<u>Spiritual Improvement</u> Sunday [aft.] 12 Matthew 25, Cahpter 29th Verse. June 1842

"For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away that wh he hath.

To direct Xtians to the means by wh they may be advanced in spiritual improvement; seems to have been one of the leading designs of the Saviour, in the use of the parable of wh our text is a part. This He does by express instructions as in the words we have quoted; and likewise by indi[-] = rect the as explicit suggestions, as in the vivid represen= tation of the loss of endowments by the careless & slothful[.]

The whole truth intended to be conveyed by the exhibition of the diverse use of the talents, by the improvident and the faithful servants; seems conveyed contained in the words we have announced, and whit is our purpose to consider and improve.

In order to obtain to obtain dear news of the text and corectly unfold it, it is necessary to understand the principal and most significant words employed in it. The apparently paradoxical use of the word, "hath" points it out as one of such. In the course of the parable, it occurs frequently and oppositely. This leads us to think that the Saviour attached different meanings to it in different places. A [couts] supposition w^d sub= ject his language to the charge of empty sound and meaningless jargon, as in the sentence "from him that hath not, shall be taken even that wh he hath[.]" What an inexplicable confusion of ideas w^d we have, if we interpre[-] =ted the language here used according to the common use of the [unds]employed! The idea of taking from a man that wh he has not, appears as a blank negation void of sense and replete with folly[.]

But this is not the character of these words. They were spoken by him, who spoke as never man spoke; and there=

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To outs very on that both shall be genow, and he shall have show about the state hat he genow, and he shall have there about he shall had shall he taken away in we fet he permeter that he had had shall he taken away in we fet to be possible to the shall he taken away in the state in possible to the shall have fette parable to again gother decision in the shall proper possible as the shall be some fette parable as the some text of post to the shall be some of persons about he would be indeed in the sound in place to person about the sound in the sound is of and some questions, as in the sound appealant token of the last intended is he towns got by the tokeling the discount; there is intended in the sound and the sound is in the faithful token amounted, and to the sound and the sound is a state to other to the sound in the sound to obtain the state to a sound and it is one parposed to and the town to the sound to the sound to the sound to the sound of the sound to the sound to the sound to the sound of t

year his language to the charge of comply hours of and receivingly jurger, as in the sentence from him that. I do to but a week and the half and the taken town that who he half and a sureplicable conference of a conducty to the house, if we enterprese that he language him beard a conducty to the common and of the language him had a good any flowing from a warm that will be had not appears as a blank regarder bound founds and reflects with pally. But this is not the character of these winds. They were your whose of these while the speaker, who speake is and liver.

fore, they are words of deep import and full of the highest wisdom, as were all the words that fell from his lips. There must be then a different and peculiar significance pertaining to them.

From the context wh represents the use & improvement of the bestowed talents by the enterprising servants—
—from the commendation of their master for such [a] pro=
cedure—from the deduction [in...] [...] drawn by the Saviour from the condemnation uttered on account of the unprof=
=itableness of the indolent; we infer that the Saviour when he used the word "hath" intended it to carry with it the same force that we regard this word "appropriate" to pos=
=sess; and the text may be thus paraphrased: He that hath, or appropriates, shall have more given to him; even as unto him who had increased his talents to [...]
were added other two talents; and he who does not ap=
propriate his endowments, shall lose those that have been bestowed upon him, as was the case with the unprofitable servant whose two talents were taken from him.

Now if we have rightly interpreted interpreted the Sa=viour's teachings we find in them a basis for the fol=lowing-

Statement

To increase our spiritual endowments we must appro= priate and use them.

Native experience and observation suggest a variety of proofs in confirmatory illustration of the proposition we have advanced. So framed is the Gov^t of God and so conducted; [shall] not infrequently, from inferior causes & minor processes, the nature & truthfulness of universal principles, are opened to our view.

There is such an uniformity & harmony in the divine purposes & operations that ofttimes we may discover great and fundamental truth in small things; for notwith= standing the variety in the forms of being there is a Uni=

for they are morele of leaf import and full of the highest aredon, as were all the words that fell from his life. The amend to their formal to the later and freeze to the content of represent the ada surproviously the best consist the represents the ada surproviously the best consist the tolerand the properties of the towns and to the proviously the towns of the towns and to the surproviously the towns of the towns and the surproviously the towns of the towns the the surproviously the towns of the towns the the surprovides towns the the surproviously the towns for the towns the test and the towns for the towns town the test which the towns towns to the the towns towns to the towns town as the town towns to the towns to the towns towns to the towns to the towns towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns towns towns to the towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns to the towns towns to towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns to the towns towns towns to the towns towns towns towns towns town

=ty pervading all. This lead us to remark that <u>the state</u>= =<u>ment deduced from the text</u> is substantiated by a refe= rance to the analogy of things[.]

The men distinguished for extraordinary physical energy are examples of the effects produced in the use and exercise of our powers. The Blacksmith who with iron frame & sinewy arm wields his ponderous sledge, & deals out his astonishing blows upon the resistless anvil; was once in his time a weak & helpless infantey. Per= haps in his youth, he was more remarkable for imbe= =cility, as giving indications [than for] strength of nerve or vigor of frame. In this respects he may have been inferior to many who now look with wonder at his strength and power.

But as he advanced in youth he was put to the forge and accustomed to the use of heavy implements of la[-] =bor. In the exercise there required of him he gained an [exhausiveness of] frame and strength of muscle, so remarkable & asrtonishing, as to make it almost im= =possible in the man of vigor and energy, to discover the once weak and attenuated boy.

Again, we may see the same truth in the quick keen sight of inexperienced [Seaman]. Standing with him on the deck of yr ocean=heaved vessel, you can see nought but the clear heavens above and the deep dark waters around as far as the eye can reach stretch, till the horizon seems to bring both sky and water in friendly & cordial em=brace. But on the instant he raises the cry—"[Land] in the [...]!"—and due its [yr] deep earnest sight in the direction. You look with steamed vision until the eye is pained and the head dizzied with the intensity of gaze, and nought is observable save the same accustomed blank of clouds & waters wh for days have mocked yr anxious heart, and you begin to doubt his capacity of vision.

to perceding all this leaders to remain that, the blate transit dedicated from the text is balklankaless by a reference the according of flowings. The more distinguished for extraordinary physicial energy discovering of the offects produced on the asse madericate four powers. The Headerstate advisett ison from the series four powers. The Headerstate advisett ison from the through a result of the offered his penderous the days, of deals out his attended of Heros a feet the reduction of the season of th

look with revole at his strength, and prover to the forger and a continued to the use of front, here a first to the forger and a continued to the use of prover inspection and of a special formation of the service there are approved of the prover of an expensive of the remarks there and the right of proved to remark the plants are the methods in the remark administrative being as to and a like order to a single the mean of proved to the provide the mean tight of compressive the analysis to the the provide the analy tight of compressive the analy tight. In the strength but the items because the provide the analysis to the the provide th

But what is difficult for yr eyes is perfectly easy to his[.] A few years ago he c^d see no further than you. But the blindness in wh he is engaged required quickness of sight and was adapted to strengthen and lengthen the vision, and so by continual [...].

Now passing from the proofs drawn from the exercise of our physical endowments to the use of our mental powers we may shall discover the like principle in a different form.

Our own country—among the many she can produce furnishes one of the most illustrious examples the world ever saw, in the life and character of Benjamin Franklin.

The son of a soap-boiler—poor and without either patron=
=age or encouragement; he made up his mind to educate his intellectual endowments and devote himself to the pursuits of Literature & Science. By the dirt of severe application, strict economy and patient labor; he be[-] came one of the wisest men and profoundest Philoso=
=phers of his time; not only gaining attracting the atten=
=tion of illustrious contemporaries of both Hemispheres in his own day; but gaining to his name and memory in succeeding generations, the willing offering of eulogy and admiration from personages distinguished and exalted as himself.

In the cases thus presented, we may use the general principle of the text illustrated, that there is the improvement of capacity [sanely] exertion. In plain words the doctrine is—if you wish want more, use what you already possess.

The same active principle, says the text, is required for the increase of our spiritual endowments. These consist in the strength and power, the vigor and energy of our religious affections. Our affections and sympathies, as well as our other sentiments exist under the common law of habit. What the influence and force of habit is we are all aware, not entirely, but to a measurable extent. It peretains to almost everything connected with us and perevades our entire being.

But which is deficient forgotype is perfectly entytibled office from a go be to refer the the the total of and be it to be to be to get the fit of the total of and the set of the set of the second and started to the refer and longfillen the refer and long them to refer and long them.

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The Saviour tells us that as Xtians can so praise themselves under the control & influence of healthful & soul elevating habits, that by strict conformity to them, they may strengthen the tone of their capacities, and reap to themselves a rich and abundant harvest of spiritual good & blessedness, & thus be brought powers in the Xtian course. And this is the condition upon wh spiritual advancement, and growth in grace are offered by him[.]

Another argument sustaining the general position we have advanced may be found in the conditions on whall the benefits of the gospel are dispersed.

The chief benefits the Saviour offered men in his [mind] are conver=

=sion regeneration, the aids & blessings of the Spirit of grace for spiritual exaltation, and ultimately the crown of eter= =nal life; and the bestowment of them is based upon con= =ditions wh require the earnest and continual exercise of all the powers of the soul.

The soul of man is not regarded by its maker as a passive instrument for the operation of divine influences[.] When He framed it, he framed it with an active principle assigned to every form of being and capacitated it to go great and limitless improvement[.]

In this active

The commencement of God's kingdom in the heart is by conversion. Divine influences are so [exhated] upon the soul as to change thought disposition and tendency from that impure & [whole] current in wh they have ever flowed; till in will we are perfectly coincident with the divine mind.

But there can be no conversion without repentance, and repentance is an act of the individual soul. No oth= er individual being in the universe can repent for us but ourselves. The mind turned in upon itself, exami= =ning its own states; loathing its own corruption in the sight of God; is to turn from the ways of sin; and upon this ex=

the horizon lette at that additioned can to place thempho ander the contest, son flicence of field the fit down classifier that the the fit of the less appoint to them. They may the medit to the the tens of them capacities, and thempt to them they among the sond about and harvast of the them courts. And this either condition afor the specially have a downcarrant. and opposite to grace in of generally have a downcarrant. and opposite to grace in open the specially have a downcarrant. And the either and the tendent one of the the harvast of the good the second of the tendent one of the the harvast of the second of the tendent one of the tendent of the tendent

acts changethought droporation and tendency from that surprise search of convent wealthy have some frome of, literar soils me are grafeth convictent tooth the choice mainet. But there can be to converting millest refer towns and appartment of the motional soil. Both to continue their give the property for the tendence after their property, but contained to the tendence of the ten

=ercise of its powers is conditioned that divine power of conversion wh is the first movement in the souls progress to spirituality. In this is expressed to us in distinct terms the means of renovation. If you w^d [be connected] [...] our maker—repent=—Repent and be [connected].—If you w^d appropriate to yrself this high initiatory step toward regeneration & salvation; exercise yr own pow= =ers.

The same terms are declared as necessary in the supply of the soul with those peculiar gifts & influences wh are guaranteed by the Holy Spirit for the [confirmation] of the Saints and the upbuilding of the Faith in the [heart] —"Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek & ye shall find."—And so the [...] of your faith and holiness the [crown] of life righteousness wh the Lord, the righteous Judge—has laid up for the faithful, will be given us as the [...] of "patient continuance in well doing" and per=severance unto the End.

The doctrine of the text is further substantiated by a <u>reference</u> to the effects of some peculiar spiritual exercises.

There are those whose continual practise is to spiritualize [upon] every thing that meets their eyes. There is nought that they see but what speaks of goodness, truth, and love and [...-] ty, and God the great source of all. It is their constant habit to be ever educing something of holy import from the things that meet and pass their vision[.] What to others seems blank and vacant is full of spiritual presences to them, the forms that are odious and repulsive to the most, present to their scrutinizing gaze glorious revelations, and even in things evil they discover a soul of goodness.

And there are others: The atmosphere they breathe is oderous with prayer. They feel their home ever to be at the foot of the mercy seat, and their duty the quiet or vocal utterance of the soul's desires. With such men every thought and all their conversation is sanctified by the sacred aspect of prayer[-]

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The are these is been there if the estanges that they everything that they good of the they are the sole in the things to the what form the things to he will and form the things the he was considered from the things that incert and past their better. What to other terms the things that need and past their better to the to the second to face of special produces to the most present to this so to the course and in pulling to the theory of the things and cover the things and covered and when the the things and the times to the things and the second and the second the transfer they hentless address at proper the past of the most to a desired at the total the second the transfer and their duty the great or provide alleemen afthe tout of desired that the thing the transfer and their duty the great or provide alleemen afthe tout of desired that the land man everythought and all this convertation is to make free of the second this convertation is to make free of the this convertation.

=fulness. Their whole life and being, with all the joys and blessedness of their existence; are & found in prayer.

And how is it with such men? Why they are continually going from strength to strength. Every department of the spiritual being is in a state of progressive improvement. Just in pro= =portion as they exercise their spiritual powers, are they strength[-] ened and renewed like the Eagle for a higher and more glorious heavenly ascent: and while this earth recedes from view, and the things of sense grow less and less attractive a holy tenderness more and more pervades their being and strengthened and renewed continually by the might [...] inspired by the Holy Spirit, they take hold as with [...] the things of the spirit, incorporate them in their being and while they dwell on earth they breathe [...] air.

A <u>fourth</u> argument adapted to convince us of the 19 truth of the general sentiment we are endeavoring to sustain; may be found in the <u>example of goodness</u> wh[o] at various times have been <u>sent to bless the human</u> family, and illustrate divine truth in their lives.

Such facts are pregnant with confirmation and instruc[-] tion[.] None are more remarkable than that of the refi= ned and susceptible John Howard.

To a man of his exquisite taste and kindly associations, a prison is as extremely repulsive upon his first entering upon the arduous and humane offices, to wh he devoted his life; and doubtless he discovered a weakness of ben= enevolent feeling, in his first contact with humanity in the odious in the odious and forbidding forms presented in a prison of disease and uncleanliness—wh he had not expected in himself.

But after passing thro his first trials, he found his work more attractive and the Xtian sympathies and sen[-] sibilities wh derided him there to, growing stronger and stronger. After awhile he had no intrusive thoughts of plus p. His beld life and heary, with all the joys and the bladery of testimen the format in principer.

And how it with eyes trace? They they was included ally going from the week they be been format in the superior was they there produced by the operations to they there plan as they there there produces the progress over they there passed and and advanced like the weeks format the same of a make for all the same the same the same the same for all the same same the same the

a repelling character. So invigorated became his ben= evolence, and so expansive his love, that there was more delight to his soul in relieving the the wants and lessening the miseries of his fellows, than was ever experienced in the pleasures of a drawing [...] or amid the convivialities of social life.

And thus was it with the objects of his benevolence. As he increased his acquaintance with the scenes of misery and want under his own eye in his own country; his heart swelled with brotherly feeling for the wide world of dis= =tress and misery; and he cast his eyes upon the more in= =tolerable scenes of prison=suffering in foreign lands[.] And he left his own country, and became the Apostle of suffering man, amid the fevers and contagious dis= =eases pent up in the narrow cells of criminals, until death laid him low, a martyr to humanity, in a for= =eign clime.

I have before me the life of John Bunyan's. I see there all the different states and processes thro wh he passed, from the wild and almost brutish aversion to Xtian truth, to that high and glorious spiritual exaltation to wh few have ever attained, and in wh, even while on earth his spirit, took to itself the wings of a dove, and soaring far above this dim spot wh men call earth, gave revelations to men seraphic and almost divine.

I turn to the life of another exalted saint[.] I have
Paul before me. I follow the incidents of his life, from
his heartless and bloody assent to the murder of Stephen,
to his cruel persecution of the Xtians of Jerusalem–from
the miraculous interposition on the road to Damascus, yet
dead to righteousness and faith;—to his conversion and first
efforts in the Xtian cause at Damascus—from his imprison—
ment at Philippe, to his bold & fearless self—vindication be—
fore Agrippi to his undaunted and majestic condem—
nation of heathenism on the Forum at Athens—or his

reference and to expansion the imagended became his hear relever and to expansione the love that there is not have stight to his had an experience of the them to a case experience of metalities of the flexibility. Then to a case experience of metalities what with a discovery roun after the property of the process of the secret of the states what what with a standard of the heart of the secret of the secre

bold and fearless self vindication before Aggrippi.—
And thence I trace the current of his eventful life thro imprisonments and strifes and shipwrecks, till the final approach of martyrdom; and see in each and every e= event a continual advancement in faith and holi= eness by the exercise of his spiritual powers for the glory of God and the salvation of men, until earth to him has lost its attractiveness, and in full assurance of faith, he looks at death with tortures and distress—with an unfailing eye, and even thro that trying ordeal sighs and yearns for the regions of immortality and the unfading treasures of an external existence[.]

I go back further in the History of the Church and that meek man and quiet Petriarch, Abraham ap= pears before me. I follow the the eventful course of his life from the departure from the home of his fathers, at the Lords bidding; until I reach his high attainment in spiritual excelling and divine favor, wherein angel guests & visitants, were wont to sit familiar beneath the shade of his tent door, and at his well furnished board; and God himself was willing patiently to listen in friendly communication, to mortal man.

And what do we learn from the example of these holy ones whose life and character we have held up to yr ob= servation? –Each and every one is a continual and vivid portrayal, in all the various states of their exis= =tence of the great truth we have announced: In them I see no spiritual improvement, no increase of holy character, no advancement in the faith, no progres= sive influence with God and man; save by the use of uni= =form and well directed exertion[.] In the use and appro= priation of their powers they found their strength and power.

And I have heavenly visions, and divine revela= tions are made to me. The city of the New Jerusalem Sold and peacles between taken before of gapling.

And there I loace the current of his executed life throe impresents and the formal of his executed life the formal approaches for and the formal approaches for and to prove and lee in each and energy as sent a sentenced advancement in faith and hole. such life of the plant of for the plant of the formal of the latenth of the proves the total life and the latenth of the testing and deltast for the light and testing type, and even the late trying ended light and parties for the region from modelity and high and parties to the the testing of the charge of and that make the factles in the theteny of the charge of and that make the factles in the the executed towards of hid high provide of the late from the departure from the long of all factors at the land that dealers, at the land the desire of and the latest defend and the standard of the standard for the standard of the standard of the latest desired the standard formal the standard formal the latest the latest the latest the standard formal the standard formal the latest the latest the same that the standard formal the standard formal the latest th

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is opened to my view. There I see angels and arch=
angels, myriads on myriads, a countless multitude[.]
There I behold the entire host of the redeemed. To them
particularly do I direct any attention. They are
all gathered around the throne of the Lamb, and
[pass] Him unceasing adoration and unnumbered
praises[.]

And what is it I learn from them? —I see in their eventful career, written as with the prayer of God the great truth it has been ours to prove. They have all worked out their salvation with fear and trembling and have come up to the heavenly city this great tribula= =tions and distresses, and thus have they secured to them[-] selves the ineffible delights of God's kingdom of grace & glory above.

"Therefore" says the inspired seaman;—Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day & night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on their [...] heat. For the Lamb wh is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Rev. [...]

o from allowing view. There I see any the rendered thought, majorands on majorands, a countlef modelitate them I believe the entere hold flee redeemed. If then particularly do I desert very alloware. They are not gathered and past them uncertainty determines the thermal of the common past them uncertainty determines the forest the fact that is it bleares from them? - I see in their small the forest of forthe the past lack it had been over to prove the forest and them the beating and have topically to the past locality and them topically the past locally and have difficulties, and then their they travel to them to last the majorate difficulties, and then have they travel to them to last the majorate delights of food. Single one of forest glory above.