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REV. E. McLEOD.

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD.

"I only wish I knew," says a quaint and deep-sighted believer, "what the old saints in heaven think of modern spirituality; whether they think spirituality so pleasant, unoffending, moderate, contented, polished, civilized, is so much as safe." But inasmuch as the saints do not tell us what they think, save by that low and inarticulate voice whereby their holy lives and imperishable testimony still vibrate through the air of the Church, what do we think of it ourselves? Do we so much as stop to think? Has not worldliness continued to insinuate itself a considerable way into the very seats of religion? Has it nothing to do with the dressing of the child at the baptism, with the choice of churches, with the furnishing of pews, with the reputation of preachers, with the management of charities, with the manners and conversations of Christians? And is it likely that the power and grace of Christ among his people are to gain anything by further concessions to this worldly spirit? In fact, have we, as Christ's witnesses and friends, any more immediate and pressing work on hand, than to gather up and concentrate our forces of resolution and prayer, our personal and ecclesiastical energies, at just this point—the threatened secularization of our holy things—the tendency to "conform" even the interests of worship and faith to the fashions and standards of this world?

It will be no sufficient defence to say that the world is a very good institution, honoured as the workmanship of God, consecrated by the Saviour's footsteps, and containing on its varied territories a great many noble people and admirable articles. That is an evasive playing upon words. It is one of the shrewdest pieces of satanic suggestion that the "Prince of this world" has used to sophisticate the self-indulgent compromisers between God and man. A recently departed preacher, in a graceful and discriminating discourse, illustrates whatever truth there is in the notion that this world is not to be held in contempt. The forbidden world, as he justly says, is not the world of physical order and beauty, nor the world of God's children, who are in the world, nor the lawful occupations of men in the world. Our age scarcely needs to have this line of demonstration extended or repeated. Let us not waste time and strength in fighting the phantoms of former centuries—as if the troops in Lombardy had turned from the living foe to assail the sculptures of Milan, or latter down the nailed images of old warriors in the palaces and galleries of Pavia. We are not in imminent peril from asceticism. Our people take cold too easily, and are too much afraid of chronic rheumatism for that. We are not even in deadly danger from misanthropy, nor from sloth. The gates where we are to set our watch are those where elegance and taste, wealth and ambition, social competition and superficial accomplishments, and other such silexomies, apply for admission to pass with conscience and devotion about some treacherous mixtures. It needs that we should guard more carefully our seasons of devotion; reserve a longer place for contemplation and self-scrutiny as a preparation for private prayer; strive and entreat for more indifference to those despotisms of dress, expenditure, furniture; deny ourselves more pleasures; dwell more in wholesome and sober retirement; substitute the quiet sanctuaries of the family for showy and heated public places of general company. Nor can very much improvement be expected till professors of religion of both sexes are willing to practise, for Christ's sake, a stricter self-denial; to adopt voluntarily a simpler style of appearance; to forego fine fabrics and luxurious appointments; to educate children into a different estimate of what the world prizes and admires. For this expression, "the world," has, after all, a definite and specific meaning, which is not to be winked out of sight. The apostle John knew it perfectly when he wrote, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." James knew it perfectly when he wrote, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." "If you dance till two in the morning, and go to communion at ten, I do not believe in your abiding sorrow for sin. If you are in the theatre till midnight, I do not credit the compunction of your morning's meditation."

It is this guilty "conformity" which gains over and carries away into the far country so many souls which ought to "shine as lights in the world." The lofty protests of conscience are taken down. The doors of her castle-sanctuary are unbarred. Worldliness leans some people more faithfully from the kingdom of heaven than from the earth. It strikes into the core of character. The business of every disciple is to maintain, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, against all these confounding influences a religious independence, steadfast, immutable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Without this, every added refinement of outside condition is only an embellishment of servitude. The prosperous man then only lays up goods to be consumed, and fastened by them. The master of enterprise becomes a bondsman. He constructs machinery to render himself "independent," but it turns out that he is only chained to his wheel, and must go round with revolutions. He elaborates social elegance only to feel it cramping his limbs, tying his tongue, torturing him with his malices of excess. The subject of the earth is hungry at his own feast. Potent at every little abatement of his comforts, a victim of conformity, he finds that civilization, conveniences, have put their right harness on him, and no emancipator on earth but the spirit of faith in the Lord can make him free. How deep, how real, this misery is! In how many houses around us it is working! A man whose fortune has outgrown his moral sense looks round on his children. He sees their dangers, feels their exposure, dreads their getting enfolded by the very opulence his worldly painstaking has piled together; and, some day or other, he makes to himself the mortifying confession that he ought to have had either a smaller estate or a larger soul.

Sometimes, to disturb this false habit of worldly living,—as has been seen in so many households during the season just past, the hand of bereavement is stretched forth among them, and the earthly parent's sorrow for the loss of the child is made a solemn prophet of God's sorrow for the spiritual death of the soul. It is as if that heavenly Father said, "I have brought them up as children, and they have rebelled against me. Here are worldly mothers; money-making fathers; they have forgotten me. Lo! I will put them—for the love I bear them, and because I cannot bear that they should perish—into the school of sober chastening. They shall learn the meaning of those holy names,—gratitude, obedience, faith, love. The abundance of their joy, the guilelessness that lives on their infant lips and in their early movements, the melody of childhood, all the ecstasies of gladness that the presence of the dear young life awakens,—these have not moved them. They have not paused in their haste and eagerness of pleasure to think whose gift it was. As they have come in at night from their gay excitements, and bent over that beauty, and listened to the soft breathing, they have not remembered that this immortal life was not born altogether of the earth; they have not knelt and prayed heartily that it should be something better than such a poor piece of conformity to the world as they are. They have not been changed and born again themselves. This goodness has not led them to repentance. And now since they love the world better than their Redeemer, I will reach down in pity, and in my own arms, by the touch of sorrow or accident, I will lift the one up, and their affections shall follow. The musical voice which rang through the dwelling, and made them more content with the earth, shall ring from the skies and make them discontented for heaven."

With other discipline, infinitely varied, other hearts are tried, and taught. The conflict goes on. We contend against our peace. How deep-seated and malignant that disorder of conformity must be which requires such searching surgery! Why will we not fall into more tranquil and lowly ways with God? Why will we not repress the eagerness, still the passion, renounce the aggrandizement, cut off the indulgence, which cause us to offend, and so, in the glorious transformation, cease to be conformed to this world?

"Soul! couldst thou, while on earth remaining, have not yet been lifted up, and have the best authority concerning what its character will be. It may be some time before it takes place, but it will certainly occur; and every one of my readers is personally interested in having some acquaintance with it beforehand. The account left of it may be found in the 6th chapter of Revelation: 'And they said, as from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' This is the prayer that will be offered."

"To search and lift up, and hear such another sermon I would go far. O that our pulpits all may be filled by men possessing the spirit of Him, and his mantle fall on the ministry of the gospel throughout the land and world.—*Messenger.*"

will be enough there without you. Let the blessed duty of prayer be your joy here, from day to day. Watch unto it. Persevere in it. In faith and humility carry it on. Let nothing but death stop you. Then, while others pray for the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, you will sing, "Worthy is the Lamb, that hath redeemed me unto God by his blood."—*X. Y. Observer.*

THE PREACHING THAT CONVERTS THE SOUL.

"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. Other preaching may please, amuse, and entertain; but the love of Christ attracts, astonishes, draws, breaks, melts, subdues, and changes the heart. St. Paul knew this, and determined to preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

In the light of his Saviour's cross, the sinner sees and feels "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," the height and depth of the love of Christ, and cries,

"Alas, and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die,
Would he devote a sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

There and only there he beholds his sin atoned for, his guilt cancelled, the law magnified, justice satisfied, God glorified—"just in justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus." There he is conquered, disarmed, won by the love of Christ. In a moment the prayer of faith ascends, and tears of penitence fall, regeneration of heart is effected, consecration of himself to God is made: "I am the Lord's"—he becomes "a new creature in Christ Jesus."

What made the preaching of Waugh and Hill and Burder and Wisefield and Wesley so efficient to the conversion of souls, but that the love of Christ was the burden of their theme? They glorified Christ in their preaching, in the conversion of multitudes now with them "before the throne of God and the Lamb."

Never shall I forget seeing the late great and good Rowland Hill of London, now in the city of God, preaching in a market-town in England on his market-day. Like the apostle Paul standing on the steps at Athens, Mr. Hill was mounted, in the midst of the market-place, in a lumber-wagon of a farmer from the country, a man standing at his back holding up an umbrella to protect his head from the rays of the summer sun. I can yet see him as he then and there stood and preached for upwards of an hour the love of Christ to the thousands gathered around him. What volume of voice, what vehemence, what emotion of heart what earnestness, what tears were his! Not an inch of the highborn gentleman, his ripe scholarship, his far-spread fame, or any one thing that was Rowland Hill's, could be seen, but only the "radiant glories of the Crucified One," in the "gloriousness of his love to man."

To search and lift up, and hear such another sermon I would go far. O that our pulpits all may be filled by men possessing the spirit of Him, and his mantle fall on the ministry of the gospel throughout the land and world.—*Messenger.*

DEAD OR WOUNDED.

The late Dr. Miller, of Princeton—as all his students will remember—abounded in anecdotes, which he related to his classes from year to year, to illustrate the points made in his lectures. One of them occurs to us just now as especially applicable to the converts who have recently come into the churches within the bounds of our circulation.

A celebrated southern judge was in his earlier years sceptical as to the truth of the Bible, and especially as to the reality of experimental religion. He had a favourite servant, who accompanied him in his travels round his circuit. As they passed from court-house to court-house, they frequently conversed on the subject of religion, the servant, Harry, venturing to remonstrate with his master against his infidelity. As the judge had confidence in Harry's honesty and sincerity, he asked him a great many questions, as to how he felt, and what thoughts occupied his mind. Amongst other things, Harry told his master that he was often very much tempted and tried by the devil. The judge asked Harry to explain to him how it happened that the devil attacked him (Harry) who was so pious a man, so sorely, whilst he allowed himself—who was an infidel and a sinner—to pass unnoticed and untempted.

Harry asked, "Are you right sure, master, that he does let you pass without troubling you?" "Certainly I am," replied he; "I have no dealings with him at all. I do not even so much as know that there is any such being in existence as the devil. If there is any such being, he never troubles me."

"Well," said Harry, "I know that there is a devil, and that he tries me sorely at times." A day or two afterwards, when the judge had again conversed with his servant, he concluded to go on a hunt for wild ducks on one of the streams which lay across his road home. Harry accompanied him. As they approached the river, they espied a flock of ducks quietly floating on its surface. The judge steadily crept up to the bank and fired upon them, killing two or three, and wounding many others. He at once threw down his gun, and made strenuous efforts—with the aid of clubs and stones—to secure the wounded ducks, whilst he permitted the dead ones to float on, for the time unnoticed by him. Harry—as he sat on the seat of the carriage—watched his master's movements with deep interest, and when he returned, said to him:—

"Mass, whilst you was a splashin' in de water after dem wounded ducks and huntin' for dem, I see dem float on, it jist come into my mind why it is dat de debil troubles me so much whilst he lets you alone. You are like de dead ducks; he's sure he's got you safe. I fink de wounded ones, tryin' to get away from him, and he's afraid I'll do it, so he makes all de fuss after me, and jist lets you float on down de stream. He knows he can get you any time; but he knows it now or never wid me. If you were to begin to flatter a little and show signs like you were a goin' to get away from him, he would make jist as big a splashin' after you as he does after me."

The illustration struck the leached judge with great force, and led him to re-investigate the grounds of his scepticism; and, through Harry's instrumentality, he was finally brought to sit with him at the feet of Jesus, to learn of him.

The illustration is a homely one, but it sets forth a great truth in the experience of those who

set out in the Christian course. They must expect to be assailed by Satan as they never were before. If he fails of success in causing their fall by the use of one form of temptation, he will try another. He has tried so long, and had so much to do with men, that he is now an adept in devising means to tempt them, and make them as miserable and degraded as himself. Young Christians, therefore, should not think it strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try them, as though some strange thing had happened to them, when they are assailed in new, and to them, hitherto unknown methods of assault. As long as the devil feels that sinners are safe, and that he is sure to get them at last, he allows them to float on quietly upon an untried current; but the moment they attempt to throw off his yoke, and to assert their independence of him, they must expect his wrath to wax exceeding hot, and his assaults to fall thick and fast upon their heads. Let them not be ignorant of his devices. He goes about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."—*Presbyterian Herald.*

HOW DOES GOD PURGE FRUITFUL BRANCHES.

1. By the faithful preaching of the truth. Let the whole truth be clearly presented to a congregation, and some of them will be likely to say, "These are hard sayings; who can hear them?" Such will demand a different kind of preaching, or a preacher who will not use so great plainness of speech. But others of that congregation will say, "It is the truth, and such truth as we need to hear, though it consumes our hay, wood, and stubble." Amongst these there may be a David, who is reproved for his sins, and who hears a voice within him saying, *Thou art the man.* This is the truth which you need to hear. Fruitful branches are made more fruitful by this purging kind of preaching. They repeat under it, and are thus cleansed from their iniquities by the blood of Jesus. The truth, plainly presented, shows men their transgressions. It is quick and powerful, and becomes a discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Real Christians, instead of being offended and driven away by faithful exhibitions of truth, are sanctified through it. The truth, like Christ its Author, is a refiner and purifier. It is Christ's fan, with which he thoroughly purges his floor. It separates the chaff from the wheat. If the doctrines of the Bible offend and drive away any who seem to be branches on the true vine, their being driven away by the truth will make it apparent that Christ's Word has no place in their hearts. They do not love it. Though the truth smites the erring Christian, it is only the smiting of the sharp pruning-knife, which will make the branch more fruitful.

2. By providential trials, persecutions, and afflictions. This method of purging fruitful branches is seen illustrated in the trials of Job, Jacob, Moses, and the Israelites; David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Daniel; the Apostles, Primitive Christians, the Waldenses, and the Puritans; and in the histories of thousands of saints in all ages of the world. Afflictions are the Lord's pruning-hooks. Fruitful branches have often said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." The usefulness of many Christians have been greatly promoted by means of their afflictions. We may thank Bedford jail for the "Pilgrim's Progress," and feeble health for Baxter's "Dying Thoughts," and Solomon's troubles for the "Book of Ecclesiastes."

3. By inward conflicts. The Christian's soul is a perpetual battle-field. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary the one to the other." A struggle is there going on. But though the battle is sooth, and every grace; and seek more earnestly his face; I hoped that in some favored hour, At once he'd answer my request, And, by his love's constraining power, Subdue my sins and give me rest. Instead of this, he made me feel The hidden evil of my heart, And let the secret powers of hell Assault my soul in every part. More, more, with his own hand he seemed Intent to aggravate my woes, Crossed all the fair designs I schemed, Blinded my hopes, and led me on, Lord, why is this? I trembling cried, 'Will thou peruse thy word to death?' 'This is my way,' the Lord replied, 'I answer prayer for grace and faith, These inward trials I employ, From self and pride to set thee free, And break thy schemes of earthly joy, That thou mayst seek thy all in me.'

4. By the Holy Spirit. In fact, in all these different processes of pruning and purging the fruitful branches, the Holy Spirit is the operator. He it is that handles the Lord's pruning-hooks. They, of themselves, would accomplish no good. Preaching, trials, and inward conflicts would not benefit the people more than pruning-knives would benefit a vine, by being laid down near its root. But the Divine Spirit employs these means to show men their sins, to excite them to the exercise of repentance and faith, to sanctify them, to help their infirmities, and to lead them to make a proper improvement of God's Word and providence.

There are the means and agencies which God employs to make useful Christians still more useful—do cause fruitful branches to become still more fruitful.

REMARKS.

1. It is kind in God to send afflictions upon his people. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

2. We should be very thankful when God thinks enough of us to use the pruning-knife on us. Afflictions are not causes for complaint, but for gratitude.

3. Those professors of religion who go on without suffering affliction, have reason to inquire whether they are not worthless, unfruitful branches, which are ultimately to be cut off and burned.

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DUTY.

What is duty? Hearty obedience to the commands of God. It is duty to eat and drink temperately, what is conducive to health. To acquire knowledge of what may render us more useful; prudent industry in some lawful occupation; to make a wise and good use of what we have. To repent of sin, to believe on the Lord Jesus; to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves; sincerely to worship God; these are duties solemnly enjoined upon us all. Can any of these be done in a right manner, if any one of them is intentionally neglected? Certainly not. For who soever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. Jas. ii. 10. If there is one command binding on you, which you do not mean to obey, you do not truly obey any of them. Because the spirit of true obedience has respect to all God's commands.

In regard to this, are not many fearfully deceiving themselves? They have a very strict and conscientious regard to some of his commandments, and a total disregard to others. They fall under the denunciation of Christ. Matt. xxiii. 23. "Woe unto you, for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Reader, "search the Scriptures," that you may know what you are required to be and to do. See if there are not some precepts binding on you, that you are not obeying. For, universal obedience, the Saviour makes the test of being his friends. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv. 14. Will not many, who claim to be his friends, when the day of trial comes, be wholly unable to support their claims? What an overwhelming disappointment, what a fearful doom such must meet! The thought is enough, it would seem, to rouse every one to "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." They will neglect to be thus in earnest, till it is too late. The door will be closed Luke xii. 24-29. "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand; and no man regarded; But ye have set at naught all my counsel and would none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your woe cometh. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Prov. i. 24-28. Take heed, lest this be your case. Delaying sinner hasten, escape for thy life.

DOES THE WORLD HATE PIETY?

Sydney Smith says, "It is not true that the world hates piety. That modest and unobtrusive piety which fills the heart with all human charities, and makes a man gentle to others and severe to himself, is an object of universal love and veneration. But mankind hate the last of power when it is veiled under the garb of piety; they hate cant and hypocrisy; they hate advertisers and quacks in piety; they do not choose to be insulted; they love to tear folly and impudence from the altars which should only be a sanctuary for the righteous and the good."

This sounds well and plausible, and has but a single flaw, it is not true. Athens had once a citizen of unblemished virtue, whose stern integrity, and winning and blameless life excited universal admiration, but so far from being "an object of universal love and veneration," Aristides was banished in disgrace to a foreign land. At a later day she had a second citizen, whose lofty example infused fresh life into social morals, and whose eloquent teachings allured young men from the haunts of vice, and the snares of evil companionship, yet Socrates did not become "an object of universal love and veneration," but died in prison, a martyr to his personal goodness.

Several centuries later there appeared in Judea a man, whose "modest and unobtrusive piety" over Sydney Smith, would not venture to call in question. His "charities" were universal, his tenderness more winning than woman's. His character was harmoniously rounded, wholly free from the rough edges and inequalities which inhere in excellent men, when governed by a single idea; equally free from the bitterness of spirit and rude personality which excite aversion in many reformers. "He went about doing good," healing the sick, comforting the troubled, sympathizing with the outcast, raising the dead. "He spoke as never man spoke." He lived as man never lived. But did Jesus Christ become "an object of universal love and veneration"? Let the secret annals of his untiring energies answer. Let the treachery of Judas, and the malice of the Pharisees, and the mockery of Herod with his men of war, and the shouts of the populace in the streets of Jerusalem, answer. Let Golgotha with its bloody cries and its bitter tears, "He saved others, himself he cannot save," answer. Let his own words answer, "They hated me without a cause." "They have both seen and hated both me and my Father." Of our blessed Saviour in whom it appeared in the most winning form of incarnate love, would be quite inexplicable.

Sydney Smith was not a competent witness. He was a man of genial temper and ready wit. But of the nature of true piety, as rooted in a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit, he seems never to have conceived. The very idea of such a piety excited his derision, and sought to riddle it through and through with the keenest shafts from the quiver of his wit. A higher authority has said, "If ye were not of the world, the world would love you; but because ye are of the world, the world hateth you." Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. One must have overlooked the teachings of the New Testament and have misread strangely apostolic history, and the dark annals of the martyrs of the churches, and have looked with a dull vision into the inner chambers of the human heart, if he denies that the world hates piety. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. . . . If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of the household?"

WORLDLY PLEASURES.—Pleasures, like the rose, are sweet but prickly; the honey hath no counter-balance in vexation; like Judah, while they kiss, they betray. I would neither be a sinner nor an epicure—allow of no pleasure, nor give way to all; they are good sauces, but ought to make a meal of. I may use them sometimes for digestion, never for food. —*Bishop Henshaw, 1610.*

ENTIRE CONSECRATION AND THE TRIAL OF IT.

"Of abandonment, or entire consecration to God in all things. But this cannot be done without the principle of abandonment; by which I mean that act in which we resign, abandon, or consecrate ourselves entirely to God. To abandon ourselves, or to consecrate ourselves to God is to leave ourselves entirely in his hands. Those who are consecrated, have given their own wills into the keeping of God's will. They renounce every particular inclination as soon as it arises, however good it may appear, and however good it may really be in itself considered, in order that they may stand in perfect indifference with respect to themselves, and only desire, choose, and will that which God himself wills. Such a soul is resigned in all things, whether for soul or body, whether for time or eternity; by leaving what is past in oblivion; by leaving what is to come to the decision of Providence; and by devoting to God, without any reserve, the present moment; a moment which necessarily brings with it God's eternal order of things, and in every thing, excepting sin, is a declaration to us of his will, as certain and infallible as its inevitable and common to us all. Abandonment, or entire consecration, cannot exist without strong faith. None can do this but those who believe."

Of the test, or trial of consecration. Our abandonment, to entire consecration to God, is a matter of so much consequence, that God will not fail to give us opportunities to try or test, whether it be a true one or not. No man can be wholly the Lord's, unless he is wholly consecrated to the Lord; and no man can know whether he is thus wholly consecrated, except by tribulation. That is the test. To rejoice in God's will, when that will import nothing but happiness, is easy for the natural man. But none but the renovated man, none but the religious man, can rejoice in the divine will when it crosses his path, disappoints his expectations, and overwhelms him in sorrow. Trial, therefore, instead of being shunned, should be welcomed as the test, and the only true test of a true state. Beloved souls! there are consolations which pass away; but ye will not find true and abiding consolation except in entire abandonment, and in that love which loves the cross. He who does not welcome the cross, does not welcome God.—*Madame Guyon.*

WHAT AM I LIVING FOR.—None of us would like to be mere cumberers of the ground. There is a sublimity in labour which we all wish to share; we value the wages, although we sometimes shrink from the work. And yet it is lamentable how many of us are allowing our lives to drift away without any settled purpose. Or perhaps we are doing positive harm without being particularly aware of it. Will it not, then, be well occasionally to ask ourselves a few questions?

What am I living for? Is it any way to aid the cause of evil? Are my smiles or unsmiles, or dark hints used to give strength to slander and uncharitableness? Am I so envious of others' good that I desire to assist in making them enemies? Am I willing to hear and to circulate reports without caring much if they be true or not?

What am I living for? Is it for myself alone? Is it that my rights be not interfered with—that I be treated respectfully and well? Are my first thoughts given to myself? And the last to forgive, the first to exact? Do I care nothing or little for the well-being of others—only anxious for my own success? If so we are living utterly and entirely in vain! We do not deserve to own that rich gift of the Preserver—human life.

What am I living for? Is it to do good? To bring cheerfulness over the spirits that were sad—to light a smile upon the dim face? If I am not called to do great things, are my little duties well performed? If so, one thing at least will be awarded us, though all beside misunderstand us—the smile of our God will be given to our weary hearts.

What am I living for? There are some of us to whom in one sense the question is a sorely puzzling one. We do not seem at all necessary in the world. No one's happiness depends specially upon us. Not ours are the close ties which bind some people together. We have a painful consciousness that we should be very little missed, if we were taken altogether away.—Yet we are not content for nothing. God shows what he would have us live for.

I CAN DO NOTHING.—A boy arose not long since in the Fulton Street prayer meeting, and with great propriety desired the prayers of Christians. He said:

"When I was converted I was resolved on doing a great many things. I have no father—having lost a dear praying father some time since. I have a mother who is not pious. I have important sisters. So I resolved on doing much for my mother and sisters in the way of securing their salvation. I resolved to establish family prayer. I had the consent of all to this. I thought I had done something when I got leave to lead the family in morning and evening prayer. I went about the matter with great resolution; but I have not succeeded as well as I expected. I have other plans of doing. In all of my expectations I have been greatly disappointed. I see I went forward in my own strength, and expected to accomplish wonders in bringing my mother and sisters to Jesus. I am not able to see any progress. Indeed everything seems to be going backward. All these hearts are less interested now than they were, and those I have seen farther from Christ than before. What am I to do next? I have found out that I can do nothing. I meant to brave it out, for I saw there was secret opposition, and I find the more I do, the less is done. I find I am nothing and can do nothing. The poor boy sat down."

An older Christian very appropriately said: Now my little young brother will be able to do something, since he has found out that all his strength and success must come from God. Depend on God, and then what is done in the name of Jesus and for the sake of Jesus will not be in vain. It will be something done.

Bestow love upon Christ, when you will, He will love you; or what love you will, He will out-love you. Promise to yourselves what you will in Christ, you shall find it, and more; make a God of Christ, you shall find Him; make Him all, and you shall find Him all; make Him all the world beside.