

The Loving-Kindness.

Not always the path is easy; There are thickets hung with gloom, There are rough and stony places, Where never the roses bloom. But oft when the way is hardest, I am conscious of One at my side, Whose hands and whose feet are wounded, And I'm happy and safe with my Guide...

Think on These Things.

Some persons think they are too young, too weak, or too ignorant to do anything until they reach a time of life when they are too old, and then they suddenly realize that it is too late. The minister who is given to change, and who is never quite satisfied that he is in the right place, does not believe in the guidance of an unerring Providence and an unerring Spirit.

The faith of Jesus in the power of truth was implicit and sublime. The task He set for Himself was nothing less than the moral reformation and regeneration of the whole world. He came into a world given over to superstition, atheism, and wickedness, and proposed to bring it back to the service of the true God and the practice of righteousness.

Jesus was a young man, only thirty-three years of age, when He was put to death. Until He was thirty He pursued the vocation of a mechanic. He spent but three years in His public ministry. He was born in indigence and had no educational advantages.

It is not enough to invite sinners to accept salvation. The Church should compel them to come in. Our Lord foresaw the tendency of Christians and Christian churches to settle down into a state of indifference with regard to the unconverted. As a matter of fact, what is the prevailing attitude of Christians toward the unconverted?

overcome their reluctance, compel them to surrender to God. Not by carnal weapons, but by prayer, by persuasion, by song, by united and persevering effort, and by love, compel them to come in.

Christians should diligently seek to bring their neighbors to Christ, because without Him they are lost. Say what we will and believe what we may about future punishment, we cannot escape the fact that sinners are being punished now. Whatever may be their lot in the world to come, they have a hard lot in this world.

A Present-Day Danger.

The dangerous tendency of the present day to which we are all of us more or less subject is that of subordinating the spiritual to the material. A glance at present conditions impresses this upon us, and a careful study of them is sure to confirm this impression.

Great material triumphs are being achieved at this time and great material advances are being accomplished. The discoveries and inventions of the age are marvelous. The record of the last half century eclipses the old fairy tales.

But we do not believe that this is the real test. The needs of the immortal soul remain the same. Sins and sorrows abound to day just as they did in the days when the oceans were crossed in sailing vessels, and death is as certain and the judgment day as inevitable as in old times before flintlocks were superseded by Mauser rifles.

It would seem that we should not lose sight of the great truths of the Cross, and that we should not forget that the supreme need of the world is a saving interest in the blood of Jesus Christ. If we are wise we shall not, No current of world thought shall be strong enough to sweep us away from our mooring here.

We are constantly impressed by the fact that a foremost place is being demanded for business and pleasure. It has always been so, of course, but the demand to-day is exceedingly urgent. Young men find the attraction to the fields of the sciences and of applied arts, and of business, rather than to the work of the Gospel ministry.

cinder path and the yachting course engross the thoughts of millions day by day, to the exclusion of a care for the kingdom of God. And yet is not the sound body as a home for the sound mind to be desired? Most certainly, if we shall cultivate the healthful spirit and save ourselves from the decadence of the athletic Greek and the corruption of the rugged Roman.

Is there a possibility that we are doing our religious work with regard to the material rather than for the spiritual result? Are we paying undue attention to the architectural and aesthetic effects in our houses of worship rather than to efforts to promote revival and secure conversions? Are we more careful to report the exact number of additions to our churches than to promote the spirituality which keeps our membership close to Christ?

It will not do for us to be carried away by any temporary, fleeting spirit of the age. We will become materialists if we permit ourselves to take materialistic views of life. Ever and everywhere that which is seen is temporal. Only that which is unseen is eternal.

To Make a Church Prosper.

Why should there be a decaying church in the world? There is a sure way of prosperity. It has never failed, and never can. A few simple rules observed by all the members of any church will insure good days.

- 1. Attend all the services regularly. 2. If it rains or snows, make a special effort to go. 3. Never miss a prayer meeting needlessly. 4. Invite some one else to go every week. 5. Take part in the meetings. Be ready always to give a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, and to speak well of Christ and the Church. 6. Think of the services through the week, speak of them to others, and pray that they may be attended with the divine blessing. 7. Pray for each member so far as you may know them, especially for the sick and poor. 8. Pray for the pastor. His usefulness will be greatly increased by the daily prayers of all the people. His preaching will improve wonderfully under such conditions. 9. Note the absence of members, not to criticize or find fault, but to show them proper attention in case they are sick, to encourage them if they are cast down, to restore them if they are wandering. 10. Speak to strangers, and invite them to come again. 11. Accept gladly any work assigned you, but never show a spirit of envy when others are promoted in the church. 12. Never encourage strife, but be a peacemaker. 13. Never speak of the faults of others to your neighbors, and never lose them through inattention, failing to maintain those little amenities, courtesies, and kindnesses which cost so little yet are hooks of steel to grapple and hold our friends. Some drop old friends for new ones; some take offense easily at imagined slights or neglects, and ruthlessly cut the most sacred ties. 14. Give cheerfully, according to your ability. 15. If able, take a Church paper. 16. If the pastor or some one else is struggling under a heavy load, take hold and help. 17. Never insist on having your own way against the majority, and never insist on overriding a minority with careless indifference. 18. Make some unconverted soul a special subject of daily prayer. Persevere in prayer, together with judicious effort, until that one shall be brought to Christ. Then begin at once to bring another in the same way by prayer and personal effort. If we knew that such simple rules as these would give us a good harvest, or insure physical health, or make us rich, as well as we know that they will make the church prosper, would we not all begin at once to observe them? These things we can all do. No special talent is required. By so doing we shall bear much fruit!—N. Y. Advocate.

Theater-Going.

Don't go—because the atmosphere is essentially materialistic and sensuous, and indisposes for prayer and faith.

Don't go—because you will contract a habit that will lead you to slide by almost insensible degrees from the purer plays with which you begin to the grosser ones towards which every theater tends.

Don't go—because the majority of theater-goers are not Christians, and it cannot be expected that those finer shades of morality will be observed with which Christ familiarized us; to sit as a silent spectator is to acquiesce in the standard of morals presented on the stage. It is one thing to be obliged to meet such things in daily life; quite another to go to see them as a pastime, and to pay for their performance.

Don't go—because you have no right to support a system which is inimical to the virtue of the actors. Not that every actor is necessarily immoral, but that the almost universal confession of those actors and actresses who have become Christians is that life on the stage is not friendly to virtue, but strongly the reverse. You have no right to help to put stumbling-blocks on other people's paths by contributing your money to support such a system.

Don't go—because, even if you do not suffer moral taint, your influence and example may lead others to follow in your steps who will not be able to resist the evil influences of the average theater-goer's life, but will drift into the love of the sensational and sensuous to the ruin of the nobler qualities of the soul.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

Laid Up in Heaven.

After all, the best satisfaction in life arises from what you are able to do for the happiness and welfare of other people. That is the great advantage of wealth. It is not that it gives you the opportunity of leading a more luxurious and self-indulgent life; it is not that you can have a fine house and garden, books and pictures, travel and society, but it is that you have it in your power to help others, to lift them over hard places, and to give them the substantial encouragements that are so useful. But this power does not reside merely in the possession of money; it also goes with good health, a cheerful disposition, knowledge, skill, or any advantage that you have over those less favored.

All these things are trusts, and we make the noblest and most satisfying use of them when we use them as trusts, not for ourselves but to promote the welfare of others. What a significant thing it is that our Saviour, who treated the suggestion that He should use His miraculous power to change a stone into bread as a temptation of Satan, a few days later should have wrought His first miracle by turning water into wine, to promote the pleasure and comfort of others! The more we see of life the firmer is apt to be our persuasion that we get the best of any power or advantage we may possess to have by using it for the welfare of others. By that use we transmute it into a permanent spiritual value. The riches that we can amass in that way are truly laid up in heaven.—The Watchman.

Friends.

Having carefully chosen a few friends, we should never let them go out of our lives if we can by any possibility retain them. Friendship is too rare and sacred a treasure to be lightly thrown away, and yet many persons are not careful to hold their friends once they have secured them. Some lose them through inattention, failing to maintain those little amenities, courtesies, and kindnesses which cost so little yet are hooks of steel to grapple and hold our friends. Some drop old friends for new ones; some take offense easily at imagined slights or neglects, and ruthlessly cut the most sacred ties. Some become impatient of little faults, and discard even truest friendships. Some are incapable of any deep or permanent affection, and fly from friendship to friendship, like birds from bough to bough, but make no nests for their hearts in any. There are a great many ways of losing friends. But when we have once taken them into our lives, we should cherish them as rarest jewels. If slights are given let them be overlooked. If misunderstandings arise, let them be quickly set aright. It is hard to lose a friend, but the loss is not utterly irremediable.

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Responsible for What we Have Not for What we Have Not.

Every man has his own lot, his own power, his own opportunity, his own responsibility. God asks no man to use what is another man's but only what is his. It is enough for a man to account for what has been given him, and about the ownership of which there is no room for doubt or question. A young Christian, seeing evidence of the strong faith of a friend of his, said, as if half envious of the other's gift, "I wish I had your faith." "You have no right to my faith," said the other; it does not belong to you any more than does my size or weight or special training. You'd find it wasn't suited to you if you had it." "Well, at all events, I wish I had more faith than I have." "What do you want more faith for than you have? You are not using the faith you have. If you'd use the faith you have, you'd have more. If you had more faith now, you'd have just so much more unused possessions to account for." Let us thank God that he will not call us to account for what he has not given us. But let us remember that we must give account for the use of all that we have.—S. S. Times.

Duty.

There are occasions when God's servants shrink from duty. But what is the consequence? They lose the presence and comfortable enjoyment of God's love. When we obey our Lord Jesus as believers should, our God is with us; and though we have the whole world against us, if we have God with us, what does it matter. But the moment we start back, and seek our own inventions, we are at sea without a pilot. Then may we bitterly lament and groan out, "O my God, where hast thou gone? How could I have been so foolish as to lose all the bright shinnings of thy face? This is a price too high. Let me return to my allegiance, that I may rejoice in thy presence."—Spurgeon.

He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace. And the men who have this life in them, are the true lords or kings of the earth—they, and they only.—John Ruskin.

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