

Sunday Reading

Evened by Christ.

One who helps a child helps humanity with a distinctness, with an immediateness, which no other help, given to human creatures in any other stage of their human life, can possibly give again.

—[Phillips Brooks.]

Some things in this world
Seem tangled and mixed,
The threads of a skein
All knotted betwixt;
And how to unravel them
Who can pretend?
Yet all will be evened
By Christ in the end.

A glorified angel
May sleep in that child—
The girl that is barefoot,
Disheveled and wild.
Oh, for a mother
This lambkin to tend!
But, all will be evened
By Christ in the end.

A hero immortal
To rank with the great
May hide in that arab
Who plays at your gate.
O men! to the rescue,
Like Christ condescend;
Know—all will be evened
By Him in the end.

—[New York Evangelist.]

Jesus in the Temple.

The story of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years of age is one of marvelous interest for many reasons, but chiefly so because it shows how at this early age the tide of his life was sweeping Godward with irresistible power. Only once does the sacred historian draw aside the curtain and reveal to us one scene from those long and silent years which lie between babyhood and manhood.

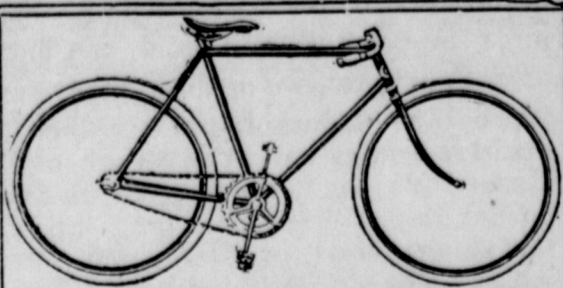
We often wish we knew more about this period, but perhaps this is enough. It takes but two points to determine the direction of a line—the starting point and one point further on. Given a point anywhere on earth, and a second point directly north of it, and the straight line beginning in the first and running through the second will finally reach the North Pole. A law almost as definite controls human life. Given the babyhood and some typical representative scene in the life of the boy or of the girl, and we may with certainty, almost, predict the life of the man or the woman. Given a babyhood almost anywhere on earth, and a brave, true, earnest boyhood, and the next point will in all probability be a noble manhood.

Given the babyhood of Jesus as the first point, and that scene in the Temple at twelve as the second, even though the line of his life disappears for eighteen years, we might almost have expected to find him at manhood where he finally reappears. A pure babyhood, a noble, earnest boyhood, an exalted, glorious, divine manhood, an eternal, uplifting, conquering influence and destiny upon earth and in heaven, these are natural steps in the history of Jesus. Are they not steps and may they not be followed in the lives of all?

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? That question, asked of his mother in the Temple, in the presence of the doctors, revealed the one great fact that, boy though he was, the outlines of his great mission to humanity were already beginning to take shape about him. There must be the long, silent, years of thought and study and communion with God, possibly, before these outlines grew clear and distinct before the vision of his soul; but one thought had taken absolute possession of him even at this early age, and this was that he had come into this world for some great purpose, and that all the energies of his being must bend to the accomplishment of that work which his Father had sent him to do.

And was not Christ our example? If he must be about his Father's business, must not we? Is it not time that we should do this? Humanly speaking, Christ's preparation for his life work began more than seventy generations back of his birth. Did not he who was the 'Son of Man' owe something to his human ancestry? Though the divine ancestry on his Father's side joins the human ancestry on his mother's side, and thus the human and the divine complete one great circle. Is there not something suggestive and even sublime in that table of Christ's human genealogy closing in those words of solemn import, 'which was the son of Adam which was the son of God'?

I can imagine it every one of the human



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race had been as true to the light that was within them as were the individuals of that royal line through which the lineage of Jesus is traced back to Adam and back to God, there might have been when he came into the world a race of animated, Spirit filled ones, 'children of God' indeed.

And then, too, this thought of the possible influence upon the life of Jesus of the long line of noble souls which lay back of him, suggests our own responsibility to those who are to follow us. We instinctively turn our thoughts toward our own responsibility to the future. We shall die, but our thoughts and deeds and aspirations shall live forever. Every time we think one low thought, every time we perform one selfish deed, every time we cherish one unworthy aim, we lay a burden upon the unnumbered millions yet to be. Every time we think or speak or act nobly, we put every coming generation under obligation to us and set in motion forces which will make human hearts thrill with joy to the remotest eternities.

Specifically the training of Jesus began from the day of his birth. As one point ever so near another point gives eterna direction to the line uniting the two, so the first day of life on earth begins the direction of an immortal soul. Start a child Godward from the moment of birth and continue the progress in the same direction, and who shall dare to tell how irresistibly the current may be moving at twelve years of age, or how great and grand a human life may be at thirty, forty or fifty years? What possibilities might be developed, what powers might be enlarged, what visions of glorious, eternal destiny might be revealed, if we were only true all the time!

At the age when we think our boys and girls should be interested in frivolities and follies and nonsense, at the age when we are inclined to think our boys and girls to young to be religious, at the age when we think it natural that there should be nothing definite and clear so far as spiritual things are concerned, Jesus had definitely conceived that he must be about his Father's business. For him life meant but one thing—to do God's will.

Every boy and girl ought to manifest the clear dawnings of greatness at the age of twelve. We help to ruin our boys and girls, we help them to grow up into nonentities, into aimless, thoughtless, selfish men and women, by failing to hold up before them in early life some great goal, some exalted ideal and purpose.

We do not know, we cannot know, what the next life has for us; but we do know that this life is a great, high, solemn, sacred trust committed to us by the God of this universe for some great and eternal purpose. It is our duty to discover what that purpose is, and help it on, not defeat it. One life misspent is a blot upon the page of eternity. We ought to teach our boys and girls early in life to ask with all the earnestness of their souls, 'What am I here for? What does God want of me? What is my mission to humanity? What work am I to do which has been waiting for me from the beginning of the world? What great deed will remain undone forever if I fail to do it? What great thought will the world never receive if I fail to think it and speak it?'

I would not eclipse one ray of joyous sunshine from the pathway of childhood, I would not sound one discordant note into the music of innocent laughter; but I would teach them that life is truly great and truly happy only as it is attuned to the high, holy and eternal purposes of God, I would teach them to believe that the only thing worth living for, is to find out what is our Father's business and to do it.

Search the Scriptures.

God himself commands it. It has been given us to be a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our path. It shows us not only how to live rightly here, but also how having walked in the way of his command,

ments here, we may obtain peace and pardon and an inheritance of joy and everlasting life in the heaven beyond. The grand central truth running all through this lesson is that the study of God's Word shows us how to be rid of our sins, and to obtain the favor of God both here and hereafter. There is nothing like God's Word to show the sinfulness of our hearts and lives.

Systematic and Proportionate Giving.

Money is the representative of labor, energy and skill. It is a great power, and when properly used and invested it returns large dividends of stock which may be made useful in helping toward an honorable and honest livelihood. With many, however, its accumulation for selfish purposes alone is the chief end of existence.

The Scriptures place a different value upon money; they teach that we are expected to consecrate some of our dollars to the Lord's service, and the most liberal we are in this requirement, the greater will be our blessings. They do not discourage the getting together of riches, for we find many records, particularly in the Old Testament, of increased prosperity promoted directly by the Lord; they simply insinuate that we are the Lord's Pensioners; that the earth is his, and the fulness thereof, and when we withhold our money entirely, using it for our own benefit and pleasure, or give it sparingly and grudgingly, we are robbing him of his just due.

Many Christians there are blessed with a liberal spirit, who not only bring their tithes to the Lord's storehouse systematically upon the Sabbath as an assurance of their gratitude as the recipients of his bounty, but respond readily to the calls which come from time to time outside the regular weekly offering. These are indeed the cheerful givers whom the Lord loves, for sometimes the addition inroad upon the purse means the denial of some really needful want; yet these conscientious givers yield their individual necessities for the sake of the charity which appeals to their help.

Proportionate giving, as recommended in the "tenth" of the Old Testament, is the rule of other Christians of the present day; a certain sum is set aside from the weekly earnings in strict observance of this method of supporting and assisting the Lord's work, and with this claim obeyed, the responsibility of giving is settled and any requests that might compel a sacrifice, perhaps, or an additional dollar or two, are persistently unheeded or ignored, such realizing or considering that money willing lent to the Lord is returned with interest. "Give and it shall be given unto you" is one of the promises of the Bible, and although this should not be the object of our generosity, we will find upon looking back over life's pathway many memorials of loving reward for what we have rendered unto the Lord. Every one however poor or humble, may give something in behalf of the Gospel. The child's penny, the widow's mite, are not despised nor overlooked by the great searcher of hearts.

Testing the Metal.

Some very interesting tests are being made in connection with the building of a new yacht to defend the American Cup. A number of tests of metal have been made, and it is understood that nickel steel is among those considered. There are many, however, who believe that the new boat will be built of Tobin bronze and will not be a composite craft. The Vigilant was built of Tobin bronze and steel, and the Defender of bronze and aluminum. There was more or less trouble with these boats, owing to the fact that galvanic action between the metals caused corrosion. In view, therefore, of past experiences, many experts think that the new yacht will be built entirely of bronze.

The world has been experimenting on the metal of manhood through all the centuries, and in all civilized lands, by common consent, Christian character is the one metal that will not corrode, and is beyond all criticism. When Nathanael expressed his doubts as to whether any good thing could come out of Nazareth, Philip wisely said to him, "Come and see." He was sure that acquaintance with Jesus would remove all doubt. If we can only get men today to test the metal of Christian character, they will not think of building their ship for life's voyage out of any other.

Finding the way Home.

In Greenland a child is never buried alone; a live dog is placed in the coffin with it, in order to guide the child to the

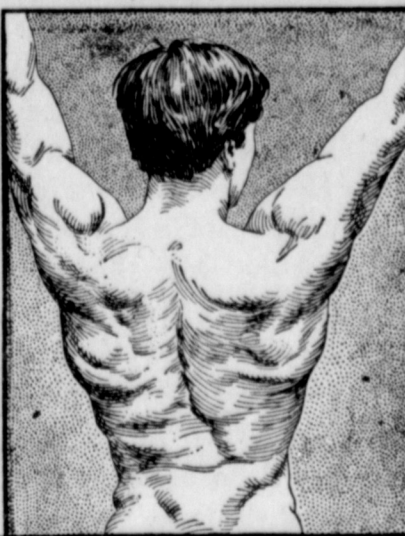
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other world. 'A dog can find its way home anywhere,' the Greenlanders declare. There is something very pathetic about this superstition. We like to see our loved ones at home. The men whom John the Baptist pointed to Christ wished to see where he lived. The hungry hearts somehow longed for a home fellowship with him. The homing instinct is in all of us. Earthly homes get broken up, and if we live to be very old, nearly every one will find the world lonely, but Christ is fitting up a home for every one of his children, where the treasures we have lost on the cost of death are saved up for us, and we shall enjoy them forever.

Seeking in the Darkness for the Light.

A gentleman who is interested in mines in Arizona recently had this experience: He went down the shaft with the superintendent, and went along following him for a time on one of the underground tracks, along which the ore was brought out to the shaft. Finally they came to a point where the superintendent wished to speak to some miners, and left the gentleman to wait for a few minutes. He, not wishing to stand idle, followed the track off on a side course, thinking he could easily return. He wandered along, turning here and there, without fear, until he came to a place where the water dripped down, and a drop of water struck the candle which he held in his hand and put out his light. He felt in his pocket for matches, and found that he had none. The situation now became serious. It was so dark that he could not see his hand before his face. He knew that there were a good many pitfalls, where a misstep might cost him his life. Slowly he felt his way back, but he could not remember the many turns that he had made, and so he wandered for an hour in the darkness, hoping against hope, until finally he caught sight of a dim light, and, on crying out, found that it was the superintendent seeking for him. He says, 'Never did light and brotherly help seem so precious as then.' Men are dimly feeling through the darkness for salvation. Christ is the great Saviour; it is our duty and privilege to follow the example of John the Baptist in pointing them to him.

The Power of the Word.

'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,' said Jesus. By this Word we are born again, 'not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.' Precious Word! With this sword and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Guide, one is fully equipped for the warfare of life, and furnished unto all good work. The Spirit will guide us unto all truth, and so we shall be kept from all error. God the Father having given us a revelation, shall he not also cause us to understand him? The more we study and meditate upon the Word, the more fully will the grace of God be untold to us, and the more shall we love and cherish that Word. The keeping of this law is the true liberty of the soul, the highest end of our being and the truest happiness we are capable of enjoying, because it brings us into harmony with the will of God, and unfolds his hidden treasures. The Bible is both the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation. Many of its truths lie hidden below the surface, and must be diligently sought for. But they are there to be found, and blessed are they who by patient, humble and prayerful searching come upon these treasures! They are truth and wisdom, and their might power is invincible.

As long as Virtue is its own reward it is liable to be spasmodic.

Suggestive Lesson Points.

1. Present good works cannot atone for past failures.
2. The divine law never changes.
3. God is just. He will pay the sinner his just wages.
4. God is gracious. He will bless the humble penitent with pardon.

WEALTH COULDN'T SAVE HIM.

Deadly Kidney Disease had him in its Clutch—South American Kidney Cure Snapped the Cord and Made him Whole Again.

A young man, a son of one of Canada's wealthiest citizens, two years ago contracted kidney disease by taking a cold plunge in the lake when the body was overheated. Specialists could diagnose but could not cure the malady, and when half the globe had been travelled in hope of help and a cure he returned to his home apparently with but a short time to live, but the printed testimony of the cure of a school boy acquaintance attracted him to South American Kidney Cure. He procured it and persisted in its use, and although it was a stubborn case, today he is well and healthy.—Sold by E. C. Brown and all druggists.

Quoits as a Pastime.

There are some games which have never had their boom, and quoits is one of them. Still, as nothing happens but the unexpected, it may be that the time is nearly ripe for quoits to be taken out of its undeserved obscurity, to be exalted to the status of a National game, to have weekly papers named after it and to have columns in the sporting press devoted to the doings of its champions. Stranger things have happened. One cannot imagine that quoits will ever attain such popularity as the bicycle, but the unprejudiced person can see no reason why it should not become as favorite a pastime as golf, which a very few years ago was almost unheard of south of the Tweed.

Quoits is a very fine game, especially in the winter time. It is splendid exercise, and trains the eye and the hand to act together in a way that few other sports can do, for the very essence of it is accuracy of aim at a mark placed below the level of the hand. It has been objected that throwing quoits makes the player lop sided, but after all that is easily remedied, for there is nothing to prevent the player throwing the quoit with his left hand if he so pleases, and such a change would make a variation in the game and also afford an excellent method of handicapping the men of unequal skill.

An Unmusical Poet.

W. S. Gilbert, the librettist, is said to have so little ear for music that he cannot distinguish harmony from discord.

CHILDREN'S COUGHS QUICKLY CURED.

Hard to keep the children from catching cold—will run out of doors not properly wrapped—get wet feet—kick the bed clothes off at night.

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