and that there is nothing more transient about it, he will not only have the fruits of the Spirit, but shall teach transgressors the ways of the Lord, and sinners shall be converted. During the last few days I have read so much about the palm tree that I have a perfect hunger for dates, and it seems as though I cannot wait until I go to town and get some.

The palm tree Christian has a hunger for souls. Moses said: "If Thou wilt not forgive their sin, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book." Paul said: "He could say himself accused from Christ for his brethren." John Knox said: "Oh God, give me Scotland, or I die." Is there any fruit so delicious to our souls as leading others to Christ? Oh, brother, sister, "lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already unto harvest." Be to-day and gather this fruit unto life eternal.

VI. The palm tree grows under heavy weight and pressure. Naturalists say it grows when it is most pressed down. You cannot keep it down, or make it grow crooked, even if you could lay it upon its side. So it is with the palm tree Christian; the more you try to keep him down, the more he grows. The Jews said, with regard to Christ: "Avay with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that He should live." "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "We will not have this man Christ Jesus to reign over us." "They drove the nails into His hands, and they speared into His side. The crown of thorns into His brow, and they mocked Him till He died." They smote the Shepherd and the sheep were scattered, so that from all around the world the Jews fled. They were things of the past; but were they? It was not fifty days until a band of men and women were in an upper room, praying for the coming of the Holy Ghost, and when He came 3000 were converted and added to the church; and every where preaching the Gospel. Then said the persecutors: "Stone Stephen!" "The Thomas to a pillar!" "Crucify Peter!" "Throw John into a cauldron of boiling oil!" "Chop off Paul's head!" "Stop them!" Stop them, or they will turn the world upside down. They killed the angels; but did they kill Christianity? Never! They killed just as well try to stop the earth turning on its axis, as to prevent the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth. Christians have had their thumbs in the thumb-screws; their feet in the stocks; their lips cut

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR NOTES

JUNE TWENTY-FOURTH. Topic—John Eliot, and Missions Among the Indians. 2 Tim. 2: 1-13. A missionary is not only a "man sent," he is a man sending; he makes other missionaries, who will take his place. No life without hardness is a missionary life; if it could be there would be no need of missionary lives. "This one thing I do" may be called the missionary's motto; only, the "one thing" includes all kinds of hard work. There is only one "pathway to a throne" that is permanent, and that is labor for the kingdom of God. John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, was born in England in 1604. After study in Cambridge University, he became assistant of the famous Rev. Thomas Hooker in his school, and was there converted. He decided at once upon the ministry, and for freedom of conscience came to America, becoming pastor of the church at Roxbury, near Boston. He held this post for sixty years. He grew interested in the Indians, and after long and patient study he mastered their very difficult language. He published a grammar of it, writing at the close "Prayers and psalms, through faith, will do anything." Eliot preached his first sermon to the Indians on October 28, 1646. It resulted in the firm conversion of the noble chief, Waban. So many Indians were soon converted that a Christian town was built, named Nonantum. Eliot introduced husbandry and the mechanic arts. Tall of a powerful frame, Eliot went far and wide preaching the gospel, fearlessly confronting hostile chiefs and infuriated Indian priests, reaching out to the borders of New Hampshire and Rhode Island. His work was aided by Parliament and approved by Cromwell. A society for the propagation of the Gospel in New England" was founded in England. In 1663 Eliot completed his great work, the translation of the entire Bible into the Indian language, which was followed by other books.—Baxter's "Practice of Piety," the Psalms in metre, and a primer of logic. Twelve towns of Christian Indians were established. In King Philip's war the work was greatly impeded, both whites and pagan Indians conceiving a dislike to the Christian Indians, Eliot himself being reproached and contemned. But on the coming of peace the work was gradually restored. Eliot died, May 30, 1690, at the age of eighty-six, telling for the Indians to the end. His last words were, "Welcome! Joy!"

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR JUNE 24. Review of the Second Quarter.—Read Psalm 145: 1-21.—Golden Text: John 14: 26.—Topic: Some Great Sayings of Jesus and Their Lessons.—Summaries: Lesson I. Topic: Counsel in character building. Place: The "Horns of Hattin," near the centre of the west coast of the Sea of Galilee. This lesson is a part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Men are known by their fruits; good trees bring forth good fruit; corrupt trees bring forth corrupt fruit; a profession of godliness is not sufficient. II. Topic: The Lord's day. Place: In and near Capernaum. While Jesus and His disciples were walking through a field of grain on the Sabbath day the disciples plucked the grain and ate it. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their fault; Jesus justified their course by referring to David's act in eating the shew-bread, and to the priests who were obliged to work on the Sabbath; He healed a man with a withered hand; they would lift a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath day, and a man is better than a sheep. III. Topic: A great faith and a great Helper. Place: Capernaum; Nain. This miracle was performed soon after the Sermon on the Mount. A sick slave; the elders sent; the centurion's good deeds urged; Jesus went with them; Jesus said, "I will go, but the centurion goes himself, to meet Jesus; he says, I am not worthy, trouble not yourself, speak the word only; Jesus says this is great faith, not found in Israel; the cure wrought at once. At Nain He met a funeral procession; a young man raised from the dead; fear fell on the people. IV. Topic: Jesus the sinner's friend. Place: In some town of Galilee, perhaps in Capernaum. Simon, a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dine; a woman—a sinner, came in and washed, wiped, kissed and anointed His feet. Simon had failed to perform the common acts of hospitality, and Jesus now calls his attention to his coldness and lack of love; reproves him for being displeased with the woman; a parable; a question; a woman forgiven. V. Topic: How to hear the word. Place: Sea of Galilee, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus left Peter's house and the multitude followed Him; spoke many things in parables; this was His first one; four kinds of ground represent four classes of people; many things caused unfruitfulness. We can by God's help, cause the soil of our hearts to be changed. VI. Topic: Problems of good and evil in the world. Place: Near Capernaum, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus speaks another parable. Good seed is sown, but an enemy sowed tares. Both must grow together until the harvest. Jesus explains the parable in vs. 37, 38. At the end of the world, those who "do iniquity" will be cast into a furnace of fire, but the righteous will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." VII. Topic: Great faith respecting salvation. Place: In the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. A fever Jesus had concluded "the parables by the sea." He crossed over the Sea of Galilee to the eastern shore. Here a fierce demoniac met Him. When he saw Jesus he ran and worshipped Him; Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. The man entered into a herd of swine, and was perished in the sea; the people besought Jesus to depart out of their coasts. VIII. Topic: Lessons from the death of John the Baptist. Place: The fortress Macherus. The death of John occurred about the time the twelve returned to the borders of Ptolemais, Galilee and Perea. When he heard of the mighty works of Christ he said John is risen. John had rebuked sin in high places. IX. Topic: The great gospel feast. Place: Near Bethsaida. God can supply bread for His people; it is likely to be bread of life. Jesus and His disciples, women and children; twelve baskets of fragments gathered. After performing this wonderful miracle the people were about to make Jesus a king, but He would not permit it. That night He prayed nearly all night on the mountain alone, and between 3 and 4 o'clock went to His disciples, walking on the waves. X. Topic: Bringing the unsaved to Christ. Place: On the borders of Phoenicia. Sermons on the bread of life and pollution, just delivered; the people plot against Him; Jesus and His disciples go to the borders of Phoenicia; a Gentile woman beseeches Him to cast the devil out of her daughter; Jesus replies that it is not proper to give the children's bread to dogs; she asks for the crumbs; severe tests do not discourage her; Jesus commends her faith; her daughter is granted and her daughter is healed. XI. Topic: Confessing Christ. Place: Near Caesarea Philippi. Jesus asked His disciples who men said He was; some said John the Baptist, and others Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Who do you say I am? Peter says, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Christ did not reveal it, but the Father had; Christ's foundation rock; gates of hades shall not prevail against His church; the keys of the kingdom of heaven given; Christ tells of His death; Peter rebukes Him; get thee behind Me, Satan; saying and losing the life; no profit to gain the whole world and lose the soul. XII. Topic: Lessons of the transfiguration. Place: Mount Hermon. Peter, James and John go with Jesus into the mount to pray. As Jesus prays He is transfigured; Moses and Elijah appear; converse regarding His standing from the world; the disciples, fully awake, see Jesus and the two men in their glory; enter in a cloud; hear a voice; Jesus commended; alone with Jesus.

WHERE TEXAS RANGERS GOT FAME FOR VALOR. HARDY FRONTIERSMEN SAVE THE LIVES OF A MEXICAN FRIEND AND HIS FAMILY. Were Besieged by Apaches—Incident of the Frontier Wars Warlike Tribes Burned, Pillaged and Slew. In a grove near the Rio Grande River, thirty-five years ago, was camped a body of fifty men in the loose uniform of the Texas Rangers, says a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald. The grove was about half a mile in diameter, and nearly circular. The rangers sought rest after a fruitless search for bands of Apaches known to be on both sides of the river. It was customary for the rangers and the Mexican rurals to help each other when near the border line. The rangers were a stalwart, bronzed and hardy set of men, of intelligent face and quiet in conversation and manners. They were maintained by the State to suppress internal disorder and repel external invasion; they were selected from the better class of citizens who were endowed with civic virtues and governed by patriotic purposes. Long service had given them the mastery of every kind of warfare with the desperate, lawless and pitiless Indian. Their discipline was perfect, firm in camp or field. They were armed in picturesque garb and armed most effectively, as taught by experience. Each man carried a huge bowie knife for close fighting, a carbine for range fighting, two six-shooters each and a saber for the charge, and they were more expert in the use of these weapons than any other body of men living. Great care was shown in the choice of their horses, for they were invaluable in service and in fact, made the rangers' work on the vast plains of Texas possible. Speed, endurance and courage, with intelligence, were the qualities of the steed, which under kind training, made the soldier and horse a modern Centaur and irresistible against the wild tribes of the West. Each man held twelve lives in his holsters, one in his carbine, and all who came within the deadly lunge of the knife or sweep of the saber perished. So prepared and arrayed for stirring adventures and ruthless war, the ranger went forth as the knight errant of a boundless domain to protect and defend life, liberty and property dependent upon his chivalric mission, against legions of the cruellest foes that ever cursed any portion of the human race. SLAYING WOMEN AND CHILDREN Around the grove from the river to the staked plains on the north was a level prairie extending far and wide into Texas and Mexico, the abiding place of many primitive homes and more pretentious and wealthy ranches. A great horde of Apaches in their annual August foray were slaying, burning and driving away women, young girls and boys, while infants and children too feeble for flight to the mountain villages of the invaders were at once slain without mercy. This hellish work was going on in old Mexico some miles west of the river. There was much less hard fighting and more plunder here than in Texan territory. And thus the red fiends revelled to surfeit in their saturnalia of crime, with none to oppose but the helpless victims. The rurales were in hiding or hunting for the rangers to help them. At midnight, after the second day of encampment, a vaquero was brought in by a guard to Major Ward, the officer in command. He told a most distressful tale of attack upon his ranch, a rich Mexican of aristocratic lineage, his family of wife, boy of twelve years and beautiful daughter, the Sororita Dolores. It was viciously defended by the owners and sixty vaqueros against an overwhelming

EPWORTH LEAGUE LESSONS

SUNDAY, JUNE 24. Surprised People.—Matt. 7, 22, 23. In nearly all the Scripture which speaks of life beyond the grave there is reference to the surprise, and even amazement, which will fill men's minds when they discover just what the facts of the new life are. And this surprise will not come from the strangeness of the new experiences. It will grow out of the fact that, after all, eternal destinies have really been fixed by earthly deeds. The beliefs and conduct of to-day, to which we pay so little heed, are full of meaning for the infinite to-morrow. We do not live with this in mind. The righteous, in the parable of the last judgment, were plainly astonished that what seemed to them insignificant things, with nothing about them to suggest that there were to have eternal meaning, had won for them the blessing of the judge. And those on the left hand of the judgment throne were equally amazed. "When did these things happen?" is the incredulous question of either class. They had no memory of these events, which the Judge declared had been so big with eternal meaning. The righteous did not think their unselfish ministry was anything important; the unrighteous could not see that their self-centered lives on earth had made them blind to the presence of the Christ. What does this mean? Are we all wrong in the method of our preparation for the future? Is faith of no effect, and love of God unavailing? Will judgment depend on deeds, rather than on the attitude of the soul to God? Yes, and no. At the beginning of all real service to man there is faith in God. Through all living there must be constant trust and constant dependence on God. But these are not substitutes for unselfishness; they are the means by which we reach it. If we do not attain the unselfish life, either our faith has been a mere form or we have not understood its meaning. The sure way to provide for heaven is to live the heavenly life now. We shall still be surprised that such amazing gains come from such simple conduct, for we shall see in heaven's rewards more of the grace of God than of our own deservings. WOMAN GEM CARRIER. Miss Grace M. Varcoe, who is now in New York, has crossed the Atlantic twenty-one times as the agent of an English diamond concern, and on each trip she has carried with her gem values at from \$150,000 to \$300,000. Miss Varcoe is said to be an expert lapidist. She has traveled in all the principal cities of this country, Canada and Europe as the representative of her firm. She speaks four languages and, incidentally, carries a revolver, which, should occasion require, could also "speak."

NEW YORK A CITY OF ISLANDS

Increased in United States in Two Years Over 1,000,000. Over a million more telephones were in use in the United States at the beginning of 1905 than two years before, according to a report just issued by the Census Office. In round numbers there were 2,315,500 in the country at the end of 1902 and 3,400,000 at the beginning of 1905. That this country is far ahead of Europe is told by figures showing Europe's entire equipment January 1, 1905, to have been less than 1,500,000, less than half the number in the United States. There were over 5,000,000,000 phone calls in 1902, of which nearly 121,000,000 were "long distance." Ohio led in the number of messages, although there were more "long distance" messages over Pennsylvania telephones than in any other State. San Francisco, with a telephone for each nine persons, was the best equipped city. The report speaks of the effect of the telephone in reducing or checking the amount of telegraph business. It says the rates of the two systems for medium distances do not differ greatly, and for very long distances they are overwhelmingly in favor of the telegraph, if the message be taken as a unit. But, if the number of words exchanged be taken into account, as well as the time required for getting into communication, the telegraph is at a disadvantage. A Country Editor's Outlook. William Allen White, the Kansas editor, in describing life in a small town in the Middle West, says: "When a man has published a paper in a country community for many years he knows his town and its people, their strength and their weakness, their joys and their sorrows, their failings and their prosperity—or if he does not know these things he is on the road to failure, for this knowledge must be the spirit of his paper." The author has been editing and publishing a small daily newspaper in Emporia, Kan., since 1860 with considerable success, and it must be inferred that he knows the sort of people about whom he writes.

REAL FRENCH HATS BOUGHT.

The beautiful and expensive models seen in the Paris millinery shows are occasionally bought en masse by large dealers on this side and then American women have an opportunity to buy real French hats at prices that are not prohibitive. There are those, of course, who would not wish to buy anything that had been used for a display, but many more are glad to just catch a chance.

SCALE INSECTS.

If you find scales on your fruit trees, send a twig with some of the insects on to the experiment station of your State and ask if they are the San Jose scale. Do not be too alarmed at the presence of scales on fruit trees, as we have several varieties that are very common which do but little if any injury. One who has carefully examined a San Jose scale is rarely mistaken in it if jagged.

A Thought For the Week.

Never ask a man what he knows, but what he can do. A fellow may know everything that's happened since the Lord started the ball to rolling, and not be able to do anything to help keep it from stopping. But when a man can do anything, he's bound to know something worth while. Books are all right, but dead men's brains are no good unless you mix a live one's with them.—Old Gorgan Graham.