

Tennessean Baptist.

J. R. GRAVES, W. F. HARRIS, GRAY, HARRIS & CO.
PUBLISHERS.

DESIRING TO KNOW THE WHOLE TRUTH, DARING TO OPPOSE ANY ERROR. J. R. GRAVES, EDITOR.

VOL. XIV.

NASHVILLE TENNESSEE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1857.

NO. 15.

The Pulpit.

(One hundred and fifty sermons will appear in this department during the present year, by J. M. Witter, and others, and the most brilliant and successful of England.)

Work for Christ a Privilege.

BY THE REV. J. T. WITTER.

"We were allowed of God to be put in the Gospel."

1 Tim. ii. 4.

Attention has been directed in previous

sermons to "The Service of God a Feast,"

and "The Church of Christ a Home."

We design this paper to carry out and

complete the series, and to invite the prayer-

ful consideration of our readers. If wrong

views have been held on the subject of the

former papers, and the "Service of God,"

had been thought gloomy and oppressive, or

the "Church of Christ" a prison, we trust those

views have been corrected. If the first and

second propositions on which we have written

be true, no less true is the third, that "Work

for Christ is a Privilege," and equally likely

is it that wrong opinions may have been held

here as in the former cases. Earnestly do we

desire if such should be the fact, so thoroughly

to set you right, that surveying the vast

field of labor, at home and abroad, thinking of

the untold numbers who are ruining their own

souls, and by their sins dishonouring our

Lord; in the spirit of intense love to Christ,

and compassion for your fellow-men, you will

say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

EMPLOYMENT. Work—employment of a

certain kind—work for Christ—this is our

first thought. God has some work for all his

children to do. "Son, go work to-day in my

vineyard." In the plan of salvation by Christ,

God employs redeemed men to make known

the message of mercy, to declare the glad

news of a Saviour's love, to proclaim Christ as

the only ground of a sinner's hope, the only

refuge from the wrath to come. For different

departments of christian labor he provides

and fits the men. When he ascended on high,

"he gave some apostles, and some prophets,

and some evangelists, and some pastors and

teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for

the work of the ministry, for the edifying of

the body of Christ." However diverse the

spheres and the kind of labor, and however

different the qualifications and the circum-

stances of his children, the principle remains

the same, and the law is of universal applica-

tion, no circumstances can justify any child of

God in saying, "I pray thee have me excused."

Not poverty, for the poor can work in their

sphere, and by example show how true religion

cheers, and comforts, and dignifies the poor—

Not wealth, for the annual subscription, and

the princely donation, can be no substitute for

the powerful influence of a holy life, or the

moral force of a personal appeal. Not sick-

ness, for the affliction can pray for the ad-

vancement of his kingdom in the earth, and

emphatically in cheerful resignation the sustain-

ing power of true godliness. To each, to all,

the command comes—Work. On each and

all the obligation rests. Your conversion is

at once the ground of your obligation, and the

basis of your fitness for the work; whilst it

should cause deep concern that no heavier

woes are uttered than that one denounced

against those who loiter and do not labor—"Curse ye Merx, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

EMPLOYMENT A PRIVILEGE. It is so in the

general; specially is it so in the service of

Christ, and this on many grounds. Employ-

ment is natural to man, so natural, that with-

out employment man is uneasy, wretched. He

who has nothing to do, feels time hang heavy

on his hands; the day is too long, and so also

is the night—lassitude and exertion are alike

fatiguing; and the mind needs employ-

ment, too, or it soon sickens and wastes. "A

mind quietus, it is a mind distressed." Our

divine Creator knows this, and has therefore

ordained his intelligent creatures some employ-

ment. "The holy ones rest not day nor night,

crying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Al-

mighty." Angels, not only hymn the praise

of Deity, but become ministering spirits to the

heirs of salvation; while in Eden, ere yet sin

had entered or man fallen, "the Lord God

took the man and put him in the garden to

dress it and to keep it." True, there is much

of labor which is sorrow, of work which is

overstraining toil; there is the over-anxious

mind, and the over-wrought brain, and the

over-taxed physical system, but these are the

effects of man's capacity, cupidity, of strife in

trade, and unworthy competition, and they in

no way detract from our statement, that em-

ployment is natural to man—much more is spir-

itual employment natural to the renewed man.

EMPLOYMENT IS A PRIVILEGE WHEN IT

ACCORDS WITH OUR TASTES AND HABITS. How pleas-

urable the work in which we delight, when

contrasted with the irksomeness we feel in

work opposed to our tastes and feelings. If

we are Christ's and the "spirit of Christ

dwells in us," then work in his name and for

his kingdom exactly accords with our most

correct view, our holiest desires, our best feelings.

No time so precious as to dwell on his love;

no message so joyous as to tell of his grace;

no invitations so sweet as the welcome of his

mercy to every penitent; all our spiritual

tastes, all the habits and affections of the "new

creature in Christ Jesus" must be in fullest

sympathy with work like this. He who loves

Christ truly, and has been called to this work,

to the work and the Master prompts

to the performance. How cheerfully we labor

for those we love—how the thought of

multiplying their comfort sweetens our em-

ployment. The tender mother, what a privilege to

her to provide for the wants of her firstborn,

to prepare his food, to arrange his attire, to

guard his frail infancy, to nurture his feeble

life; to her fatigue is not, and labor is pleas-

ure, for—the secret is—she loves her child.

And when love to Christ fills the heart and

fires the soul, then work in his vineyard is a

pleasure and a joy; love gives wings to our

feet, inspiration to our souls, energy to our ac-

tions, life to our words; "whether we be beside

ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be so-

ber, it is for your cause, for the love of Christ

constraineth us." Employment is thus a priv-

ilege when it is not the constrained labor of

the hireling, but the hearty service of the lov-

ing child, then in all truthfulness we sing—

Thy various service we esteem

Our sweet employ, our blissful theme.

Employment is a privilege when success crowns

our efforts. The racer, in the Olympic games,

forgot his fatigue, when, amidst the crowd of

spectators, he reached goal and the victorious

crown was placed upon his head. The mariner

forgot the terrors of the voyage past

when he has safely reached his port. The hus-

bandman thinks no more of the long anxiety

he has endured 'mid the dreariness of win-

ter, now that the grain ripens for the sickle,

or the reapers shout the harvest-home, and the

wheat is gathered into the garner, and even

thus it is in spiritual things; the first ap-

plaudits felt it, when returning from their first

missionary journey elate with joy they told

their Lord, "Lord, even the devils are subject

unto us through thy name." The Pentecostal

period was marked by immense success, but

equal gladness, and when after Christ's ascen-

sion to glory his disciples met to review their

labors, their song was, "Thanks be to God,

who always causeth us to triumph in Christ,"

and divine success attends the faithful laborer

now. "He that loveth God and keepeth his

commandments, he shall have the Father and

the Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

Son, and he shall have the Father and the

world as if it were never to have an end, and

we neglect the next, as if it were never to have

a beginning.

II. "Therefore be ye also ready; for in

such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man

cometh." Matt. xxv. 44. "These words are

addressed to every one of us in particular.—

Yet all men (for few even among persons of

piety are to be excepted) reckon upon a long

life, and form projects accordingly. And

what is the reason of such an obstinate hope

of life? It is because we love it passionately.

And whence is it that we affect to remove

death at such a distance from us? It is be-

cause we do not love the kingdom of God, and

the grandeur of the world to come. O gross

and stupid mortals, who cannot raise yourselves

above this earth, wherein, even by their own

confession, they are miserable! The true

manner of preparing for the last moment is to

spend all the others well, and ever to expect

that.

VERY SHORT SERMONS.

Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed

for I am the God and will still give thee aid and

I will strengthen thee help thee, and cause thee to

stand.

I upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand

Show this, or send it to your sceptical

or infidel friends.

Paine's Regret for "the Age of Reason."

The substance of the statement referred to

in the following communication, was given in

our paper some months ago, as taken from one

of our exchanges. The authority for it was

afterwards inquired for, but could not be as-

certained. The same inquiry has lately been

started by a Correspondent of the New York

Observer, and the following response obtained.

THOMAS PAINE.—In answer to the inquiry

of "T. T." in the Observer of the 7th inst.

I send you the following communication from

a correspondent at College Point, L. I., who

