

# BIBLICAL RECORDER

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### God Commandeth all Men everywhere to Repent.

God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. I lay this command across your path; you can not proceed; one step further in a sinful course without treading it under foot. You are urged to the immediate performance of this duty by a regard to your own interest; for except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish. You are urged to it by all the blessed angels, who are waiting with a desire to rejoice in your conversion. Above all, you are most powerfully urged to it by the blessed angels, who are waiting with a desire to rejoice in your conversion. Above all, you are most powerfully urged to it by the blessed Redeemer, whom you are under the strongest possible obligations to love and obey. He has done and suffered much for you. For you he has toiled, bled and died. For you he cheerfully endured the scoffs and cruelties of men; the rage and malice of devils; and the overwhelming weight of his Father's wrath. In return for all this he asks of you one small favor. He merely requests you to repent, and be happy. If you comply with his request, he will see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. O, then, be persuaded to give joy to God, to his Son, and to the holy angels; to make this day a festival in heaven; by repenting. Ever now, your heavenly Father is waiting for your return, and the Redeemer stands ready with expanded arms to receive you. Even now the white robes and the rings are provided, and the fatted calf is made ready to feast returning prodigals. Even now, angels and archangels are ready to pour forth their most joyful songs to celebrate your return. Will you, then, by persisting in iniquity, seal up their lips? Will you say, there shall be no joy in heaven, this day, on your account? God shall not be glorified, Christ shall not be glorified, angels shall not rejoice, if we can prevent it? If there be any of whose feelings and conduct this is the language, I solemnly, but reluctantly, declare unto you, in the name of Jehovah, that God and his Son shall be glorified, and there shall be joy over you in heaven, notwithstanding all your endeavors to prevent it. Never shall any of his creatures rob God of his glory; and if you will not consent that his grace shall be glorified in your salvation, he will be compelled to glorify his justice in your everlasting destruction. If you will not allow the inhabitants of heaven to rejoice in your repentance, their love of justice, truth and holiness will constrain them to rejoice in your condemnation, and to sing alleluia, while the smoke of your torment ascendeth up forever and ever.—*Payson.*

### Reason of God's Forbearance with Sinners.

How wonderful is the long-suffering and forbearance of God! Here a sinner, who have been, for twenty, forty, sixty years, abusing his patience, and misapplying all his benefits. Yet, instead of cutting them down, he adds another year, perhaps many years, to their long since forfeited lives. There are sinners who have wasted and profaned a thousand Sabbaths, yet he allows them another Sabbath, another opportunity of hearing the offers of salvation. There are sinners who have repeatedly been urged in vain to be reconciled to God; yet he condescends still to require a reconciliation. There are sinners at whose hearts Christ has knocked, a thousand and a thousand times; but, though they refuse to admit him, he still knocks again. O, why are such treasures of goodness lavished on such insensible creatures? Why is such an inestimable prize put into the hands of those who have no heart to improve it? Why, indeed, but to show what God can do, and how infinite is his patience and forbearance exceed our own. One reason why God bestows on sinners the day and the means of grace, is that they may have an opportunity of clearly displaying their own characters, and thus proving the truth of the charges which he has brought against them. He does, as it were, say to the world, I have accused these creatures of being enemies to me and to all goodness, and of cherishing in their hearts an obstinate attachment to vice. They deny the charge. I am therefore about to bring them to the test; to try an experiment which will clearly show whether my charges are well-founded or not. I shall send them my word, and the gospel of my son, clearly revealing to them the truth there revealed. I shall allow them one day in seven to attend on their instructions, and I shall offer them the assistance of my Spirit, to render them holy; these privileges they shall enjoy, for years together. If they improve them aright, if they believe my word, receive and love my Son, and renounce their sins, I will acknowledge that I have accused them falsely; that they are not so depraved as I have represented them. If, should they, on the contrary, neglect my word, disobey the gospel, and refuse to receive and submit to my Son, should they profane the Sabbath, misimprove the

day of grace, refuse to repent of their sins, and be reconciled to me, then it will be evident to all, that I have not accused them falsely; that they are just such depraved, obstinate, irreconcilable enemies to me and to goodness, as I have represented them to be in my word.—*Payson.*

### The Violated Sabbath.

The following incident in the life of one who afterwards became eminent for his devotion to the cause of Christ, may serve as a warning to others who are tempted in like manner. He was still young and indulged a hope that he had been regenerated though he had not joined the church.

On his way to the school one Sabbath morning, he was met by three of his former companions, who said they were bound on an excursion on the river, on which the early sun was beautifully gleaming. Partly by sarcasm and partly by entreaty, they induced him to join their party. The boat glided up the stream, and had scarcely shut out the town behind the richly-wooded banks when "the church bell rung out," the narrator says, "signifying to the inhabitants that it was nine o'clock, and that, by and by, divine service would commence. The sound of the bell vibrated sweetly on the undulating wave, and produced a tranquilizing effect on three of the party, but to the fourth it was perfect agony. Perhaps a poor condemned criminal, on the morning of his execution, hears the prison-clock strike which warns him of the fatal hour, with just the same feelings as this young man heard the nine o'clock bell. That well-known sound had been to him, for months past, the signal for commencing the Sunday-school proceedings spread out before the eye of his mind. His conscience was very busy; the Spirit set his guilty conduct in terrible array before him. He fancied he heard the children sing the teacher pray, the school business begin, and every man at his post but one, and that was himself. In vain did his companions laugh, and baste him, and try to cheer him. No—God had smitten him; and a wounded spirit who can bear? They had taken some musical instruments with them with an intention to play; but his harp was now unstrung, and the whole day was spent by him in perfect misery. If he could have jumped ashore he would have done it, but he could not; yet one thing he did, and it was worth doing. He solemnly resolved never to break the Sabbath again, and never more to associate with those who fear not God, but to come out from among them, and be separate; and God has enabled him to perform this vow."

### Temptations Peculiar to Enquirers.

There are three things that do usually afflict the soul that is earnestly looking after Jesus Christ. 1. Dreadful accusations from Satan. 2. Grievous, defiling, and infectious thoughts. 3. A strange readiness in our nature to fall in with both. By the first of these, the heart is made continually to tremble. Hence his temptations are compared to the roaring of a lion. For as the lion by roaring kindleth the heart of his prey, so doth Satan kill the spirit of those that hearken to him; for when he tempteth, especially by way of accusation, he doth to us as Balaak did to the Jews; he speaks to us in our own language. He speaks our sin at every word; our guilty conscience knows it. He speaks our death at every word; our doubting conscience feels it. 2. Besides this, there do now arise even in the heart such defiling and soul-infectious thoughts as put the tempted to his wits' end. For now it seems to the soul that the very food-gates of the flesh are opened, and that to sin there is no stop at all; now the air seems to be covered with darkness, and the man is as if he were changed into the nature of a devil. Now, if ignorance and unbelief prevail, he concludes that he is a reprobate, made to be taken and destroyed. 3. Now also he feels in him a readiness to fall in with every temptation—a readiness, I say, continually present. Romans 7: 21. This throws all down. Now the devil begins to swallow him up; now he can neither pray, nor read, nor hear, nor meditate on God, but fire and smoke continually burst forth of the heart against him; now sin and great confusion puts forth itself in all. Yes, and the more this smother deathly doth to do duty sincerely, the further off he is from his duty; for by how much the soul struggleth under these distresses, by so much the more doth Satan put forth himself to resist, still making more poison, that if possible it might never struggle more, for struggling are also as poison to Satan. The fly in the spider's web is an emblem of the soul in such a condition; the fly is entangled in the web, as this spider shows himself; if the fly stirs again, down comes the spider to her, and claps a foot upon her; if yet the fly makes a noise, then with poisoned mouth the spider lays hold upon her; if the fly struggles still, then she pours her more and more; what shall the fly do now? Why, she dies, if somebody does not quickly release her. This is the case of the tempter; they are entangled in the web, their feet and wings are entangled; now Satan shows himself, if the soul now struggleth, Satan laboureth to hold it down; now Satan shows himself, if it will shake a noise, then he beats to receive and submit to my Son, should they profane the Sabbath, misimprove the

again, then he poisoneth more and more; inasmuch that it must needs at last die in the net, if the man, the Lord Jesus, helps not out. The afflicted conscience understands my words.

Further, though the fly in the web is altogether incapable of looking for relief, yet this awakened, tempted Christian, is not. What must he do, therefore? How should he entertain hopes of life? If he looks to his heart, there is blasphemy; if he looks to his duties, there is sin; if he strives to mourn and lament, perhaps he cannot; unbelief and hardness hinder. Shall this man lie down and despair? No. Shall he trust to his duties? No. Shall he stay from Christ till his heart is better? No. What then? Let him now look to Jesus Christ crucified; then shall he see his sins answered, for then shall he see death dying, then shall he see guilt borne by another, and then shall he see the devil overcome. This sight destroys the power of the first temptation, purifies the heart, and inclines the mind to all things.—*Bunyan.*

### Words of Jesus.

It lay neglected in a corner of the tent—the little hook, with its lowly yet lofty title, all unheeded by the careless group who crowded around, sent by some loving mother, or sister, or wife, with an earnest prayer that it might lead their loved ones to think of Him who, though "He be not far from every one of us," is too often forgotten in this sinful world—it lay awaiting its mission. The sinners were mostly young; but a few had attained the meridian of life, and several were (or professed to be) Christians; but amid the din of war and temptations of the camp their religion seemed almost forgotten, or laid aside for a more convenient season. Cards were the usual pastime; and Christian and worldly alike seemed to find more of interest in them than in the weightier matters of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." But this afternoon even they were laid aside, and there was a feeling of earnest and sadness creeping over all the party.

Finally, one of the group, a noble hearted man, though one who did not always remember to walk worthy of his high vocation, glanced at the little volume, and took it up carefully to while away the time. The title was simple, but it grated harshly on his ear: "Words of Jesus." Ah! who amid the tumult of war, the confusion of the camp, and in quiet hours the thought of home, could stop to meditate on Him who was "meek and lowly of heart," the heavenly Friend, who "bare our transgressions and received our iniquities"? But the Spirit led the book, as unthinkingly he proposed reading aloud, "for the sake of something new," as was lightly said. And so the reading commenced, at first carelessly, but with gradually increasing interest, until they heard gladly of Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of sinners. And as they heard of His weary life on earth, His loneliness, His sorrow and suffering for sinful men, they forgot themselves awhile to look to Him, the Author of eternal life. "Words of Jesus"! What rest and security they breathed; how they pointed to the blissful haven above—the home ready, the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"; and how trivial and unworthy seemed the life below; the strife of men, the struggle for power, the bitter enmities and anger of human hearts. Over them all there came a change, and for that evening at least they were wiser and better men. With their softened feelings came, love, remembrances not only of the tender love of dear ones at home, but their earnest prayers for them, and they felt that, like other blessings with which their lives were crowned, of them they were all unworthy.

"Well, Charlie," spoke up one of the hearers, when the book was laid aside, and with a voice which would be lusty despite the light tone, "that was first-rate—better than cards, don't you think?" "Yes, indeed," was the fervent reply; "I believe some good angel placed the book there; it seems a message sent to draw us again into the path of duty and true happiness from where we were so sadly straying; and for one I am truly thankful for the gentle reproach, the timely warning, as well as the blessed hope it gives for a bright eternity we may some day enjoy. It may be soon."

My readers, does not this show that we may be, at least, instruments in doing good by sending Bibles and tracts to soldiers?

Dear soldiers of our Confederate States, perilling your lives, and, far more, your souls, for the sake of honor and home; oh, that we could persuade you to pause awhile each day and think of Eternity—the joy or woe that word contains for you. We beseech you to obtain from the profane world—the drink which, if it falls on intoxicating, is noble, pure and good; to cease the evil breathing practice of card playing, and to live yourselves to the standard of true gentleness. Study the Bible; and though at first you may not see its beauty and preciousness, yet with prayer they will come. And if it be your lot to be of the number for whom we are called to mourn, may we feel the comfort of that cheering verse—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

The object of all knowledge is truth.

### Language of all who Neglect Prayer.

It is natural to man, from his earliest infancy, to cry for relief when in danger or distress; if he supposes that any one able to relieve him is within hearing of his cries.—Every man, then, who feels his own dependence upon God, and his need of blessings which God only can bestow, will pray to Him. He will feel that prayer is not only his duty, but his highest privilege; a privilege of which he would not consent to be deprived, though confinement in a den of lions were to be the consequence of its exercise. The man, then, who refuses, or neglects to pray, who regards prayer not as a privilege, but as a wearisome and needless task, practically says, in the most unequivocal manner, I am not dependent on God; I want nothing that he can give; and therefore I will not come to him, nor ask any favor at his hands. I will not ask him to crown my exertions with success, for I am able, and determined to be the architect of my own fortune. I will not ask him to instruct or guide me, for I am competent to be my own instructor and guide. I will not ask him to strengthen and support me, for I am strong in the vigor and resources of my own mind. I will not request his protection, for I am able to protect myself. I will not implore his pardoning mercy nor his sanctifying grace; for I need, I desire, neither the one nor the other. I will not ask him to preside and aid in the hour of death, for I can meet and grapple, unsupported, with the king of terrors, and enter, undaunted and alone, any unknown world into which he may usher me. Such is the language of all who neglect prayer.—*Payson.*

### An Answer to Prayer.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

During the period of the late distressing wars on the continent, many persons of failing fortunes, and declining health and hopes, repaired from the city to remote and sheltered retreats, where they might lose sight of the universal misery, and more safely and quietly enjoy their home and friends. In one of these insulated spots, dwelt a family of the well-known name of Caradeux, on a little farm, where they endeavored to believe themselves entirely removed from the dreadful din of arms. In this distant solitude they began to revive from their sufferings, and to sow and reap their fields. It was, however, a repose of but short duration. Soon they were compelled again to feel the fallacy of all earthly plans. A road was opened in the very border of the forest where their farm lay, for the approach of the invading army. The dread array of opposing squadrons was no longer distant.—Every successive hour lessened their sense of security, and brought new cause of alarm. There was no alternative. The rigors of the season, and the rapid movements of the enemy forbade them to fly for safety. At last, one tempestuous night, when the snow darkened the air, and the wind was rending the stoutest oaks of the forest, their anxiety became frightful. The march of the hostile troops was heard rapidly advancing. The distant boom of the artillery began to sound in their ears, as they pursued the flying soldiery in the immediate direction of Caradeux farm, and now the whole western horizon was lighted up with the flames of war, and fire and sword, combining to raise the vestiges of humanity wherever they passed. The good people of the farm house heard with an agony of dread the perilous notes of war, and now could almost count the footfall of the approaching army, and were expecting that the next awful hour might see the inmates of their dwelling consigned to the murderous legions who were invading their soil. At this terrible juncture, the parents, and grandparents and children, all clinging to each other, rushed toward an upper chamber, barricaded and secured as well as they could, the windows and doors, and all knelt down to put themselves into the hands of their Maker. The pious grandmother presided over these soul-felt, invocations, and read with a high and solemn voice, the prayer for the dread time of war, which has these words: "O God of might, raise a protection wall around this dwelling, to defend us against the terrible power of the enemy." One of the young sons, who had most devoutly joined in the petition, exclaimed instinctively, "May not this be too much to ask?"

Mentime the night had been wearing on. The army seemed not to be coming in approach toward the farm, which by exactly in their expected route. The inmates of the little chamber remained in silent astonishment, and doubt as to the cause of this suspense, but when the dawn began to shed its feeble light, greater still was their astonishment. The wind had drifted the snow during the night to such a height as entirely to envelop and conceal their mansion from the road, and indeed, the surrounding country. All the family of Caradeux again united in devotion, and poured forth tumultuous expressions of praise and thanksgiving, and said the good grandmother, "Behold, my children, the wall which the Lord built last night around this house!"

### False Estimate of Life.

Lafit, said a dying man, who had lived in selfish ease and in the indulgence of those passions which debase and degrade man, "Life is a miserable humbug, and thus he departed from the life which he had first

and then despised. He had made it a life of sin, a scene of wasteful and riotous living; and it was his punishment to be compelled to look back upon it as a period utterly barren of all happiness. Nor could there be more terrible punishment than to find, memory reviewed the past, nothing but ashes of fleeting pleasures, and to be led to curse life and die.

Many who would recoil from such a description fling away of life as a worthless thing, are in the habit, we think, of speaking laughingly of it, or of affecting so to do. The poet Pope, who aspired also to a moralist, has no higher conception of life than to call it a "poor play," in which we suppose it should be man's duty to earn to render his part respectably, carefully when the curtain might fall and the lights go out. No real or permanent rest can or should be given to that which is a "poor play." To estimate the value of this low estimate of life we most easily protest. It is neither a "miserable humbug," nor a "poor play." It is a serious and important thing. We may waste it, we may degrade it, but in itself it is a possession of priceless value, and may become a source of happiness to ourselves, good to show men, and glory to God. No one can fix a proper estimate to it who is content to spend its precious hours in indolence, or to throw it all carelessly away. It is a vulgar and pitiful courage which affects to look at it as a thing to be lightly cast from the hand.

Our disposition to make this false estimate of the value of this life, is found chiefly in the whole who are ever to see, or who live, in a thing. Possessions which are rare, and proportion precious. To undervalue the ordinary judgments of men, if enjoyments are to be gathered here, in the present lifetime, it would seem to be an important period. Yet men who say this is the sole possession of the kind we will ever have, say also that it is valueless.

It is, in fact, that the true value of the life consists in its relation to the life to come. It is as the introduction to the moral life that it becomes a thing of so much value to us. It rises from being a mere and troubled and full of sorrows, to a life of an introductory and preliminary state, leading on to blessedness that has no measure or end. If we live in it as if it were our all, it is a worthless thing. If we live in it as though it were the vestibule of a grand temple, it has value and worth. It has a value given it by its connection with that grand, nobler, more enduring—life, made to seem brief and transient, in the comparison, but it is ennobled by the fact that it leads us to the permanent and eternal sphere.

Therefore, men look with scowling faces on life, and cast bitter curses upon it, but conclude that they have forgotten their immortality. Let them look with faith, and they may look back with satisfaction and forward with hope. The brief present life will assume the importance and dignity of the life for which it can fit us, and into which we must at last enter.

### Profane Swearing.

Some years since, before railroads existed, there lived a wealthy stage proprietor. He was of fine personal appearance, of generous impulses and active business, and had an earnest, pious wife. He had much piety, and was a man of prodigious energy; whatever he did, he did heartily with a will. He was a favorite with his people, but he had a gross besetting sin, that was profanity. In this, as in every else he did, he was forcible and earnest. He was often urged to abandon this wicked practice, both because of its influence upon his character, and because of its influence upon his business. The habit was conceded by him, and his indulgence sinful, but he would not "hold it," he said. The folly of such an attitude was both weak and transparent. He had tried, his profanity was stopped. When he was in the presence of persons whom he had marked respect, as clergymen or eminent Christian men, he used every offensive epithet; nobody was more discreet, and used more unexceptionable language, at the wretched vice to which his tongue was enslaved held him in such of the time, or ruled his spirit in a most profane and cruel manner. Yet he would not be content with this; he would have domestic afflictions, and he would have another section of his countenance abandoned profanity. He professes to love a name he blasphemes.

To you earnestly beseeched this sin, if they have yielded to it, once to renounce it forever. Contact with advice, all experience shows, cannot be touched without a solemn track behind. In our reverence of many young men in the aspects of the times. They are all salutary restraints, show but to whatever is sacred, and by the little and profane babble, fami-

lize themselves with the deprecation of usages and institutions of most solemn importance. It is these first steps, these initiatory leanings toward crime, that had so many to become open scoffers, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, and then occupants of public penitentiaries. It is these beginnings of evil which young men should heed, these first "fallings," which are to be studiously guarded against. To such as have discovered their error, and given up this sin, they must look upon the past with a weeping eye, and upon the future with one both devout and watchful.

### Our Leader.

On the eve of his last battle, Gustavus, king of Sweden, said to his German allies: "Friends, officers and fellow soldiers, let me conjure you to behave valiantly this day. You shall fight not only under me, but with me. My blood shall mark the path you ought to pursue. Keep firmly therefore, in your ranks, and second your leader with courage."

This bears a strong analogy to what the Scriptures teach us concerning Christ. As the Captain of our salvation, He became perfect through suffering. He assumed our nature, that He might share our conflict with the enemy. He endured the assaults of Satan, that we might the more cheerfully obey a Leader, who asks us only to "second" Him—who calls us to fight not simply under, but with Him. He lived with more than the self-denial of man's life, and died with more than the agony of man's death; that the path we ought to pursue might be the plainer and the holier in our eyes, because His blood marks it. Shall we be wanting in courage—shall we not be valiant for the truth—with the voice of such a Leader ringing in our ears; the voice not only of a God commanding from the Throne, but of a man sympathizing, exhorting from the cross? Shall we not live under the inspiring influence of His sentiment, which Whitefield selected as a motto for the American flag, in the expedition against the Roman Catholic stronghold, Louisburg, thirty years before the Revolution. "Nothing is to be desired of God, with Christ for our Leader?"

### Religious Herald.

### Communion with God.

Says Dr. Doddridge: "When I awake in the morning, which is always before it is light, I address myself to Him, and converse with him, speak to him when I am fighting my candle and putting on my clothes, and have often more delight before coming out of my chamber, though it be hardly a quarter of an hour, than I have enjoyed for whole days, or perhaps weeks of my life. He meets me in my study, in secret, and in family devotion. It is pleasant to read, pleasant to compose, pleasant to converse with my friends at home, pleasant to visit those abroad—the poor, the sick; pleasant to write letters of necessary business by which any good can be done; pleasant to go out and preach the gospel to poor souls, some of whom are thirsting for it, and others dying without it; pleasant in the week-day to think how near another Sabbath is; but Oh, much more pleasant to think how near eternity is; and how short the journey through this wilderness, and that it is but a step from earth to heaven."

### Beautiful.

When Phillip Henry, father of the commentator on the Bible, sought the hand of the only daughter of Mrs. Matthew in marriage, an objection was made by her father, who admitted that he was a gentleman, a scholar, and an excellent preacher, but he was a stranger. "True," said the daughter, who had well weighed the excellent qualities and graces of the stranger, "but I know where he is going, and I would like to go with him," and they walked life's pilgrimage together.

### Posts.

"Now my days are swifter than a post, they flee away, they see no good."—Job, ix. 25.

Letters are carried inland from Bombay along miserable roads with scarce any bridges, by relays of horsemen at the rate of at least 125 miles a day. But in important matters the natives outrun the government despatches by a private post of their own.

### True Magnanimity.

Hath any wronged thee?—be bravely revenged; slight it, and the work is begun; forgive it, and it is finished. He is below himself who is not above an injury.

We have heard a good story on Stonewall Jackson. It has come to be commonly said in camp that nobody knows Stonewall's secrets except his old negro body servant. Some one talking to the old negro asked him how he came to be so much in the confidence of his master. "Lord Sir," said he, "mass never tells me nothing, but the way I knows in this—Mass says his prayers twice a day; morning and night—but if he gets out of bed two or three times in the night to pray, you see I just commence packing my haversack, for I knows there will be the devil to pay next day."