

The Voyage of Life.

BY THE REV. W. R. FITCH.

The voyage of life is nearly past,
And my journey is almost o'er!
The haven near I see at last,
And the lights along the shore.

The Life of the Church.

We may with propriety speak of the Church, for, rightly understood, there is such a thing.

This life in general consists in the aggregate life of the various units which make up the Church.

The source of this life is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He is the head and they are the members, who are baptized into spiritual union with him.

The agent who produces and determines this life is the Holy Spirit. He it is who unites the members of Christ's body with him the source of life.

The norm by which this life is to be determined is the Word of God. Each member is begotten again unto a lively hope, being born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God.

It is of the last importance to keep clearly in mind that the norm which is to determine the life of the Church is the Word of God, so that as the living Word is the source of the life, the written Word is the rule, law and constitution, according to which her whole life and activity is to be shaped.

And once more the life of the Church thus determined is to express itself in active service. She is to be a witness to the world of the reality and power of spiritual and eternal things.

Then all the aggressive missionary service of the Church, of all sorts, in all lands, and at all times, is another form in which the life of the Church expresses itself.

Thus the life of the Church, has its source in Christ, its agent producing it in the Holy Spirit, its norm in the Holy Scripture, and its service in the world.

Working Out God's Plan.

God has a plan for every life. We are not here to drift through our few years as circumstances may carry us; we are here on a divine errand, with a work to do for God and for humanity.

No more important question, therefore, can be considered by a young person than: How can I discover what God's plan for me is, and how may I fulfil his purpose? We may be sure that this is a reasonable question.

The first thing is to submit our life to God. This means a personal surrender of our will to him. We acknowledge that God is our rightful Lord, but we must voluntarily yield ourselves to him, taking him as our absolute master.

Another step is the taking of the word of God as the infallible guide of our life. It is in his word that God chiefly makes known to us his will. We must not expect him to appear to us in a burning bush or in a pillar of cloud and fire, or to send a visible angel to show us the way, or to speak out of the heavens, telling us day by day what we ought to do.

The Bible is not merely a book to be read every day - it may become the emp iest kind of task work, utterly without blessing or good.

There is also a revealing of God's will in providence. Duties are presented to us as we go on in the common ways. Every day brings its task. Work is the law of life.

Life's providences are really burning bushes and pillars of cloud and fire to him who has eyes to see the glory in them. He who lives reverently and devoutly will continually see the hand of God and hear the voice of God in life's events and circumstances.

If we really wish to know the divine will for our life and are truly ready to

make it our own will, we need never be uncertain as to the way God would have us take or the work he would have us do. He may not show us the whole way at one view - miles and miles ahead. Usually he shows us only a little way at a time, a single step.

But, after all, everything depends upon the doing of the will of God, when it is made known to us. Most of us know more of God's will than we do. Nothing more surely hardens the heart than failing to obey the voice of God when it is heard, or to take God's way when it has been pointed out.

In an art gallery to which thousands of people are attracted every year because of the richness and variety of the treasures presented for public view, there is a painting by a famous artist which was never finished.

"Ye Are Complete in Him."

The unfinished picture has its lesson and message. Many men and women have filled up the measure of their days, but have left behind an incomplete life; and many are still in full career whose lives are inadequate, unsatisfactory, partial, and in a large measure failures.

It is something to be grateful for when we know that we seem to others to illustrate high excellence, because it encourages and helps them to believe that we are what we seem, and if we honestly try to realize, as fully as they think we realize, our ideals, no hypocrisy is involved.

Even if it were not, so to speak, a matter of prudence to be charitable to others, because of our own great need of similar allowance, the spirit of charity is to be cultivated assiduously because of its blessed reflex influence on our own hearts.

His First Convert. An eminent minister and teacher has thus told the story of his first convert. He was a mere lad himself when he gave his heart to Christ.

No life is complete unless it partake of the fulness of God and is molded upon the life and character of the Saviour of men, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

At length he bethought himself of a poor, half-witted boy, whom everybody seemed to pass by. Day after day he sat down to talk to this feeble intellect, and at length the light seemed to dawn.

with His teachings, practice and example.

To be "complete in Him" is to be wholly dominated by Him; to be possessed with His Spirit; to be actuated by the lofty motives that swayed Him; to have His breadth of spiritual vision; to be urged forward by sublime impulses of duty; to be eager, ready, and capable of service for humanity, whether it be exalted or menial; to be too noble of soul to bend to prejudices, too righteous to form or express an unjust judgment, too gentle to cause any to suffer needlessly, too pure to be stained by the enforced contact with the world, too devoted to be unthoughtful of those who have need; and to have put on, as God's elect, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, and, above all things, having put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

The Beam and the Mote.

It is difficult to see others as they really are. Yet by taking thought enough we can form a fairly accurate conception of their characters and their abilities. It is still more difficult to see ourselves as we are.

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Duty for the hour is in the light of the hour. God takes care of consequences of such duty-doing.

A person who tells you the faults of others intends to tell others of your faults. Have a care how you listen.

Whatever is coming, there is but one way to meet it to go straight forward, to bear what is to be borne, and to do what is to be done.

Remember that in every quarrel the person who has been the least to blame is generally the most ready to be reconciled.—Bowdler.

Not long ago it was found that a telegraphic cable, which had been laid on marshy ground, in Tonquin, had been destroyed by the inroads of tiny but persistent insects. The cable failed to carry the electric current in consequence of this insidious damage, and was entirely useless.

It is indispensable that the work within keep pace with that without, for secret fellowship with God is far more vital than public service. Yes, the success of the latter is absolutely dependent on the maintenance of the former.

To be right in relation with their neighbors men must be right in their own hearts. To be right in their own hearts, they must be right with God. Hence the divine order is to be right with God by reconciliation through Christ, then to be right in heart by the renewal of the Holy Spirit, and then life in all its relations will be right.

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