

Sunday Reading.

New Every Mornine.

(SUSAN COOLIDGE.)

Every day is a fresh beginning, Every morning is the world made new. You who are weary of sorrow and sinning, Here is a beautiful hope for you— A hope for me and a hope for you— All the past things are past and over, The tasks are done and the tears are shed. Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover; Yesterday's wounds, which smarted and bled, Are healed with the healing which night has shed. Yesterday now is a part of forever, Bound up in a sheaf which God holds tight. With glad days and sad days and bad days which never Shall visit us more with their bloom and their blight, Their fulness of sunshine or sorrowful night. Let them go, since we cannot revive them, Can not undo, and can not atone; God in his mercy receive, forgive them; Only the new days are our own, To-day is ours and to-day alone.

The Holy Spirit.

I freely and resolutely assent unto this, as unto a certain and infallible truth, that beside all other whatsoever, to whom the name of spirit is or may be given, there is one particular and peculiar Spirit, who is truly and properly a person, of a true, real and personal subsistence, not a created but an uncreated person, and so the true and one eternal God; that though He be that God, yet He is not the Father, nor the Son, but the Spirit of the Father and the Son, the third person in the Blessed Trinity, proceeding from the Father and the Son. I believe this infinite and eternal Spirit to be not only of perfect and indestructible holiness in Himself, but also to be the immediate cause of all holiness in us, revealing the pure and undefiled will of God, inspiring the blessed apostles, and enabling them to lay the succession, and by a perpetual succession to continue the edification of the Church, illuminating the understandings of particular persons, rectifying their wills and affections, renovating their natures, uniting their persons unto Christ, assuring them of the adoption of sons, leading them in all their actions, directing them in their devotions; by all ways and means purifying and sanctifying their souls and bodies, to a full and eternal acceptance in the sight of God.—Bishop Pearson.

THE HOLY SPIRIT DIVINE.

It is really God. He is revealed to us in Scripture in the plainest manner. The same names are applied to Him that are applied to God; the same infinite perfections attributed, the same works ascribed, and the same worship enjoined. To be born of the Spirit is to be born of God; to lie to the Holy Ghost is to lie unto God. The mind of God, which is known only to God himself, this Spirit knows, and knows perfectly. "He searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." Are these a creature's honors, or a creature's claims? No more than they are yours or mine.—C. Bradley.

We sometimes hear from the sacred desk of late the strange teaching, that the great object Christ had in view in submitting to the ordinance of Baptism at the Jordan, from the hands of his forerunner, John, was not to set an example to his followers, but in order to, admit him into the office of the priesthood, the priests under the law, as those teachers say, were so constituted with the washing of water, &c. But we understand Paul to teach a very different doctrine where he says, Heb. vii. 16, 17, Christ was not made a priest "after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For it is testified of him thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." This passage of Scripture ought forever to settle this question.

How solemn, how sublime, how glorious the Baptism of Christ and the circumstances attending it. The triune God was present, the approbation of Heaven is given, the voice of the Redeemer is heard, thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Surely those who follow the Saviour without question or cabal, enjoy the Divine presence and peace far beyond what those can enjoy who are not so disposed. "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine."

C. MOSHER.

A clergyman in Amesbury, Mass., stopped the service last Sunday with the remark that God loves mercy as well as sacrifice, and advised the shivering congregation to gather about the furnace registers, a suggestion they acted upon with alacrity and commendable unanimity.

One hour for Jesus.

BY REV. J. HUNT COOKE.

The most important subject that can occupy the thought of any person is Jesus Christ. Yet many live year after year without ever beginning to meditate upon Him. Is that your case? Every year you have lived you have spent eight or nine thousand hours, every ten years eighty or ninety thousand hours. You have thought about many things; have you ever given one hour, in which thoughts of other things are put aside, and the mind fixed intently on Jesus Christ?

What! not one hour fairly so spent out of the more than one hundred thousand hours at least that God has given you! This, if true, is awfully solemn. There must be some evil influence at work, or you never could so pervert your time. Thoughts of Jesus Christ are necessary for a good life, for a happy life. You cannot possibly be really good and truly happy without thinking about Him. It is very serious. It is surely time to begin. Will you not now at once set apart one hour for consideration of this? You know it would be right. You know it would be wise. You know it is essential to your happiness. Will you not do so this very day?

A minister called upon a city merchant. He spoke to him about Jesus Christ. The man of business said, "I have no time to think about these things now." "Sir," said the earnest pastor, "you must make time to think about them." The active man could make time to seek out a new customer, or to consider any fresh proposal for gaining money. But he was unwilling to look out an opportunity to know Jesus Christ, and seek the wealth of heaven. That very night the minister was summoned by him in all haste, he went without delay, but before he reached his dwelling the merchant was a corpse. He had found time to die.

Should you determine to give Jesus Christ one hour—that is to say less than one hundred thousandth part of what you have received—you may not find it easy to carry out your resolve. There will be a spirit of dislike, a spirit of procrastination, a spirit of wandering thought, and many other influences endeavouring to prevent you. It is a very solemn fact that if you endeavour to seek Jesus Christ, you will find all kinds of obstacles in the way. So true is this that it almost proves the belief that there is a bad, watchful, malevolent, unseen being determined to hinder you from being good and happy. Make, then, a fixed resolution. Let it be unalterable. Do not let any other advantage or the wish of a friend interfere with it. Determine to spend one hour in meditating about Jesus Christ.

Think of His love. You know the story of the Gospels. Refer to them. Especially to that by John. Try and form an idea of His gentleness, His readiness to help. Meditate particularly upon His agony and death, and remember that it was all for sinners just such as you are. Dwell upon it until you gain some clearer thought of His great love. Then know He is just the same now, and is with you, looking at you, and knowing your thoughts.

Think of His frown. Some day you will see Him. How soon you cannot tell. Think what it would be to behold Him in all His beauty and glory, and whilst He welcomes His friends, and is about to lead them into the Father's house. He turns to you and says, "Depart, I never knew you," and then you are driven from His presence into the outer eternal darkness. Think as vividly as you can about this, for if you are thoughtless of Him this must be your portion, and that before very long.

Think of His smile. Imagine what would be the honour, the peace, the joy, the indescribable bliss of seeing Him, the altogether lovely, the all-glorious Christ, smile upon you with love, and to hear Him say to you, mentioning your name, before all the angels and all the holy men and women who have ever lived, "Come ye blessed," and then leading you into the dazzling glories of heaven.

It is said that there recently died in a workhouse, a man who was the rightful heir of property worth more than one million pounds. Why did he perish in poverty? Because he did not be-

lieve such wealth was for him. Why did he not believe? Because he knew not the truth. He had never seriously looked into it.

Solemnly, in His name, are you urged to give one hour to think upon these things. Should you do so the power of the Holy Spirit may come and bestow upon you the joys and riches of His grace. Should you refuse, will it not seem strange that when at the great white throne the account of your life is given, it will be found that out of the hundreds of thousands of hours God gave you, you were unwilling to give one to the great object for which He bestowed the precious gift of thought—to think about Jesus!

Just What to Do.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The past winter was not one of widespread and powerful revivals; the spiritual thermometer seemed to be running in the figures towards zero. But many Christians are beseeching for an outpouring of the Spirit, and among the readers of this journal are some who are asking the old, yet ever new question, "What must I do to be saved?" You are right in emphasizing that little word "do," for your Saviour having already done his mighty work of providing for an atonement for you, the next doing must be on your side. If anybody tells you to do nothing at all but simply trust yourself to Christ, he or she may only confuse you. Jesus Himself never gave any such advice. He said "Follow me," and that means go where I lead you, and do what I tell you. In Peter's case that meant the quitting of his nets and his fishing-boats, and in Matthew's case it meant the leaving of his toll-booth, and in both cases, they did it to please the Lord Jesus. No waiting for more feeling, you observe; no bargaining with him for an easy time, or any reward. They obeyed Christ. That was their decisive step.

Now in the very first thing that offers itself to you, so act as to please your Saviour. Consult conscience. Jesus speaks to you through the conscience; it is your moral telephone; listen and obey. Last evening, a young lady friend who is now very thoughtful about her soul's salvation, was invited by a friend to a social prayer-meeting. She had also been invited to a party. The party was not in itself a sinful place of entertainment, but her conscience said to her, the prayer-meeting is the safest place and the best place for me to-night. She was more likely to meet Christ, to honor Christ, and to get needed help for her soul among his people, than among a merry company of pleasure-seekers. Her going to the house of prayer was a decisive act; it was a following after Christ, rather than after a worldly indulgence. Did she do that in order "to be saved"? Yes; because she wanted to be saved from frivolous, soul-dissipating influences, and from reproach of conscience. She wanted to put herself distinctly on Christ's side, and she did it. Her step was like casting a ballot on election day; it showed which side she was on. The prayer-meeting could not convert her soul, but her act of going there was an evidence that she was being converted, for conversion signifies a turning round towards Christ.

We have cited the above case as an illustration of what is implied by "following" Christ. The same principle may be applied in a hundred different directions; every right step taken in obedience to the voice of an awakened conscience, is a step towards salvation. Christ speaks through the conscience: "Whatever he saith unto you, do it." Very quietly the Holy Spirit often opens the heart, just as he did the heart of Lydia. What is done by that awakened heart commonly settles the great question. She opened her lips for Christ, and opened her house to his servants, and that proved that she had admitted Jesus into her heart. What she did saved her, because she did it in order to obey and honor her Divine Saviour. If she had done the opposite, who supposes that Lydia would have become the first convert on the soil of Europe, and have found her place among godly women? Her actions spoke louder than words. "What makes our Fred so wonderfully

kind and obliging this week?" inquired a wife of her husband. "I don't know, unless he was converted by that sermon last Sabbath." The husband was right; the youth had been quietly changed in heart by a faithful sermon, and began at once to act differently. That boy's conduct at home was his way of "following Christ"; his conversion proved itself by his acts, and has lasted ever since. God's hand was in it.

Salvation is a joint process—it is all free grace on the side of the atoning Saviour; it is all free obedience on our side. Jesus works, and you must work; he is in you, and you for him. Doing nothing at all is the damning sin. Just observe what answers Peter and Paul gave to the questions, "What must we do to be saved?" Peter's prompt, pithy answer at the time of Pentecost was "Repent!" Repentance is more than shame or sorrow for sin; it is a turning from sin with a full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience to Christ. This means doing, not mere feeling. My friend A—repented of the sin of dram-drinking, when he signed a pledge and forsook his bottle. It would have been absurd for him to have said that he was penitent and trusting Christ, while he was yet taking sly drinks out of that decanter. It would in his case have been a quenching of the Holy Spirit. An awakened inquirer once said to me, "My besetting sin is to swear." Then I replied "Confess your sin to God, and stop swearing. At whatever point that Holy Spirit convicts you of sin, there is the point to yield and to repent. Repentance proves itself by acts."

Paul's answer to the question was "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." This was also an act, and a very impressive one. Trusting, in the jailor's case, was not a babe falling asleep on the bosom of a mother—as some goody-good people define faith. It was a pretty resolute step into which he put the whole energies of his soul—as I would put all my bodily energies into grasping a rope if I fell overboard from a ferry-boat. There are times in life when faith is a very quiet resting in the arms of the Redeemer. But I don't understand that the jailor was in the spiritual condition for that style of reposeful trust. His was the quick cleaving to Jesus; God was working in him, and he in turn was "working out his salvation with fear and trembling." My friend, your faith must be a laying hold on Jesus Christ, and a cleaving fast to him. That is your doing. He will cleanse you, strengthen you, and hold you to the end. That is his doing.

Finally, the whole great question of your salvation must be settled between you and your Saviour. Go to him, go with your Bible, go on your knees, go and surrender yourself to him. One hour with Jesus is worth years of sermons or inquiry-meetings. No pastor, no friend can save you. Jesus can. Whoever he bids you do, as he speaks to your conscience, do it.—New York Evangelist.

Front Seats in Prayer-Meeting.

But let us look at the thing in the light of common sense. The closer and more compactly people are seated in a meeting, the quicker and more potential is their sympathy. It is easier for the leader to get the meeting fairly started when there is not a wide intervening vacancy between himself and others. The very fact of walking well toward the front gives an emphasis to the individual presence. Your being there signifies that you have come with a real purpose to be and to do what you can to further the interests of the meeting. They who occupy front seats will be more likely to linger for a few moments of social converse when the meeting is over; and nothing helps the family feeling in a church more thoroughly than the little informal meetings and conversation of those who exchange words of greeting and inquiry after the hour of prayer.

It is hard for us to comprehend the indifference and apathy with which some regard the weekly prayer-meeting. Into the midst of our secular affairs and thronging cares, it lets itself like a Bethel opportunity. We have often gone to it feeling dull, disheartened, and ill at ease with life and work. We have seldom left it without having

been refreshed, gladdened and strengthened. The Master is there, and gives peace to his waiting disciples. Just how the secret of His love is revealed to the inner consciousness in a prayer-meeting, we cannot explain; but it is the theme of joyful memory that often and often the Lord has made Himself known there to the famishing soul. No Christian can afford to be intermittent in attendance on this means of grace. And once there, it is best for one's spiritual help to pass by the back seats and take one in front.

A Sparrow's Love.

I returned home from the chase, and wandered through an alley in my garden. My dog bounded before me. Suddenly he checked himself, and moved forward cautiously, as if he scented game. I glanced down the alley, and perceived a young sparrow with a yellow beak and down upon its head. He had fallen out of the nest (the wind was shaking the beeches in the alley violently), and lay motionless and helpless on the ground, with his little unfeathered wings extended. The old dog approached it softly, when suddenly an old sparrow with a black breast, quitted a neighboring tree, dropped like a stone right before the dog's nose, and, with ruffled plumage and chirping desperately and pitifully, sprang twice at the open, grinning mouth. He had come to protect his little one at the cost of his own life. His little body trembled all over, his voice was hoarse he was in an agony—he offered himself. The dog must have seemed a gigantic monster to him. But, in spite of that, he had not remained safe on his lofty perch. A power stronger than his own will had forced him down. The dog stood still, and turned away. It seemed as though he also felt this power. I hastened to call him back, and went away with a feeling of respect. Yes: smile not! I felt a respect for this heroic little bird and for the depth of his paternal love.

Love, I reflected, is stronger than death and the fear of death: it is love alone that supports and animates all.—Tourgenieff.

[The writer of the above was probably mistaken—this courageous bird was doubtless the mother.—Ed. C. M.]

The Gate of Heaven.

Were we to know the history of the saints in heaven, it would probably be found that the great majority of them had arrived at that blessed world via the house of God. We should doubtless find that large numbers of them took their first step heavenward at the sanctuary. There they started on the heavenly pilgrimage. There their first thoughts were turned in that direction, and there was the place of their setting out. Something that they there heard and that the Holy Spirit carried home to their hearts with divine power turned them to that course. Of an innumerable multitude in heaven may it be said that "this and that man was born there." They were there "born again," "begotten through the Gospel." And so from that time they cherished a peculiar love for the house of God and were constant attendants there. A day in his courts was esteemed better than a thousand in the tents of wickedness. Fed and nourished from its provisions, they increased in spiritual grace. And thus it is with respect to all that delight in these ordinances of religion.

"Cheerful they walk with growing strength Till all shall meet in heaven at length; Till all before thy face appear, And join in nobler worship there."

But, with rare exceptions, the willing neglectors of the house of God are found travelling in another direction. Their course is away from rather than toward heaven. The places to which they prefer to resort prove to many the gate of destruction. As a class they are of the number of those that "hate knowledge, and do not choose the fear of the Lord;" and so as a class, their end will be the end of such. They shall "eat the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices."—N. Y. Observer.

Lord Shaftsbury is to have the freedom of the City of London conferred upon him, in recognition of his lifelong labours as a philanthropist.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson IV.—APRIL 27, 1884.

ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.—1 Cor. viii. 1-13.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 10-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."—1 Corinthians viii. 13.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Lesson.
- T. Israel's Golden Calf.—Ex. xxxii. 1-6.
- W. The Making of Idols Described.—Isa. xl. 19, 20; xli. 7.
- T. The Impotence of Idols.—Palm cxv. 4-8.
- F. Judging our Brethren in Eating.—Rom. xiv. 1-14.
- S. Abstaining for the Sake of Others.—Rom. xiv. 15-23.
- S. Eating and Drinking for God's Glory.—1 Cor. x. 27-33.

ANALYSIS.—I. Concerning Meats offered to Idols, Vs. 1-7. II. The Mianse of Christian Liberty, Vs. 8-12. III. The Higher Law of Love, Vs. 10.

In this lesson Paul discusses the question which troubled the Corinthian Church—whether it was right to eat the flesh for sale in the markets, which had been used in offerings to heathen idols. From this he draws the general principle that the law of love would lead us to abstain from even lawful things, out of respect to the tender consciences of others.

NOTES.—Vs. 1.—In Corinth and other Gentile cities, portions of animals which had been presented in sacrifice at the heathen temples, were sometimes sent either by the priests or offerers, to the markets for sale. These meats would be met by Christians upon the tables of others, or, perhaps be purchased by them for their own households. But partaking of them was an abomination among the Jews, as such meats were considered polluted by contact with heathen rites. Some Christians shared in this sentiment, and would not only not partake of them themselves, but were grieved that others should do so—believing that such participation was, in some sense, a concession to, if not an endorsement of idolatry. The question was one of great importance, because the whole social life of the ancients was closely interwoven with their religious worship. The Conference at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 20) had decided adversely in the matter of the use of these meats, but it is noticeable that Paul did not refer to that decision—a hint of how little ecclesiastical power such a conference possessed. He brings to bear upon the question, not the decrees of councils, but the law of love. We all have knowledge: Those who ate these meats had doubtless argued that the meats were not in themselves affected by being put before an idol, and Paul says: "Yes, we all know that." But while knowledge is a good thing, love is still better. For knowledge puffeth up, i. e., makes one conceited. Not tempered and controlled by love, it tends to self-pleasing and to forgetfulness of others. But charity (love) edifieth (buildeth up). It builds up others, or the whole church. Mere knowledge looks at self, but love considers the general good.

Vs. 2, 3.—Humility and love are the avenues through which spiritual knowledge comes, and a man's conceit is the greatest hindrance to true knowledge. There is a moral element in all true knowledge which mere head worshippers do not understand. The way to know is to love God, for then God is our teacher, and the same is known (sp. proved) of God. Not he who thinks he knows, but whose heart is filled with God's love, is taught of God (see 1 John iv. 7, 8), and has the right kind of knowledge.

Vs. 4-6.—Concerning . . . the eating, etc. That is, concerning the point in question. To settle this, let us first know what an idol is. That is easily determined—it is Nothing in the world. It is but carved wood or stone representing a deity which does not exist; therefore it has no power over the meats put before it. If this were the only question, then all might freely eat of these meats. But there is a question as to the effect on others of eating, which he discusses farther on, and which changes the conclusion. Meanwhile he expands this thought of the nothingness of an idol. There is none other God but one. The gods of mythology, Jupiter, Juno, Mars, etc., are mythical. Called gods. By the heathen. Gods many, lords many. The heathen had gods of air, earth, sky, mountains, sea, etc. They deified the sun, stars, fire, beasts, kings, heroes; but none of these were God. To us, Christians. Our