

Our Young People

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OUR TOPIC TALK.

JUNE 14.—*Gold or God.*—Luke 18: 18-30.

Most people want rules to regulate conduct. But the highest standard of living is that which makes principles supreme rather than a mere rule of "do" or "do not." The man who came to Christ with the enquiry, "What shall I do?" had been observing rules to win merit and he was seeking for more that he might attain the greater credit. But instead of receiving a new regulation he was confronted with a proposition which tested the principles of his conduct, and showed that, in spite of his good deeds, selfishness was the root of his motives.

All sin, in its last analysis is selfishness. This is what prompts one to love gold more than he loves God. Even he who gives his gold merely for the sake of reward is still selfish at heart. It was the poor widow's self-sacrifice that won Christ's approval (Mark 12: 43). We never know how much selfishness there may be mingled with our giving until we have made the gift sufficiently large to make us feel the keenness of the sacrifice.

When selfishness has gone out of the heart God can come in, and He is the one golden value of all ages. One who has Him in the heart is sure of treasure in heaven. An aged Christian, whose worldly goods were very few, once wisely said, "What I have saved I have lost, but what I have given away I have saved."

S. J. C.

HEAD LIGHTS.

I.

(Recently J. H. Wolfe, of Nebraska, has been writing a series of articles for the *Morning Star*, under the name of "Head Lights," and as these touch pertinently young people's work in all its phases, we propose reproducing them, week by week, for the benefit of our readers, with due acknowledgments.—P. Com.)

THE CONSECRATION MEETING.

Does this mean to us all that the word implies—or simply an evening named "consecration," when we are present to simply read a Scripture verse, and that too many times without rising?

First of all, there must be a thor-

ough preparation by every one—leader and all—before going to that meeting. A getting fully right with God. Quenching the thirst at the Living Fountain. A looking into the face of the Father, and a quiet talk with Him, so that we may be on "speaking terms" with the best friend we have. Then we are ready for the meeting, both to contribute something and to get good. We thus are able to bring something, and to lay it on the altar of sacrifice for God; to consecrate our hearts, faith, talents (received since the last consecration meeting), song, testimonies—our all. With such a preparation and coming, the Spirit will have ample freedom. Such consecration. God can honor and bless. We can go away feeling that "it was good for us to be there." The meeting will no longer be simply a routine of calling the names, the possessors, if they happen to be present, responding with a verse of Scripture, or the same few words given over and over again, but a speaking forth from a full heart, bubbling over with the pure water of life. Quench not the Spirit. Refuse not obedience to his monitions. If he says "Pray," do not refuse. If it is "Go," say with a glad heart, "Here am I, send me." If it is "Give," do it gladly. Pray much for these consecration meetings.

GOOD PRAYER MEETINGS!

We can have them if every member keeps—if you keep—the following facts in view:

A good meeting is the result of earnest prayer and obedient lives.

God does not put his word into empty heads. If you want him to give you a message for the meeting, think hard upon the topic.

It is the broken speech that breaks hard hearts; "Be willing to break down for Christ."

In preparing for the meeting:

First, begin at least a week ahead.

Second, study the Bible passage and daily readings.

Third, ask God to enlighten your eyes.

Fourth, get help from commentaries on the subject.

Fifth, write out what you have to say that you may not talk too long.

Sixth, throw away what you have written, and speak from the heart.

Seventh, take no thought for men's approval, but only for Christ's.

OUR OWN POOR WAY.

Many ways in life are uncertain, but one way in life is absolutely sure,—our own way, and the end of it is misery. Having one's own way in life is like taking one's own way in an unknown wilderness,—there is nothing possible but disaster. There is no place where the old word is more true:

"Dame Nature keeps the eternal school,
And grows keen twigs to flog the fool."

George Eliot says in *Middlemarch*: "The mistakes we mortals make when we have our own way might fairly raise some wonder that we are so fond of it." The things we were very sick for, we have often gotten very sick of! Experience and wisdom are continually turning unto the Lord and saying, "Show me thy way." They cry with the Psalmist, "Teach me, O Jehovah, the way of thy statutes;

and I shall keep it unto the end." God grant that we may not have to learn this lesson by bitter experience; but God grant, too, that we may learn this lesson, even if it have to be by bitter experience.—S. S. Times.

AN ACCUSER SILENCED.

Two fellow-travellers were seated together in a railway carriage engaged in earnest conversation. It was of a religious nature, and one of them, a skeptic, was evidently seeking to excuse his skepticism by expatiating on the various evil which afflict Christendom. He was detailing, with manifest pleasure, the hypocrisy and the craft and the covetousness and the divisions found in the professing church, and then he pointed to some of the leaders as the most markedly corrupt of the whole.

In front of them sat a Christian who was compelled to hear all this. Had he felt the accusations to be false he might have suffered them all, as a part of the hatred of the world bears toward Christ, and been truly happy in so suffering; but he knew them to be true—too true to be concealed from the most charitable mind, so all he could do was to bow his head and bear the deserved reproach.

Soon, however, the accuser, anxious to extend the circle of his audience, addressed this fellow-passenger in front of him.

"I see you are quick to detect evil," answered the Christian, "and you read character pretty well. You have been uncovering here the abominable things which have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. You have spared none, but given all a good measure. Now, I am a Christian, and I love the Lord Jesus and his people. Not a word shall I offer in defense, but I here solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Christ himself."

The skeptic was surprised. He seemed almost frightened, and sheepishly replied: "Well, no; I couldn't find fault with him. He was perfect."

"Just so," said the Christian, "and therefore was my heart attracted to Him; and the more I looked at Him the more I found I wasn't like Him at all, but only a poor, sinful, guilty man. But tell me yourself if I hadn't a right to be happy and to love Him when I found out that He had died for me? Ever since then I truly love Him, and all the evil which professed followers of His may do, cannot to turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what he has done, and not on what they are doing.—*Horatius Bonar.*

AN ABUSED WORD.

Self-sacrifice is a plain word, which it ought not to be possible to pervert or misunderstand. Nevertheless, the mistake is often made applying it to an effort to exalt and cultivate one's own soul—which is but a subtle form of selfishness, after all. A well-known nurse, in a book on hospital experiences, tells of her troubles in training various "probationers," and says emphatically:

"Some had a most exalted idea of leading a life of self-sacrifice, and so took up nursing, and these were almost too heavy a burden for any unfortunate sister to endure. I used to give vent to my feelings by saying: "Well, may I ever be preserved

A MAN CAN'T swim in shackles. It isn't a question of his winning a race, but a question of being able only to keep afloat. The man who is suffering from malnutrition is like the fettered swimmer. His stomach and its allied organs of digestion and nutrition are diseased. It is not a question with him of winning in the race for business but of simply keeping up under any circumstances.

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