

Sincerity.

CELIA ELIAS.

In the ministry of Jesus you will notice he never rebuked any one severely but the hypocrites or insincere professors of religion.

He showed the tenderest compassion toward Mary Magdalene and had no censure for the guilty woman brought to Him for correction, because they were sincere penitents, but he administered nothing to the hypocritical Pharisees but the deepest censure. He declared it would be easier for drundards and harlots to enter the heavenly kingdom than they, but they should receive "greater damnation."

In Christ's time as well as today the hypocrites "shut up the kingdom against men." Every Christian worker can testify that the greatest hindrance in reaching the unsaved lies in their lack of confidence in the professed Christians about them.

Insincere and inconsistent church members are still shutting up the kingdom against men. Jesus said to them, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The Bible admonishes us on lines of "simplicity and godly sincerity" and truly it is needed in this age of fraud, but even in this hypocritical age the Lord has a people who are sincere and in whose spirit there is no guile. Hallelujah! Judges, in dealing with criminals, are far more lenient toward those who are honest and frank and acknowledge their guilt. Thus with the Judge of the universe, only sincere hearts find mercy.

David learned that the Lord "desired truth in the inward parts." Nothing will make God's children more courageous and fearless before the world than to keep a spotless record before the Lord. "The Lord weigheth the spirits"—He deals only in heart qualities. Beloved, may we be "sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." Amen.

The Way to Spell Content.

The second President of the United States—John Adams—used to relate the following incident, showing how a wise father conquered a boy's disinclination to study. When I was a boy I used to study Latin grammar, but it was dull, and I hated it. My father was anxious to send me to college, and, therefore, I studied the grammar till I could stand it no longer: and going to my father, I told him that I did not like to study, and asked for some other employment.

My father said, "Well, John, if Latin grammar does not suit you, try ditching—perhaps that will. My meadow yonder needs a ditch, and you may put by Latin and try that."

This seemed a delightful change, and to the meadow I went. But soon I found ditching harder than Latin, and the first forenoon was the longest I ever experienced. That day I ate the bread of labor and I was glad when night came on. That night I made some comparison between Latin grammar and ditching, but said not a word about it.

I dug next forenoon, and wanted to return to Latin at dinner, but it was humiliating and I could not do it. At night toil conquered pride, and though it was one of the severest trials I ever had in my life, I told father that if he choose I would go back to Latin grammar.

He was glad of it, and if I have since gained any distinction, it has been owing to the two days' labor in that ditch.—Selected.

One day a boy was tormenting a kitten. His little sister, with her eyes full of tears, said to him: "O, Philip! don't do 'at; it is Dod's tittlen." The words of the little girl were not lost. It was set on wheels; Philip left off tormenting the kitten, but he could not help thinking of what his sister had said. "God's kitten, God's creature—for he made it," he said to himself; "I never thought of that before." The next day, on his way to school he met one of his companions unmercifully beating a poor, half-starved dog. Philip ran up to him, and before he knew it was using his sister's words, saying, "Don't, don't do that, Ned, it's God's creature."—X.

True repentance consists in the heart being broken for sin, and being broken from sin. Some often repent, yet never reform.—Thornton.

Not Enough Emphasis on the Responsibility of the Pew.

From several sources, statistics show that the increase in church attendance does not keep up with the increase of population, or to express it in plain language, the masses do not go to church. It is said they go right by the doors where the most popular and gifted preachers discourse. The greatest pulpit power fails to draw them.

We think this is the real cause of the failure of the church to attract the masses—they are not depending enough on the power of the pew, but are putting all the responsibility on the minister by paying a good salary and expecting him to attend to the religion of a community while the laity attend to other things.

The laity ought to be just as devoted as the ministry. The world will never be won to God by big sermons or great preaching. Preaching is not the only means God has ordained. Holy living outside of the church on the part of the pew is just as essential. While God has said to a few, "Go preach," he has said to all "Ye are my witnesses." Until there is a religion that shows its samples every day in the street, the workshop, the farm the halls of trade, politics, the kitchen and parlor, this world will refuse to be attracted to the house of God by eloquent preaching. People may sneer at us for insisting constantly on holiness, but this is the only thing that can make the church attractive to the world, for the world demands a holy life in the church of Christ, and unless we can show them something besides pulpit power the multitudes will still go unchurched.—Sel.

What it Means.

A little girl was pouring over her lesson leaf with a puzzled face. What does this mean, father?" she asked at last—"Give me thine heart."

After a brief silence Mr. Gordon said: "I will try to explain these words to you very soon, dear, meanwhile you have a purse, I think, have you not? Will you give it to me?"

Unhesitatingly the child produced a purse which contained just two pence half penny, a great treasure in her estimation.

A day or two after this incident, Mr. Gordon called Margaret to him, and said: "My dear, did you not give me your purse the other day?"

"Yes, father."

"And why do you think I wanted it?" "I think, perhaps," said the little girl smiling, "that you meant to put something into it."

"That is just what I have done," said her father, laying his hand on her curly head. "And does my little girl see that when God asks us to give our hearts to His keeping it is because He wants to put something into them? We are empty and poor, having nothing good of our own. Christ wants to make us happy, and holy too, and He only can make us rich in goodness and in love and in all that is most precious and beautiful. We may always trust Him when he asks us to give up anything to Him: it is only that He may restore it to us enriched a thousandfold."—Ex.

Shut Thy Door.

Souls often grow lonely in a crowd, and starve in the midst of temples, worshippers and ordinances. God would have us alone with Him sometimes. Coming to Church is not coming to Christ. "Enter into thy closet and shut the door." Shut out nonsense, business care and pleasure. Shut out flatteries and frowns. Shut out strangers and acquaintances. Shut out friends and foes. Shut out this world, and open the windows that look out upon the next.

Give the mind rest. Give the eye quiet. Give the tongue silence. Give the heart meditation. Give the soul communion with God; look up, there are blessings waiting for you. Listen; God speaks in His still small voice. Ask; God waits to hear. See that no shade of sin hides from your sight the Heavenly Father's face.

Settle the question of peace, pardon and duty in secret before the Lord; then bring everything that concerns your heart and life, for time or for eternity, and lay it before the mercy seat. "In

everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Sel.

The Secret Chain.

A hunter in the Alleghenies one day shot a large bald eagle. The bird measured seven feet two inches across the wings. When the sportsman went to examine his prize, he was astonished to find one of the eagle's claws held firmly in a powerful steel trap, to which was attached a steel chain five feet long. Trap and chain had many marks of vicious blows from the eagle's bill, showing how he had vainly endeavored to free himself from them. While they had not been heavy enough to prevent his flying, the hunter believed that they so impeded and wearied him as to be the cause of bringing the great bird within the reach of his rifle.

Many a young man and woman, with large capabilities and bright prospects, have been brought within reach of the guns of the enemy by some chain which has held them down. It may be the chain of passion, appetite, indifference to high purposes, impatience, instability or what not—why be held down by a chain, when a release is promised?—Selected.

Examine Yourself.

Reader, what do you joy in? Is it the theatre, dance, race or wine cup? Is it fashionable dress, ice cream suppers and entertainments of various kinds, or do you really joy in the God of your salvation? When Jesus was on earth He went about doing good, forgiving sins and healing the sick. He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. On the Sabbath He went into the synagogue, as was his custom, and read.

Friend, do you love to spend much time in secret, in sweet communion with our Lord? Do you love to read the Word of God? Do you joy in visiting the sick and pointing them to the great Physician? Do you love to administer to those who are hungry and thirsty, naked and in prison? Do you take pleasure in pointing souls to the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world?"

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?"—Josephine Dupont.

Cleansed for Service.

"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me." Several years ago I was in a hospital in Richmond, Va., to be present at an operation to be performed on a little son of a friend of mine. The little fellow had been prepared, ready for the surgeon. I stood beside him during a short wait before he was wheeled into the operating room. He needed some little attention, and I reached forth my hand to render it, when a warning gesture from the physician stopped me. My hands had not been treated with an anti-septic wash. I had not been properly cleansed and purified to render this service. And so those who would render acceptable service unto God must have clean hands and pure hearts. Let us pray the prayer of the Psalmist, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."—S. S. Times.

[Yes, but the Psalmist wanted to be cleansed from sin, service or no service.—Ed.]

Hiding God's Word.

Once a Bible was baked in a loaf of bread. That was at far-away Austria. Some wicked men came into the house to find the Bible and burn it, but the woman who owned it was just going to bake bread; so she rolled up her Bible in a big loaf and put it in the oven. When the men went away, she took out the loaf, and the Bible, was not hurt a bit. That was a good place to hide a Bible, wasn't it. But I'll tell you a still better. David knew of the place when he said, "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart."—Sel.

The Guardian Angel.

Henry A. Ashmead.

Alone tho I seem to stand,  
Far off of sight of land,  
Foes round on every hand.  
Taunting and jeering,  
Under his sheltering wing,  
(Sent by the Heavenly King)  
Ne'er will my faith grow dim  
While he is steering.

Loud tho the thunder crash,  
Vivid tho the lightning flash,  
Swiftly the current dash,  
Hell's forces assemble;  
Is not my guardian near?  
Bidding me feel no fear  
And while his voice I hear  
Why should I tremble?

Clad in his robes of white,  
Grasping his sword of might,  
Holding his buckler bright,  
With which to guard me  
Unseen by mortal sight,  
Spirit of wondrous light  
Why should I fear the night  
When thou art near me?

Then when my race is run,  
And work on earth is done,  
He to my side will come  
To set me free.  
Sent from on High to guide,  
He will not leave my side,  
Until on the other side,  
Safely I'll be.

A Little Heroine.

Nannie dear, I want you to hem those napkins this afternoon, without fail. Can I trust you to do it? I must go out for the whole afternoon, and can not remind you of them," said Mrs. Barton to her little girl.

"Yes, mother dear, I will; you can trust me," answered Nannie.

Now Nannie did not like to hem napkins any better than you, but she went at once to her work-basket, took out her needles, thread and thimble, and began work. Pretty soon she heard the sound of music. It came near and at last it sounded right in front of the house. She dropped her sewing to run to the window, and then she stopped.

"No, I promised mother, and she trusted me," said Nannie to herself, and she sat down again, and went to sewing. Soon the door burst open, and in rushed several little girls.

"Nannie, Nannie, where are you? There's a monkey out here, and a trained dog, and they're playing lovely tricks. Come on!"

I can't, I promised mother and she trusted me."

They coaxed and scolded, but all to no purpose; so they left her.

Just as she finished the last napkin, her mother came in. "My dear little heroine, I know you," she said as she kissed Nannie.

"Why, mother, I didn't save anybody's life, nor do anything brave; I only kept my promise," answered Nannie, wondering.

"It is sometimes harder to keep a promise and do one's duty than to save a life. You did a brave, noble thing and I thank God for you, my dear," said Mrs. Barton.—A. P.

Life is too short to wait until some great thing can be done. Little deeds of kindness, little acts of charity done day by day as we go along through life, are far more important than one single deed, however great.—Reformed Church Messenger.

"Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," says the Scripture; not liberty for us to do as we please, but liberty for God to do as he pleases in us.—A. J. Gordon.

They who object to religious joy in other people certainly have but little joy in their own religion and hence have a very poor kind of religion."—Sel.

Life is continually weighing us in sensitive scales, and telling every one of us precisely what his real weight, to the last grain of dust.—Sames Russell Lowell

The habit of viewing things cheerfully, and of thinking about life hopefully, may be made to grow up in us like any other habit.—Smiles.

I do not myself believe there is any misfortune. What men call such is merely the shadowside of a good.—George MacDonald.

I am always in haste, but never in a hurry; leisure and I have long taken leave of each other.—J. Wesley.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Ruby's Old Red Dress.

"Come, Ruby," said Mrs. Ward to her little daughter. "The rain last night ripened the blackberries on Lone Pine Hill, and I want you and Roy to gather as many of them as you can."

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Ruby, dancing round. "Where's my sunbonnet and a basket?"

"You'll have to take more than one basket," said her mother from the pantry. "It's going to be a pretty good day's work to fill all the things I shall give you. Now, you run and change your dress—put on that old red one."

"Why do I have to change my dress?" asked Ruby. "That old red thing is ragged, and besides it's too short."

"Well, what if it is!" answered her mother. "It's good enough to pick berries in. Run along now, and do as mother tells you. You won't be ready by the time Roy is, and I want you to hurry so as to cross the track before the eight o'clock passenger train comes along."

"All aboard!" shouted Roy, as he rattled up with his little express wagon. His mother gave him the baskets and pails, and went to look after Ruby, who stood pouting by the bedroom window.

"Why, Ruby Ward!" said her mother, "do you want your brother to go alone to pick berries?"

"No, mamma," wailed Ruby, tugging at her buttons. Mamma pinned the curly brown hair into a "knob" on top of her little girl's head, gave her a water proof cape in case it should rain, and some old stocking-legs to keep the fat little arms from sunburn and scratches.

At last they were ready, and so eager were they that they ran nearly all the way up a hill, and then after a short rest Roy proposed that they coast down.

Basket and pails were tied fast to the wagon, and, with Roy as steersman they fairly flew down the slope and across the track at the base of old Lone Pine, where the hugh tree that had given the place its name lay prostrate, shattered by lightning.

A large bowlder, dislodged by the fallen tree, had ploughed its way down the hillside and lay across the track.

"I believe that loud clap of thunder we heard last night busted the old pine," said Roy. Then he exclaimed, listening: "There's the whistle for Burnham's Station. In ten minutes the train will come down here and go smash."

The boy knelt beside the bowlder, and squinted over it at the track beyond.

"No, sir, Ruby!" he exclaimed, "the engineer can't ever see this in time to stop 'er. O Ruby, your dress!" he cried. And seizing the garment in both hands he fairly tore it from his astonished sister and was off with it, leaving her standing with bare neck and arms. Ruby drew the wagon into the shade of some roadside bushes, put on the cape, and scrambled up to a point from which she could see her brother and the advancing train.

Now she could see the black smoke, now the engine, and now it was on the down grade; and there was Roy, bravely waving his tattered signal.

Ruby's heart beat wildly as the great black thing drew near, and came to a halt just as it reached Lone Pine curve. How the engineer thanked Roy again and again! And how the passengers cheered when they saw the boy!

The track was soon cleared, and the train, after cautiously feeling its way over the damaged places, sped on and away.

It was not so easy, after this excitement, for the two children to settle down to steady work, but they did work and so well that they returned in time for supper with every dish full.

The story of their adventure had gone before them, so that they missed the joy of its first telling; but their proud family gave them a warm greeting. Mother had some specially nice teacakes for supper, while father beamed down upon his little son, and asked him if he was not afraid when the engine came down at him.

"Fraid! No, sir," said Roy. "Did the engineer think I acted 'fraid'?" "No," answered his father, smiling; "he said you seemed quite cool."

"Anyway," remarked Ruby, between mouthfuls, "I'm glad I minded mamma, and wore my old red dress."—Juliet O. Carlton, in Sunday School Times.