

HOW WE MAY WORK WITH GOD.

A joyful thing it is to help God to do his great work in the world, for this is high and holy duty. God is always at work. When on the seventh day he rested from all the work which he had created and made, he entered on labors in which he works as he rests, and rests as he works. But in these he needs our help. The branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine, and the vine cannot yield her ruddy clusters apart from the branch. Let us consider some cases in which we may work with God.

God is eager to feed the teeming children of men, but he needs our co-operation in preparing the soil, sowing the seed and garnering the harvest.

He desires to clothe the nations and tribes of these northern climes, and with that intent prepares the wool on the sheep, the leather of the horse's skin, the silk and the cotton, the alpaca and the eiderdown; but he needs our co-operation to shear the sheep, tan the skin, wind the silk and spin the cotton, and presently the swift fingers to do what Eve did with the fig-leaves.

God desires to house man who has no power of weaving nests like the birds, or burrowing holes like the foxes. For this purpose he has made clay for bricks, stone in quarries for the walls, slates for roofs, wood for beams and rafters, the silica for glass and mortar for the interjects of the walls. But again he needs our co-operation.

We need not increase our enumeration, but it is impossible to look around our homes, our streets, or our great cities, with their telegraphs and telephones, their tramcars and their railway trains, their motor-cars or their gas-engines, without encountering scores and hundreds of instances in which God and man have wrought together.

What a new complexion this would lend to life, if, as we stepped out from our homes, we could realize that we were going forth, not to make a living, nor to earn our salary or stipend, not to amuse, instruct, or legislate for men, as our primary object, but to discover what God was doing in the world and to give him such help as we could! It may seem a high and impossible idea, but the more one thinks of it, the more it stays upon the mind. We are bidden by the apostle to abide with God in every calling in which we are called. We know that he claimed to be a fellow-worker or co-laborer with God—and why should the significance of such a conception be reserved for the missionary or minister of religion alone?

Nothing so degrades out toil as the constant thought of the pay we shall receive for doing it. If this is liberal, we are apt to be cheerful and deft-handed; if it is meager and stinted, we grumble and move to it as slaves. But if we once realized that our work was with God, how eager, how quick, how strenuous would be our endeavors, that we might not disappoint nor fail him. Since companionship with the great and good is always a joyful thing, it would put a song on our lips if we realized the blessed co-partnership in our toils of God.—*Rev. F. B. Meyer.*

THE MAN WHO CARRIED THE HOD.

It is related that while an admiring group of tourists viewed a magnificent cathedral and remarked concerning its grandeur, a hitherto unobserved individual responded to certain statements in such a manner as to indicate that he had a part in the making of the work which was being so admired. His remarks led others to observe him, and

inquiry was made as to what part he had performed in the worthy work under consideration. The inquiry brought to light the fact that he had carried a hod while the building was in process of construction. Having done this, he considered himself a factor in the result which was being contemplated; and he was right. He was a factor. Not so important a factor, it is true, as many who performed work requiring far greater skill and intelligence, yet he was a factor. Without him, or some other to take his place, the great work could not have been accomplished.

It is thus in all the relationships of human life. Each has his part to perform, and if he performs it well the harmony and beauty of the great result sought will not be impaired. If, upon the other hand, his work go undone, or if it be indifferently done, the result must suffer.

In Christian work and relationships this fact is as operative as elsewhere. In the local church it is faithfulness upon the part of each that brings the best results. Among the officials, if pastors and stewards and trustees and Sunday-school superintendents and Sunday-school teachers and choir and class leader and sexton all do their part well, the most gratifying results will be realized. Of course, these may all do their part, and without the co-operation of the full membership there will not be realized the highest results, but with this capable and faithful leadership, supported by a consistent membership, results amazing unto men and most pleasing unto God may be realized. It is pleasing to contemplate what would result if, in the entire church of Christ upon earth, each one were doing faithfully his or her part. It would be but a little time until the lion and the lamb should lie down together. The fairest pictures painted by the imagination of man cannot quite equal the glories of the conditions which would prevail. We should then have but little cause to sigh for heaven, for heaven would have come to earth.

We grow discouraged when we contemplate such results and think of the state which must be reached in individual life before these grand results can be realized; but that is the important fact to be considered; that individual efficiency and consecration must be reached before this high ideal can be experienced; and it is for the individual that we are responsible. Is our consecration complete? Are we doing our full part? If not, then to that degree, at least, are we responsible.—*Methodist Recorder.*

HOW HE SETTLED THE QUESTION.

An Endeavorer who thought he needed every cent he had to spend for those dependent upon him, used to count whatever he gave them as money given to the Lord; but often it was hard work to decide whether the money thus spent should be counted in that way. So a year ago he gave up trying to straighten it out, and began to reserve one-tenth of his salary for actual evangelistic work—missions, church work, and the like. All his personal gifts were taken from the remaining nine-tenths, and he was satisfied as never before. On the very month of his decision, his salary was lowered, and when he wrote it was still one-tenth below what it used to be; but he was still giving a tenth of the amount of the old salary, and was certain that God would not permit him to want. It had been a hard decision, but a very happy one.—*Exchange.*

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OUR BUCKET.

Faith is the bucket by which a man may draw water out of the wells of salvation, and drink to his heart's content. You may sometimes have stopped a moment at a street fountain and have desired to drink, but you found you could not, for the drinking cup was gone.

The water flowed, but you could not get at it. It was tantalizing to be at the fountain-head, and yet to be thirsty, still in want of a little cup. Now faith is that little cup, which we hold up to the flowing stream of Christ's grace; we fill it, and then we drink and are refreshed. Hence the importance of faith.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

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