

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"Ye are the salt of the earth-- Ye are the light of the world---

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matt. 5: 13-16.

Could Christ put the value of Christian life any higher than to say, "Ye are the salt of the earth--- Ye are the light of the world? What honor is here conferred upon men! "Ye are the salt of the earth---Ye are the light of the world." O Christ, help us to be worthy bearers of this high honor.

Christ knew what it was to be the "Salt" of a decaying civilization. He came into the world at a time when civilization itself was threatened with decay. Men and women were shamelessly immoral and even in polite circles all modesty of speech or manner had been abandoned. Mighty forces were at work among men that were eating out the heart of social life. Rome was drunk with power. Her cruelty and injustice had drenched the world in blood. But even the tyranny of Rome was preferable to the spirit of anarchy and chaos that threatened to overthrow all law and order. Men hated Rome, but they were afraid to let her go, lest a worse come. Art, science, and learning were on the decline. Such a thing as a brotherhood of men had never been heard of. There was such a distrust and hatred among men that only the most grisly fear could

hold them together. Men feared Rome but they feared the forces that threatened all order more. Then came Christ with His ideals of purity and holiness. In a world where hatred and fear motivated every act of men he dared to tell them they should love even their enemies. In a world where the races of men were in a savage race to destroy each other He dared to tell them they were all brothers. If He had not come when He did, it is almost certain that civilization would have reverted to barbarism and then to savagery. Like a sweet lump of salt to a decaying body His ideals and example took hold of the hearts of men and women. In the middle of the darkest night this old world ever saw He raised a beacon to guide men to a safer haven.

Salt is the enemy of corruption and decay. Left alone human society tends to decay. We commonly speak of human society as a progressive thing. We know that we are different from all other forms of life, in that we are capable of progress. It is true that human society is progressive. But why is it progressive? It does not grow better by itself. We know that some very enlightened societies have reverted back to barbarism. It is always the strong, the purity loving members of society that mark out the path of progress. If you see growing up in your community a spirit of goodwill and gentle kindness do not think it just happened. Some man or woman or some group of men and women are responsible for it. There has never been a reform among men that grew up like a mush-

room in the night.

One of the mightiest forces that threatens human society is man's social uncleanness. There has never been a society among men where licentiousness was not a problem. How God-fearing men and women have had to fight to keep the family life pure and sacred. You can see in every community and every town forces at work to destroy its purity. If the strong, the purity loving members of society were to relax their vigilance how long would it be ere human society would be on the level with the beast?

If Christ were to call Christian men to the bar of justice today, what would He say about the shocking increase in divorce? The salt of Christian purity must be losing its savor when such a large per cent of marriages go on the rocks. The high increase in divorce in some cities borders on licentiousness. It is almost as bad as free love. There is nothing that can stop it except to hold high the ideals of purity preached by our Lord. If we want our children's children to enjoy the blessings of a pure home life, we must not slack our warfare against this evil. Men and women talk about divorce today as they would about a change of dress.

Perhaps it is partly due to the independent spirit of the modern woman. Our mothers did far more than their share to preserve the home unbroken. The modern woman will not submit to the abuse and neglect that many of them did, and you cannot blame them. To be successful today marriage must be a fifty fifty proposition. If

the home is saved men are going to have to carry their part of the self-denial and burden. But the custom of running to the divorce courts is not helping either one. It is very much like the old Negro woman said, "Lor, Miss Zoe, ef you drap one man and his meanness, you only got to git used to another man and his meanness. Ah'm stickin' to my ole Sam. Ah knows how to fight him." It is better to fight with some one you are used to. I do not believe in fighting, but I think it would be preferable to so much divorce.

Did you ever see a town where there was no profane swearing? where there were no filthy jokes told, and all the---I started to say men, but in these days women curse and use filthy language. I never saw a community where there was no dirty language, I wish I could. But I have seen some communities that had less than others. I have seen groups of men that would not tell a filthy yarn or use a profane oath when some certain man was present. I believe that twenty men who hate profane swearing and filthy language could break it up in any small community. Men swear and tell filthy jokes because their neighbors like to hear it. It is wrong to swear and it is wrong to tell filthy jokes, but it is just as wrong to listen to them. If there were no one to listen to them they would not last long. "Ye are the salt of the earth." It is your business, Christian, to promote pure speech among men. If you can laugh at filthy language I am afraid you have lost the savour of a godly life.

"Ye are the light of the world." What an honor it is to be a light in the pathway of men. But every man who walks in the way of Christ is just such a light. If the light of your life grows dim some wanderer is sure to go out of the way. O God, help us to keep the light that is committed to us bright and shining.

Every rail road man knows how much can depend on a light. The wrong color of a signal light can plunge a whole train load of people to their death. If the watchman gives the engineer the green signal when it ought to be red God help the poor men and women who are trusting him with their lives. If he did that knowingly, wouldn't he be a murderer? Every man who is living a life of sin is signaling to his brother, "Go ahead, the way is clear." He knows there are broken rails, burned bridges, and wash-outs all the way down the line. But he tells men with his light the way is clear. "Ye are the light of the world."

They have beacon lights along the shore. At the mouth of the harbor they stand to guide sailors into port. On dangerous rocky points they warn ships to steer farther away. But often there are heavy fogs at sea and the lights cannot be seen. Hundreds of ships have been lost in the fog because they could not see the light. They now have a power unit that sends out a radio beam. This beam can be picked up much farther away than the light and is not affected by the fog. They can send these beams from a pilotship off the harbor. They can be picked up by air planes as well as ships at sea. A few months ago an ocean

liner followed one of these beams so truly that it rammed the pilot ship that was sending the beam. It seems they have not yet learned to measure the distance correctly. When they do these signals will be a priceless boon to air and sea.

One pilot told me that a little instrument on the dial told you when you were in the path of the beam. It goes "Tack, tick," all the time when you are in the path of the beam, but when you lose your way it stops. That little key striking the bar says to the pilot, "You are on the right road, you are on the right road."

Out from every man's life there go the beams of his personal influence. "Tick, tick," it says to all who follow behind. "Tack, tick, you are on the right road, you are on the right road." But some will say, "You are wrong. I have never told anyone I was on the right road." Maybe you didn't, but your light is signaling wrong, Brother!