

A Sermon, from
1 Corinthians IX, 26. & 27

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly,
so fight I, not as one that beate the
air:

But I keep under my body & bring
it into subjection, lest by any means
when I have preached to others I myself
should be a castaway.

The Scriptures abound in similitudes
to describe the life of a Christian
believer & the things of the Kingdom
of heaven. ~~Things~~ ^{Things} of a spiritual
and heavenly nature are represented
under some figure or emblem
taken from earthly or temporal
objects. Man a creature of flesh
with his ~~earthly~~ ^{bodily} senses & earthly
notions is thus led from the visible
to the invisible, from temporal &
passing objects to that which is eternal

& encuring. Thus led by the light
& guidance of God's word to reflect
to ardent comparisons between natural
and spiritual things, a wide field
for thought & inquiry is opened before
his mental eyes. Every thing around
he sees in nature, or in the efforts
& ~~strivings~~ ^{pursuits} of men affords him some
lesson of instruction. Indeed his
inquiries & studies in this respect
become easy inasmuch as ~~the way~~
he has as it were the ^{surest} guideposts
of the Scriptures, & almost every
imaginable object in nature &
the daily occurrences in human
life have been applied by inspired
men, and particularly the greatest
of teachers Jesus Christ himself
to some higher & spiritual use.
The field in which the husband-
man sows seed, it ~~may be~~ ^{with life} on different
kinds of soil, men also fertile or
barren, the vine that requires pruning
the hidden treasures of the earth,

such as gold & pearls & other precious
metals, the fishing net, the sheep ^{with their}
their shepherd, the merchant man with
his traffic, the hired & bridegroom &
the marriage feast, a race for a prize,
a fight for mastery, a battle for
the conquest of an enemy - all these
& similar objects & things are
employed as similitudes in the
Scriptures & men especially in the
New Testament to direct our attention
to something higher & better ^{from things seen}
~~visible to invisible~~ ^{to things unseen}
~~from earthly to heavenly~~ ^{as yet}
The comparison ^{is} ^{as yet}
a similitude ^{is} ^{as yet}
most instructive & impressive.
Then our text refers to a race &
to a fight or combat both of which
illuminate in a striking manner
the necessity of an earnest &
unwearied effort to obtain the
high reward which is promised to
those who are faithful to the

each, as also the need there is for
us to be constantly on our guard
& to wield the sword of the Spirit
against the enemies of our Salvation.
We shall mention

I, The connexion of the sect with the
precepts of Christ.

II, Point out the Apostle, firm
reprobation & resolution as
directed against the nearest enemy.

III, His humble confidence as to himself
(on his own strength,) together with his single
aim.

May God be pleased by the aid
& teaching of his Holy Spirit to inspire
the leness & caution of the sect
deeply on our hearts & minds
that we may run with patience &
perseverance the race that is set
before us & fight as good soldiers
of Christ.

I, Our Lord God will observe
by referring to his words Epistle from
part of the Apostle's sensitization

in which the Christian's life is compared
to a race. The text is the Apostle's ap-
plication to himself.

The Corinthians were well acquainted
with the Isthmian, ^{or Olympic} games consisting
chiefly of foot races, as also the combats
or fights of pugilists. These races
were periodically held & of great
celebrity in Greece. They formed one
of the greatest of amusements, among
the Greeks & partook of a sort of festive
character, tens of thousands generally
attended them. The Apostle here
will observe makes no comment
as to the lawfulness or inpro-
perity of such games & amu-
sements. Though more civilized
& more than other nations, ^{the Corinthians} ~~they~~ Greeks
were heathens & idolaters, and
might be ^{well} excused, if they laid
more stress & importance on such
amusements than ~~they deserved~~ the
advantages accruing from them merited.
Whether profane Christians are equally

excusable in their fond pursuits
of pleasure & indulgence in all manner
of amusement is another question
which it is not my present purpose to
discuss. The innocence or otherwise
of various amusements may be best
judged of either by the expediency or
inexpediency for good or the evil
tendency, ~~if any thing we may fairly~~ ^{attending the same}
~~is sufficient~~. There is one experience
of St Paul's, respecting the spirit &
character of men ^{for} ~~the~~ of the latter way, which
ought to serve as a criterion
& caution. ~~Among~~ ^{Among} other evil propensities
of the people in the latter way, ~~letting~~ ^{letting}
that they ^{men} would be lovers of pleasure
rather than of God. The most in-
nocent things in the world if it occu-
pying by our hearts & affections more
than God & the godliness, will prove a
sin as man. But we turn to the
sentiments which pervade the ~~Apocrypha~~
since when ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~we~~ ^{we} ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Scriptures~~
he evidently means to intimate to

his readers that they had hardly come
up in their zeal, their earnestness, their
perseverance & efforts for higher attain-
ments to the spirit & energy, ~~and even the~~
~~selfishness~~ of them who engage
in their well known race & combat, or
even to the selfishness which they endure
for a season in diet & other indulgences
~~and give them to understand that they~~
might very properly learn a lesson from
them with much advantage to themselves.

to suppose
that they
will be
the

I need not say with many other pursuits
If men were half so eager in the pursuit
of spiritual things as they are in earthly
& sensual objects, if they had any thing
like the same energy & perseverance,
how different the course of religion &
spiritual life would appear in
the world. We may take the apostle's
language to imply as much as this: My
brethren, you have a better race than
you which it behooves you to engage in
with heart & soul. If then run, I refer
to men worth any such effort as they

in all things. Why give way to sensual
indulgence, if thy mind be occupied the
love & pursuit of better things?

But let me point to another difference
the great contrast between the prize
With then ancient combatants, ^{as runners}
renewing a corruptible crown was all
they could obtain. It would have been
corruptible & perishing, had it been a
crown of gold, but certainly it was a
crown of garlands of fading flowers
or green leaves. But now - the
prize we have in view & desire is an
incorruptible crown. It is a crown of
imperishable gold, ~~not~~ a crown of
immortal glory. When the Apostle says
this, when he calls it ^{an} incorruptible crown
he means all that is beautiful & grand
all that is can give joy & pleasure
all that will be glorious & enduring
all that will make happy. What
earthly crown, a greatness or pleasure
can be brought in comparison with such a
reward. When all we now see ^{is} fading
has passed away, when this earth itself
has ^{dissolved} vanished, ~~when~~ this crown of

of immortal glory will still contain
certain bright & shining

Such are undoubtedly the sentiments
of the Apostle, as briefly intimated
just before the words of our text &
elsewhere manfully announced.

Yes so great was his apprehension
of this high prize of an calling in
Christ Jesus, that it produced in
him a perk, as indeed it had long
been the uppermost thought of his mind,
a holy & firm resolution to run & to
fight & to win, even if some, if
many were to follow behind.
I therefore to run not as uncertainly
to fight I not as one that beats the
air. There is not uncertainty no warring
no doubtfulness no increase in my
aim & object. I am resolved to per-
severe I am determined to win.
Then ~~nothing~~ is much gained,
half the battle is won, when men
set about spiritual & heavenly pur-
suits in good earnest, with a firm
resolve to persevere to gain the prize

not indeed relying on their own good
 intentions or their own strength
 but steadfastly looking to Christ
 the author & finisher of ^{our} faith.
 For so the Spirit clearest to best,
 his readers to see the race set before
 them. St Paul, you will remember
 from the very first beginning of his Christian
 career ~~was~~ set out with full purpose
 of heart. He did not cease with flesh
 & blood as we many do ^{& often} for a time,
 and then meet with all manner of
 drawbacks & hindrances, & backslidings; if they do not
 We must forget these things which are ^{utterly}
 behind & stretch forward to reach ^{fall away}
 forward to those things which are before ^{from grace}
 us even to the goal the end of our aim.
 It is but too reasonable & just that and
 it should be, for God's ~~most~~ ^{sure} ~~law~~
~~his~~ ^{merits} ~~him~~ of glory ^{is} ~~all~~ ^{mea} of here
 nearer hearts, ^{indeed} ~~in~~ ^{into} ~~them~~ there
 is no guile, no dissimulation no
 halfheartedness. He who knows & sees the
 least will judge of men as they are within
 not according to outward appearance. No
 elements are fitter for heaven. Again
 I say, it is but reasonable & just that

only to whom whose heart is clearest
to God & Christ Jesus ^{who cannot be satisfied} & spiritual things
shall obtain the incorruptible crown by
~~receiving the same~~ ^{receiving the same}; for even
as regards the attainment of earthly things
by an earthly obtainment only by personal
effort & certain and based on distinction
of men ^{is more prized upon faith & exertion}
But what makes men then determined
& grow no doubt gives the first great
impulse & is the continual source of
support, yet when God worketh in us
both to will & to do after our good pleasure
then must be a corresponding effort on
our part - even the most arduous & tedious
to work out our salvation

We must appreciate & prize value things
on the spiritual side. He renounced all things
eternal things must become realities in
our ~~real~~ minds. Faith must be truly the
substance of things hoped for the evidence
of things not seen. ~~that~~ We must in
faith embrace with warmth & firmness things
of an eternal & heavenly nature. That old
hearted accounting or uneasy view of future

There was with
him a lively sense
of things spiritual
a firm grasp &
envelope of the
future in his vision
that created a
goal, causing
a constant strain
on his mind,
for Christ
& united
them for
nothing in
comparison
to what God
has promised
he looked for
ward with hope
to the world to

come & believe
that even our light afflictions would make us an exceeding weight of glory

things, of heaven & eternity which can admit
of no high appreciation, precious no favor, no
longing desire, no sure hope, will never
suffice to gain heaven's crown. When
every thing seen, ~~and~~ of a perishing nature,
earthly glory & distinction, or wealth or
pleasure, when ~~proper~~ human favor or
popular applause are men ardently
earnestly sought after than eternal things,
when men's hearts & affections are far
less attracted by spiritual than carnal
things, how can they expect to win the
prize held out to them. When a little
attention to religion, an occasional prayer
perhaps a new formal prayer, with a
vocal assent to the truth of God's word
will suffice, what ground of hope can
then be. There must be earnestness, a full
determination, an undivided heart, a single
view of purpose & aim, zeal & perseverance
therein no reward can be gained, no an-
guish achieved. To beat in the air without
a true aim without encountering the enemy &
directing the weapons of our warfare against
him, is not fighting, does not show the spirit of
a warrior of Christ. It is a mere feckless pretension
or dissimulation such as a man exposes the soldier

when neither
man is expected
or but, expected
of our Christ
target of his
is the only
object of
heavenly
things
highly prized

of this will to disgrace & shame & should
The soldier for ~~the~~ ^{Christ,} ~~even expect to be~~
escape shame & reproach & disappointment
at least who never fight; manfully under
the banner under which he has enlisted.
Oh be not deceived - a man a warrior
if to secure a prize & a victory implies win-
ning now that is supposed by many.
Your heart & mind must be in the same
and the arm & energy of body the whole
man will follow.

But the Apostle explains to us
manfully how he fights & dies. But
I keep under my body & bring it into sub-
jection. He knew when man's character
is here even in himself. The carnal
mind is enemy against God, flesh &
blood are opposed to what is spiritual
& holy & divine. Our carnal appetites
our sinful passions, our vain thoughts
& propensities, bring all earthly man
be subdued & subduer kept under
conquerance. If you do this Satan
will surely give an advantage over

you, the water can not soon restrain.
To keep watch at times as it were, to
mind the enemy nearest to us is of the
first importance to win the Christian
race. We never must trust to our sinful
nature. The Lord is ~~most~~ successful
above all things overhanging us here.
Let us then follow the Apostle who tells
us to keep in subjection the old man.
Mark in conclusion briefly the Apostle
directed as to himself & his wife
aim to obtain the prize at any sacrifice.
"Let us not leave ourselves to
others & myself. Others can be a con-
fession." Yet that the Apostle calls
him can faithfulness & perseverance
or ~~could~~ have right of that grace
since none from a high what alone
can sustain us. But he is fully aware
of the charge the Christian is exposed to
beaten presently in his journey, unless
he strive against the enemy with
he pursue with all zeal leaving
things. Should leave ourselves to
much to others, & call myself a Christian.

of God's cause, at last be free
 wanting myself, myself be exposed
 to shame & degradation. No I never
 will run the risk, no taking place
 since we fear running the race
 no self defence no sacrifice no crown
 no purification no hard battles, shall
 hinder me. I have but one desire the
 aim, I will gain the prize.

John Brown
 18 Aug 1860
 3rd July 1860
 John Brown
 18 Aug 1860
 3rd July 1860
 John Brown
 18 Aug 1860
 3rd July 1860