

The Corner - Stone Disallowed.



By

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THE CORNER-STONE DIS- ALLOWED.

“**B**EHOLD, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious : and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe He is precious ; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient : whereunto also they were appointed.” (1 Peter 2:6-8).

Right glad should we be to think that the Scripture quoted had only an application to the unsaved sinners of the world. But we are forced to the saddening conclusion, however, that God's children, in general, are vastly

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in need of a plain, straightforward exhortation on the subject. For is it not a fact that the “disallowal” of Christ by Christians is becoming prevalent even in quarters where least suspected? And shall we not cry against this sin? Because some have separated from the world’s religious systems, judging them to be Babylon, and are “gathered out” (as we say) to the Name of Jesus alone, yet they are not on that account past all possibility of a “disallowal” of that blessed One. A right *position* is of indisputable importance; still a right *condition* of heart is essential to the last degree.

World-bordering.—Worldly friendships are fast crushing the bone and muscle of Christian testimony. When Balak could not induce Balaam to curse Israel, then he and his people showed themselves agreeable, and, with pretended friendliness, called the Hebrews to

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their sacrifices. Moreover, unholy alliances were contracted with the daughters of Moab, so that the fierce anger of the Lord was kindled against His people whom He had redeemed and separated from the nations, and whom He meant to keep *always* and *altogether* separate, that they might be a special people unto Himself. "Our God is a jealous God." His anger burns when our affections are after others. Solemn was the chastisement that fell on Israel for "disallowing" Him—a plague swept off twenty-four thousand of them. In the Epistle of James we read : "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? Who-soever, therefore, will be (is determined to be) a friend of the world is (is constituted) the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The language is awfully severe, for the words are addressed to *saved souls*.

There is not seen, as a general rule, that holy

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zeal for families which characterized Moses' demand to Pharaoh: "There shall not a hoof be left behind." Noble declaration! Blessed sentiment! It is painful in our day to find parents, well versed in truth, bringing up their families in such a manner that they acquire *a greedy liking for worldliness in its attractively varying forms*. Eli restrained not his sons; neither do they. Youthful wishes are gratified; for what others have, they must, of course, have also. Can it in anywise be questioned that there will be numbers of fathers and mothers who shall see their children "go away into everlasting punishment," all because of the worldly bringing-up they gave them, and for not checking them when young? To "disallow" Christ in the training and education of families shall yet be proven a fearful thing. The history of Lot's household is no isolated instance. So far as we may learn from Scripture, his entire

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family are with the wailing multitude of the damned, and the father responsible for it all too—himself a saved man. What an appalling wreck of a home ! Part of his children perished in the fire that fell on Sodom ; his wife was judged almost as soon as she left the doomed city ; whilst his two daughters who escaped with him to the mountains shortly afterwards proved themselves to be two of the most morally depraved women that ever lived. Compare Genesis 19:12-38 and 2 Peter 2:6-9.

A Striking Contrast.—What a different home was Abraham's. Why should Lot ever have left his uncle's company and a path of fellowship with God ? In Nehemiah's day, so serious, indeed, had family matters become, that with many of the Jews their children "spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language." From such

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a distressing state of things one turns to 1 Chronicles 25:5-6, with not a little pleasure: "And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. *All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord* with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman." This text deserves a handsome frame and hanging up in every "Christian" household. Think of it, you fathers and mothers—a family of seventeen children all serving in the house of the Lord! Heman must have been a very glad father and a thoroughly godly man.

Many parents who have, professedly, been separated unto God, are, nevertheless, desirous that their children shall be introduced into what is called "good society." Friendships are sought after and encouraged with those who are strangers to the ways of God. *They*

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are invited out to things you once protested against ; but having tasted "the pleasures of sin," you cannot restrain them. And now a rod is being formed to smite your own back ! Perhaps your children do get on from a worldly view, but far, how very far, from God. With aching heart you notice their disinclination for spiritual things, and wish (oh, how you wish !) that you had never sought for them earthly position. The social evenings, the worldly company, the time spent in frivolities, the places of entertainment and amusement frequented, and "society" pleasure-parties shall, all of it, have a remembrance, bitter as wormwood, in eternity ! "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." But *you* departed from the way of the Lord, and "disallowed" the Corner-stone in your family affairs. "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord

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thy God when He led thee by the way ? And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor ? or what hast thou do to in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river ? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee ; know, therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts.” (Jer. 2:17-19).

A Warning Word.—Just a word to young Christians. Beware of going to places where Christ is “disallowed.” “Sacred” concerts, and entertainments got up for “good causes,” are most unhealthy and soul-withering in their influence, if you frequent them. Usually in the performers you have people who are not only unsaved, but real enemies of the Cross of Christ. You may soon find out the truth of

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it by speaking to them about "eternal realities." Shall you sit down and hear the Lord's songs sung by such people? For though they take His Name on their lips, they "disallow" Him in their company. And, pray, are you badly in need of being entertained by the like? Then as to amusements, don't you think it argues very badly for Christianity when a believer fancies it needful to go down to the world's level to get an hour or two's enjoyment? Let them see, rather, that our joy in Christ is so much superior to what they have, that we are spoiled for anything besides. Your time is coming—have patience. In the meantime, do not be where Christ would not be welcomed, and where it would seem out of place to speak of Jesus.

Sisters in the Lord are not beyond needing a wholesome word of exhortation on their "At homes," "Calls," and "Afternoon teas." What is the purpose these things usually

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serve ? Do they tend to freshen up the soul ? As you sip your tea out of elegant-looking china, and conversation is at a steady run, is it concerning “Him whom my soul loveth?” We would commend Christian women when paying calls to have their Bible in hand or in bag, and when sitting chatting, open the inspired Word. It is not unlikely that you would make the discovery that at some of the places it has been your habit to visit, the Corner-stone can be “disallowed” of women as well as men, and everybody feels “queer” when the name of Jesus is mentioned. Imagine what would happen at some of these “afternoon teas” if someone present started to tell her conversion, and to enquire of the others if they had one to tell !

God in business-life.—Let us come now to the places of business, and the work or trade by which a livelihood is gained. What of

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these ? Honest dealing, clean and above-board transactions, commercial enterprise regulated by divine principles, heavenly guidance daily sought upon all affairs of trade—this, and *this only*, will pass with God. We know perfectly well it is said “Business is business,” and that “if a man is to succeed he must not be continually having scruples of conscience as to this or that transaction.” Well, earth’s maxims are not current in the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and if you fail to figure out well at the judgment-seat of Christ you will be a poor man, whatever else you may have been on earth. Allow the Corner-stone His place in your business. The bank balance might not be so large in some cases, but, what is far better, a substantial deposit has been placed to your credit above each time *your* will gave place to *the Lord’s* will !

There is an unholy keenness to get on that

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grieves the Holy Spirit of God—a haste to get rich which does not scruple at what, forsooth, are termed “trifles.” Come, let there be a determination to have your matters so regulated that Christ’s presence would not prove an embarrassment if it could be that He visited you in person. If it were known for certain that the Master of the House would return in a week’s time from now, it would not require a very wise man to conjecture what would take place. To go on in a careless manner, “disallowing” the Corner-stone, soothing the conscience with the lie, “My Lord delayeth His coming,” and acting like the ungodly, is doing as the fool doeth. Do not refuse the exhortation because of its plainness, like many in Israel in the days of their declension, but suffer it as a message from the Lord, “who trieth the hearts ! ”

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