

Communications.

Baccalaureate Sermon.

Rev. Stanton Lautenschlager.

Theme.—Making Life Eternal or Co-laborers with God.

Text.—Mark 10:44. "And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all."

I.—In this text we have teaching that is at once sublime and eternal. Teaching that modern civilization is just beginning to understand, teaching that was utterly unlike the pedagogy of the schools of that time. Yes, unlike the teaching of most schools up to our time, for it is only in very modern times that the schools teach that service and not authority is the measure of true greatness.

2. The teacher that taught in ancient times such truth, that was at once modern and eternal, was none other than the Son of God, a teacher who never went beyond the borders of Judea and Galilee, a teacher unlearned in letters, science and philosophy, a teacher reared in a carpenter's shop in the beautiful but humble village of Nazareth, a teacher that needed not the philosophy of the University of Tarsus, nor the theology of Gamaliel, a teacher compared with whom all the profoundest teachers of ancient and modern times are but students, a teacher at whose feet we all must sit and learn or remain forever unlearned in the deepest things of life. This man's teaching was at once infallible, divine and eternal. Is it any wonder they called him Rabbi or Master? Is it any wonder they said of Him that He taught as one having authority and not as the scribes? Is it any wonder that when he taught in the synagogues on the Sabbath with such power that they said, looking at each other in amazement, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" This teacher taught for three short years, gathered a few humble followers about him, laid down a few principles, then they hurled him to death, scattered his followers, forbade them everywhere to teach in His name. But the teacher rose from the tomb and His teaching would not perish. Other teachers have come and gone and their teaching discarded or forgotten, kingdoms have vanished, cities crumbled to ruins and empires perished from the earth but the teaching of the Son of God lives on, of His kingdom there shall be no end, His church is marching triumphantly onward and the gates of hell are not prevailing against it.

3. It is with one of the immortal sayings of this Great Teacher, one of the principles that forms the cornerstone of His kingdom, that we come before the graduating class of 1916 and before this congregation this morning.

We take his words to his little band of followers as the ground for our discourse.

4. Jesus had been telling his disciples about his suffering and ultimate death and also about his future glory. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, at once materialized the glory and came to a very subtle conclusion, "Master," said they, "We would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire."

"What would ye that I should do for you?" answered the Christ.

"Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory," said they.

Jesus said unto them, "Ye know not what ye ask, can ye drink of the cup I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said, "We can." And Jesus said, "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup I drink of and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized; but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."

When the ten heard of the selfishness of the sons of Zebedee, they were displeased and though there was no open dissension, Jesus saw the bitter feeling that existed and knowing that they would soon be scattered and left without a teacher or advisor, the heart of the Son of God was touched and he called them together and taught them the divine measure of a life as compared with the human measure. "Ye know," he says, "that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever shall be great among you, shall be your minister, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all, for even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

5. The divine measure of a life then is service. The formula that the Master gives to make life eternal is service to humanity. The example that the Son of God gives us in His life and to which he was faithful unto His death is that of ministry to the needy. When He lived, He lived for

folks and in His death He died for them. His life was a continual ministry and as must our be if we would live the life the Master meant.

II.—Body of the Discourse.

1. What did the Master mean? If we understand what the Master meant by this wonderful teaching, we understand the spirit that made Him willing to minister to fallen man and die for him, we understand the spirit that made the disciples put the stamp of approval on the Master's teaching, with their own blood. We understand the spirit that sends men into the bowels of the earth to dig coal for human needs, into the frozen north to discover unknown worlds, into the mission fields to tell of the gospel of life and service around the campfire of cannibals, the spirit that prompts five hundred thousand Canadians in king's uniform to leave happy homes and kind friends to tread the sod of foreign lands, to die if need be for the historic rights of man the independence of little nations and the triumphs of democracy. I take it that the Son of God did not die alone for the sins of man but also for the vindication of right liberty and democracy and how can we serve our fellowmen better than by being the guardians of human liberty? Our boys will not lay down their arms until they have broken the Prussian bow and cut his spears asunder and burned his chariots in the fire. Yes, if we understand that little message to the disciples, we stand amazed at the simplicity of the Xtion life. What the Master meant was simply that the divine test of a life is not what men do for us but what we do for them, not what we get out of life but what we put into it. The Gentiles' test of a life is authority says Jesus, but God's test is service. Man judges our work by the salary we get but God by the work we do.

Illustration: Wm Jennings Bryan sets this forth very beautifully in "The Prince of Peace." "Service is the measure of greatness; it has always been true, it is true today and it always will be true that he is greatest that does the most of good. And how this old world will be transformed when this standard of greatness becomes the standard of every life. Nearly all our controversies and combats grow out of the fact that we are trying to get something from each other—There will be peace when our arm is to do something for each other. Our enmities and animosities arise largely from our efforts to get as much as possible out of the world: