

## PERFECT YET PRESSING.

C. W. Ruth.

In Philippians, third chapter, and fourteenth verse, Paul says, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and then says in the very next verse, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." While he included himself with such "as be perfect," doubtless referring to the perfection of love, he is still on the stretch for more. While he claims Christian perfection he is still pressing forward, and "reaching forth unto those things which are before."

Perhaps the greatest danger of all Christians is that of resting in a past experience and taking for granted, that because of some glorious experience and marvelous manifestations of the Spirit in the past we are right, thus settling down in a sort of complacent, self-satisfied condition. This is the beginning and explanation of much of the back-sliding of the day. One could not well backslide while pressing forward.

We need ever to remember that immobility is inconsistent with our being, either mentally, physically or spiritually: we must advance or retrograde; we will increase or decrease; we cannot stand still; and especially is this true in Christian life. In order to retain a clear and satisfactory heart experience there must be continual advance. It would prove fatal to regard any experience, however glorious, as a finality. Whatever the experience of the past, it should be regarded as preparatory to something better; as a stepping stone to higher altitudes of grace.

While one cannot grow into sanctification any more than one could grow into justification, seeing in either case it is a divine act—an act of God, divinely wrought—it is nevertheless true that after the heart has been fully cleansed from all sin, and been made holy, there is limitless and endless growth in grace, and continual advance in the deep things of God. Indeed, this is the condition and experience where the obstacles to growth have been removed, and progress may now be made by leaps and bounds.

Men frequently inquire, "If you were perfect, how could you grow?" We may illustrate by two children: One is deformed and diseased, while the other is perfectly formed and in perfect health; which of these two children would grow most rapidly? Of course every one would say the one enjoying perfect health. We would answer, What perfect health is to the body, Christian perfection is to the soul; sin is a malady, a disease of the soul; wholeness, spiritual soundness, perfect soul health. A child may be just as perfectly formed and enjoy as perfect health as does an adult, and yet continue to grow. But we must continually distinguish between growing in grace and growing into grace. As we cannot grow into pardon, no more can we grow into purity. A child can never grow clean.

But says one, "Suppose the child has grown to manhood, and so reached his full stature, how could such an one continue to grow?" Of course such an one could not continue to grow taller physically; and yet such an one would continue to grow in strength, in knowledge and in usefulness; while he may not have more avoirdupois, nor be larger physically, he nevertheless becomes a larger man as the years go by. Even so, after a heart has once been cleansed from all sin and perfected in love, it is perfect as to quality and therefore cannot be made more pure, yet such an one may increase in spiritual power and knowledge and usefulness, and continually receive more pure love in his pure heart, and so "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

But it seems to me that the language of Paul denotes even more than would be implied by the term growth. He

says, "I PRESS toward the mark." This denotes intensity; he is giving particular attention, and diligence, applying himself, and with consecration and concentration putting forth real effort to reach a certain goal. He doubtless has in mind the Olympian games and race-course, where every nerve and every energy is bent on winning the prize. There is a sense in which one may grow without much effort, but Paul has evidently caught a glimpse of some mountain peaks of Christian experience he has not yet attained, though he had obtained Christian perfection, and as though he were on the race-course, he presses forward for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This is evidently the lack and the need of many of our holy people today; instead of acting as though we lead all, we need to redouble our diligence, buckle the armor on a little tighter, and "press toward the mark for the prize."

What was this "prize" for which he made such strenuous effort? The context would imply that it was none other than a martyr's crown. Surely this would suggest to us a greater self-denial, self-abandonment, and self-sacrifice than many of us have yet known. Not only could he say, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ," but also said, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself." Acts 20:24.

As one walks among the mountain peaks pointed out by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, such as, "Be filled with the Spirit," 5:18; "The fullness of Christ," 4:13; "Filled with all the fullness of God," 3:19; "Sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," 1:13; "A perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," 4:13; "The unsearchable riches of Christ," 3:8; "Holy and without blame," 1:4; and remember that in addition to all these, He is still "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," 3:20, surely one must exclaim as did Joshua, after he had been in Canaan a number of years, and was old and stricken in years, "These remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." Josh. 13:1.—Christian Witness.

## LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH.

We often hear exhortations to be loyal to the church. And if one does not fall in with and endorse everything that is done by the church he is called disloyal. Loyalty is a term that evidently needs defining. The church is an organization for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. This is the end of its existence and unless it accomplishes this, it has no call to exist. Church history shows that very many times the visible church has been the greatest obstacle to the progress of the Kingdom of God.

We once heard a bishop say that the tendency of all great churches has always been towards corruption. As fervid piety has begun to abate, unspiritual men have obtained possession of the government of the church. Only that is true loyalty which makes the church spiritual. If pirates seize the ship and attempt to turn it into other channels and throw overboard the cargo, it is loyalty to protest and to prevent it if possible. If unspiritual men desire to throw overboard the doctrines and experiences of the church it is our duty as loyal members to protest and to contend against it. Loyalty to them would be disloyalty to the church. Anything that makes the church less spiritual or less effective in getting men saved ought to be exposed and resisted. It is a false loyalty that sits down and allows the military supplies and munitions of war to fall into the hands of the enemy. It is a false loyalty that approves of such a course. It is a false loyalty of Jesus that will stand in the way of spiritual triumphs.

It seems to be impossible for some people to understand how any one can stand in defense of the truth and be loyal to the church. We never yet heard of a holiness fighter exerting himself to bring the church up higher. We never heard of such an opposer weeping in secret or in public because the church was falling in spiritual power and failing to save men. But we have known many who have wept and prayed before God for the welfare of Zion, as they saw it departing from what Mr. Wesley calls "The Methodist testimony." We believe in that kind of loyalty that really loves the church and grieves when the banner trails in the dust. Holiness professors as a rule love the church. You will find them in the most important work—the spiritual work. They can be counted on at the prayer meeting and class meeting. They will not neglect the special revival services in order to attend gatherings for pleasure. They put the spiritual interests of the church first and reject anything that calls the attention of the church away from spiritual things. In this they are helping the church fulfill its mission, and only this is loyalty to the church. Loyalty to Jesus is the only true church loyalty. But loyalty to ecclesiasticism and mere denominationalism is often mistaken for loyalty to the church. The professors of holiness want to see all the church spiritual. They desire no more new church organizations. They believe there is church machinery enough now to save the world. What they are after is power in the machinery. They will stay in the church and be loyal to Jesus as the best way of being loyal to the church, if permitted.—Christian Witness.

## FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

Do not make a bugbear of company. Treat your chance guest as you would be treated in like emergency. The "dish of welcome" is better than the most elaborate menu without it, and an embarrassed hostess seldom makes a satisfied guest. One is not supposed to visit you for the sake of the food set before her. Give the best you have, cordially, cheerfully, and if your guest is worth the trouble, she will appreciate the situation.

"A feast or a famine" describes some housekeeping failures; too much of one thing with too little of another; and this is generally due to the lack of harmony between the views of the one who pays the bills. A certain amount should be appropriated for table expenses, be it little or much, and by this means, the housewife will always know how to proportion her buying.

During the hot months try all the labor-saving appliances you can manage. Try to get the heaviest cooking done early in the morning, arrange matters so that the house will not have to be heated up for the dinner preparation, whether the dinner is at twelve or at six. Many things are just as good cold or reheated as though just out of the oven, and these can be prepared in the cool of the morning. Do not have pies or puddings, if you can have fresh fruits. Salads can, in many instances, take the place of the accustomed meats, and it would be better for both the health and the pocketbook to ignore the butcher.

For hot weather drinks there is nothing better than those made of cold water and fruit juices. Acid fruit juices are best with which to quench thirst. Fruit punches are easily made, if the housewife remembers to bottle plenty of fruit juices when canning the fruits.—Selected.

Never, never wait for post-mortem praise. Speak the kind words which love prompts, and remember that words of loving kindness are the best possible tonic which can be given, even to the happiest of the mortals.—Kate Tannatt Woods.

## EFFECTIVE PREACHING.

By I. F. Baker.

The prophets used to say, "The burden of the Lord." Much of the preaching of the present day seems to have lost the burden of a message. Eloquence is carefully studied, with rhetoric and well constructed sentences. A very carefully adjusted ministerial dress, with polished manners, is also important. But the burden of the message is not manifest. It is hardly possible for us to impress others when we are not seriously impressed ourselves.

When a preacher goes before his people weighed with his subject so that he groans in his spirit as a "cart under sheaves," he is sure to impress others. One who was noted for his power to impress and win men, was at one time late at the time appointed for services to commence. Some one was sent to see what delayed him. As he came near his study he heard talking. He listened and caught the words "I cannot go unless you go with me." Presently he appeared before his people, and the power that attended the service was wonderful. Paul said at one time, "I would know their power." What is needed to-day is power that moves towards God.

Divine work needs divine power. Nothing can change the heart of sinful men but God's power. Our equipment may be ever so complete, as relates to education, but if lacking the divine unction our work is a failure. I feel sure that the tendency of these times is to cultivate the intellectual at the expense of the spiritual; hence we have so much of ineffectual preaching.

I would not advocate the emotional, simply to stir the emotions, but when God breaks up the heart of the preacher with tenderness, others will be melted. It takes moisture to cause seed to sprout.

I heard one of our old preachers say—who is now living—that in his early ministry he used to weep very much. He thought it a weakness, and asked allow loyalty to a mere ecclesiastic the Lord to help him overcome it, and for thirteen years he could not shed a tear. He came to feel that he would give anything if he could weep.

It has been said it is hard to get tears through a manuscript. Our work as preachers is not to show our ability, but to rescue men from death; to build men and women into Jesus Christ. Nothing qualifies a preacher as well as the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Many who have gone the rounds of the schools need to take a post-graduate course with God.—World's Crisis.

## MINISTERIAL EFFICIENCY AND SUFFICIENCY.

A minister of the gospel is God's ambassador, the representative of Jesus Christ as his messenger to the Christian Church as a corporate body. He represents a royal King, the interests of a royal kingdom, and he has a royal message to deliver. It takes humanity and divinity to constitute an individual an efficient and a sufficient minister; perhaps we had better express it, that it takes a man with the inbreathing and empowering of divine light, divine power, divine unction, divine inspiration to constitute an acceptable successful ambassador. Efficiency embodies human endowments and acquirements, human qualifications—of birth, of education, of discipline and persistent toil and effort. Sufficiency embraces divine endowments and empowering. St. Paul asks the pertinent and heart-searching question: Who is sufficient for these things?—Evangelical Messenger.

There is no excuse for not having a thankful heart. It costs nothing to be grateful.

How much are you worth to God?

## CAMP MEETING DOS AED DON'TS.

Come to camp meeting expecting to do something. Don't come as a shirk. Do exalt Jesus in all your words and acts, for He has said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me."

Expect to preach and do your best to make the meeting a success, but don't try to take part in every service. Give a chance for a variety.

Do preach the Bible. There are many great branches of learning, but you would probably get stuck if you tried to lecture on any of them.

Do stick to the Bible and salvation, for in that you should be proficient. There are many educated men ignorant as a Hottentot of the word of God so be a specialist.

Don't testify, or pray, or talk in every meeting, or a half of them. A meeting rider is a meeting hinderer.

Do make your sermons reasonably short. If you are filled with your messages you can make enough points in half an hour to fill the average mind; what more is said runs over and is wasted.

Don't make your talks long just because you have no point to make. Do quit and let some one else try.

Do come to camp meeting filled with the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit does not have His way with us, to the extent of the hinderance there will be a failure.

Do abide in your calling and use the gift you have; don't attempt to be brilliant in some other line.

Do up all the praying you can before you get to the camp meeting, and in your tent afterwards. Don't try to catch up by long prayers in public.

Do have grace enough to listen as well as talk. You might learn something by listening.

Don't forget that you will be in somebody's way if you talk in every meeting; and even if you say some good things people will get tired of you.

How many hours have you prayed for the salvation of souls at the coming camp meeting? Not many? Well, do get at it.

Don't come to camp meeting with the idea of re-modeling the running gear. It may be an old-time machine, but if so it's past fixing. Just help fire it up and get all the service and speed out of it you can; or if you are not content to do that it would be cheaper and less work to find one modern and up to date, and ride in it. Do come to work for the salvation of souls.—The Pentecost.

"It is remarkable that, notwithstanding all the efforts to destroy the Word of God, it liveth and abideth forever. Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.' Nearly 3,000,000 Bibles were printed and circulated last year. Joseph Cook asks: 'Do you know a book that you are willing to put under your head for a pillow when you lie dying? Very well; this is the book you want to study while you are living. There is but one such book in the world.'"

The first sin was committed through giving up to the pleasures of taste and sight and it was followed by such awful retribution that it should be a warning to the whole human race. Most of our trouble and disease still comes through the lust of the eye and an un-governed appetite.—Vanguard.

A preacher who has to join a worldly organization to help his influence among the ungodly, shows that he has a very feeble character. A holy man can trust the Holy Spirit to give him all the influence he needs as a preacher of Jesus Christ.—Selected.

"The country that has had no great men, occupies little room in history."