

## TEACH ME THY WAY.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S SONG.

Let me not wander from thee, Lord,  
The holy highway of thy word,  
Left to myself I go astray—  
O strengthen me, teach me thy way.

O I would not thy path forsake—  
The narrow way I choose to take;  
Through unbelief alone I stray,  
Dear Lord, forgive, teach me thy way.

When earth's allurements compass me,  
O help me, Lord, to follow Thee,  
I cannot make to thee obey,  
Dear Lord, uphold, teach me thy way.

Lead me in paths of righteousness,  
My fair ring footsteps guide and bless,  
Light up my path with heavenly ray,  
That brighter shines to perfect day.

## CHRISTIAN COURTESY.

BY RAXAN.

"Words are only words and live upon the topmost form of thought," says the poet, and truly they do seem light when we try to tell some mighty truth which is burning and seething in our own soul, and which no word-painting can reproduce with the vividness of colouring with which it came to us; and yet, according to Scripture, which is our infallible guide, they are weighty. "By thy words shalt thou be justified and by thy words shalt thou be condemned." For every idle word that a man shall speak he shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

There is a great deal said at the present day about God judging by the motive or intention, not by the act. Now what occurs to me is, if the motive is all right, will it not carry a pure act? Where are all words and acts coined? In the heart most assuredly. If the stamp of truth is there will they not bear its impress? or can they lie side and side with love and lack its gilding? This being the case, I do not see why so many Christians are wanting in courtesy, or, in plain words, civility; for it must be confessed there is a heartiness, a forgetfulness of the little kindnesses of life, a lack of the oil which causes social machinery to run smoothly and quietly, which is painfully noticeable. Especially toward the young is this spirit manifested, and it ill accords with the tender love of our Saviour, who rebuked His disciples when they would have sent away the little ones who came to Him. Not till Christians learn that there is nothing trivial in itself or too small to be done for Christ, that gentleness in word and act are but the natural outcome from a heart filled to overflowing with the love of God, will the Christian grace of courtesy flourish and bring forth its legitimate fruit.

A mother was urging her sixteen-year-old boy to seek the Saviour, and among other things said what joy it would be to their pastor to see him enrolled on the side of Christ. "Much he cares for my soul," was the quick response. "I have been two years in his Bible class, and he does not know me yet when I meet him on the street, or if he does he never recognizes me." My heart was sore when I heard that, for I knew it was only too true, yet that minister was an earnest Christian, and really wanted to advance Christ's cause. A cheery word, a warm grasp of the hand and even a little nod has lightened a day for many a one. "Freely as ye have received freely give," is said not only concerning money, but anything which we have that will benefit others. All have not wealth to bestow, but all may have loving words and deeds for every day if they will go to the storehouse for them. The coarse dress or threadbare coat may hide a soul that will shine brighter than yours in the kingdom, one who may be called to come up higher when you will be left to worship afar off as you did on earth.

A candidate for a certain pulpit, after preaching his trial sermon, mingled freely with the outgoing people, shaking hands with all and speaking kindly words to the children. They called him, the people meanwhile congratulating themselves on getting such a genial man. He now passes out of the church without a word to any unless accosted. "He that runneth may read" the moral; it is too obvious to be missed.

In company with a Methodist friend I went to a class meeting once. An elderly lady arose and said, "I am determined to see the inside of heaven." She then sat down. Now it strikes me that many of our ministers and others have not a higher ambition than this. They are more eager to see the inside of heaven than for the holiness of heart which will fit them for the society there. If they cannot bear to have a man preferred before them here without speaking harsh words about him, what will they do there, for the least here may be the greatest there? Your neighbour has faults, I doubt it not; but does it better him a bit for you to be telling others of them? He may do wrong, so do you sometimes; but why go and talk about it to every one but the one about concerned? "Tell him his fault between him and thee alone" is the Scripture injunction. The measur-

ing-tape of the law shows that our love for our neighbour ought to correspond with our love to ourselves. "Love thy neighbour as thyself" is the command of the law. Did you ever know a man or woman repeat an ill story, whether true or false, concerning himself or herself. No; never! How dare we, then, in the face of this command tell that which is injurious to our neighbour. Christ binds us still closer when He says, "Love one another as I have loved you." Can any one tell the heights and depths of that precious changeless love with which He has loved us? Until we can we must go on loving our neighbour with a deeper, truer, holier love than we bestow upon ourselves, "in honour preferring one another." Again in that remarkable prayer of Christ's He prays, "That they may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee." So indissolubly are the Father and Son connected that we know no closer union—one in thought, one in aim, one in holiness. When we apply this to ourselves how great is its meaning! We are not merely to be looped together by society, but so interwoven in Christ, in spite of denominational barriers or political differences, that our neighbour's good name will be as precious to us as our own, that all his faults will be veiled by that charity that thinketh no evil. This happy state of things can only be attained when we rest in the full sunlight of Christ's love. Love to our neighbour is a sure thermometer to test our love to God. In proportion as we love God will be our love to our fellowmen. Let all our hearts then continually sing, "More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee."—Presbyterian.

## "MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES."

This brief characterization of Apollon is very suggestive. A few verses farther on in the same chapter, in the Acts, it is said that "he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." A beloved pastor writes, "Next to a thorough consecration, and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, I covet this ability of Apollon." There is evidently a growing desire among ministers, in almost every direction, to be able to give the people the Word of God. Expository preaching is coming to the front, as it should. It is a most hopeful sign that the number of listeners that relish the milk and meat of God's Word is multiplying.

Every true preacher of the gospel longs to be able to "mightily convince" the careless souls under his ministry, of the reality of the good news which he brings them. He will not be satisfied with anything less than accomplishing the conviction and complete renovation of those who sit under his ministry. The business of merely holding a pulpit is a thing of small concern to him. The mere position before the congregation is nothing to him. He would mightily persuade men that Jesus is the Christ. The profoundest question of his life is, how can it be done? How can I so present the word of truth as to command the attention, the assent, and the acceptance which it rightfully claims? In order to this, one must

## NOURISH HIS OWN LIFE

with this precious and unfailing truth. There are two sides to every preacher's life, the spiritual and the intellectual. These are not antagonistic, but helpful each to the other. Yet it is easy to divorce them, cultivate the one and neglect the other. The tendency of scholastic studies is often in the direction of minimizing the spiritual life, so that when we commence the work of preaching, it is with a feeble spiritual existence. Hence, we learn more and more, perhaps, in the direction of purely intellectual work. The congregation gets all the bookishness needful, but not much of *The Book*.

It is very plain that the spiritual side of the preacher must be helped forward. It must be made strong and kept strong. In order to this he must live in the truth, and by the truth, and that, too, as it is in Jesus. Revealed history, poetry, and philosophy become life to us only as they are received and wrought into soul-fiber. It is the kind of food that determines the kind of life. This is as true in the spiritual as in the physical life. The preacher who lives on the opinions, the speculations, the notions and the interrogation points of the age, will be able to furnish his people nothing better than his own bill of fare. But when he lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, his strong life will be able to carry to the people the weighty things of that word. Being exercised in the truth he rapidly goes down into its depths. He soon discovers the wealth and glory of thought and application, which lie just below the surface, ready to unfold themselves. He comes more and more to "search the Scriptures." He makes a diligent search, as a

miner seeking earnestly and carefully for the precious ore that is to enrich him. Such toil is not in vain. These are the testimonies of the Holy Spirit concerning Jesus. These Scriptures reveal the dreadful condition of lost souls. They reveal also the presence and personality of the living, loving, almighty Saviour. With such truth in the life, such truth shining along the path of God's ministers, they can do no less than unfold these gracious things. These thoughts of God made known to us in his precious word are infinitely above all merely human themes. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." In order to be mighty in the Scriptures, one must not only live in and by the truth, but he must

## TRUST THE HOLY SPIRIT

for direction, help, illumination and power to unfold the truth to others. He cannot do this while he is giving himself to schemes of personal ambition and aggrandizement. He that would teach must be taught; must have the teachable spirit; must surrender himself to the teaching and sanctifying spirit. God has ever hidden certain things from the wise and prudent—from those who exalt themselves as wise and prudent—and revealed them to babes. And for this our Lord rendered thanks to the Father. So will we thank him as we know more of him, and consequently become better acquainted with ourselves.

It is feared that much of our labor has been wasted, much of our attempted preaching has scarcely done more than produce a fog, because we have thrust so much of self between the truth and the people. We need that complete self-emptying in order that we may "be filled with the Spirit." We never can trust him while the idol of self is still up before us. Nor shall we ever be able to preach the word effectively until we do rely wholly upon the Holy Spirit for the unction which we need and the efficacy which he gives to his own truth.

It is not intimated here that we are to abandon study, and presume to claim an inspiration which God has not promised. Yet in very dread of this extreme, do we not too often forget the assurance that God gives his truly called ministers? Our Lord has promised to give his Spirit to them that ask. He is to come and abide with us, and lead us and illuminate us, teach us wondrous things out of his law. No promise is more needful. None is more faithfully kept, if we only consent to be guided, led, enlightened and anointed.

We sometimes marvel at the fertility of mind exhibited by very ordinary preachers, and the wealth of gracious truth brought out of what we had considered commonplace Scriptures by some of the Lord's servants. Why should we not all accept what God has for us in his word? Why may we not all lay hold of these treasures of wisdom that lie within the grasp of a simple faith?

This is the dispensation of the Spirit, and God gave his people on the day of Pentecost a specimen of what the Spirit can do with the word as preached by his servants filled with the Spirit. Whoever honors the word of God honors the Holy Spirit who gave the word. He is so far on the way to become mighty in the Scriptures. Let him take the other step, let him trust the Author of the word to fill his heart with it, open his mind to it, and fire his soul with its great messages of love and grace. Then we, too, as Apollon, shall become "mighty in the Scriptures."—*Journal and Messenger*.

## CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION.

Conversation is often said to be a lost art. It certainly is capable of being developed, and made the means of instruction to a degree that it has not yet attained among us. When we read of the great conversers of England or France, we learn that there have been men and women who were famous for their conversational gifts. It is indisputable that the conversation of even intelligent people is not generally so edifying and instructive as it should be. Might not the cultivation of the art of conversing on subjects of interest, render superfluous some of the trivial amusements which are now deemed necessary for the entertainment of company? Conversation may be made intensely entertaining.

Speaking merely negatively, social conversation should be free from the frothy frivolity that is unprofitable. We do not mean that cheerful, humorous talk, such as may afford mental relaxation, is wrong; but that intelligent people should choose to talk about subjects of interest. All that is coarse, low or impure should be banished from the most confidential conversation. No talk should ever be indulged, that when recalled will stain the memory, or vulgarize the feeling. But it is not enough to exclude from

our social talk what is hurtful and useless; our social intercourse should be intellectually and religiously helpful and improving.

Why is not religious conversation made a more effective instrument of edification among Christian people? There can be hardly any question, that wise conversation is eminently fitted to instruct the ignorant, to enlighten and relieve the doubter, and to comfort and strengthen the fainting. Our class meetings attain their greatest usefulness, when they come nearest to simple and free conversations about the things that pertain to salvation. Set speeches are out of place and unprofitable in such meetings. We find in Holy Scripture great prominence given to conversation, as a means of religious instruction. In the last book of the Old Testament, in a time of extensive religious declension, we are told that "they who feared the Lord spake often one to another," and that this brought upon them the special blessing of having their names in the book of God's remembrance. Our Saviour's conversation with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well, reveals some of the most profound spiritual truths. As the two disciples talked together on the way to Emmaus, Jesus himself drew near and joined in the conversation, and expounded to them the Scripture in a way that caused their hearts to burn within them. In the Acts, we read that Priscilla and Aquilla took Apollos home with them, and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." If there was opportunity, a great cloud of witnesses would rise up to testify that they have been greatly benefited by words of kindly religious counsel from Christian friends.

Why then is not Christian conversation a more potent means of propagating Christian ideas and building up Christian character? In other words, why do not people who bear the Christian name, in their intercourse, speak more frequently concerning the divine life? We suppose mainly because the fires of life and faith are burning low. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And if the heart is overflowing with grateful love to Christ, we may expect that there will be some appropriate expressions from the lips. If the "heart is full of Christ and longs its glorious matter to declare," there will be talk about Christ. But we do not think the want of religious life is the only cause of this reticence. There are many truly good people who have never rightly learned the art of improving the opportunities afforded by social intercourse to strengthen the faith of others. They have not cultivated their gifts, and because they have hidden the talent given them for use, it has not grown or improved; and they have not the power they might have had.

We freely admit that it requires delicacy and tact to engage in religious conversation wisely and effectively. There is a shallow religious cant that does more harm than good. We must respect the rights of others, and not rudely intrude our religious opinions upon them. But while freely conceding all this, there is room and need for more frequent reference to spiritual things, in the ordinary intercourse of life. Those who are instant in season and out of season, speaking wisely and kindly of the soul's interest—of the dangers, duties and enjoyments of Christian life—may thus sow seeds of truth that shall yield a rich harvest.—*Guardian*.

## "A WORD IN DUE SEASON HOW GOOD!"

There are two cures for heartache which are not only efficacious but very easy, and which, nevertheless, few seem to think of.

One is to say, "I am sorry," after a burst of passion or faultfinding. Most people feel that getting quickly into a good humor again, and being specially affectionate, is the best they can do; and feel that they are making it as plain to the injured party as to themselves that they are ashamed and repentant. For I am not speaking of those who never do wrong, who, though perhaps quite ready to deplore in general terms their bad temper, yet in all actual outbreaks hold to the belief that they had provocation enough to excuse them.

No kind manner in the afternoon can remove the sting of the unjust accusation or unjust degree of blame in the morning. It wears away the recollection, of course, after awhile, but even then the scar remains, and perhaps never disappears, cruelly fixed upon the memory, when one sentence would have been a perfect cure; not the "I forgive you," be it observed, of self-complacency, but the "Will you forgive me?" of honest confession. Doubtless both were in the wrong, but who was the most wrong? and who did the hurting? I expect that after you have said, "I take it all back," the other will see twice as well as before that she too was really to blame.

The second panacea which I offer for the pains of life is commenda-

tion, expressed appreciation. I know a man who ended life famous and rich, but who began poor; and his wife, in referring once to those early days, said, "Yes, I had to work very hard, but I did not mind it, for Robert was always thanking me for 'being such a help to him,' and 'making everything so nice,' and being so contented with what he was able to provide." It was not difficult for Robert to say those appreciative things; indeed, so easy is it that we have all heard stories of lazy people who got much of their share of work done for them by a systematic course of complimenting; for instance there was a group of young men together in the army who deliberately flattered one poor silly comrade till he dug twice his quota at the trenches, cooked all the meals, and did any quantity of their work, while they merely took pains to expatiate on "how beautifully he did" this, that and the other drudgery. Many a wife, considered and spared in all material ways, might, yet, well envy the satisfaction of that imposed on the simper. "What does it matter so you're happy?" is a slang phrase used by some boys that I know, which seem to me to contain volumes of the philosophy of life. What does it matter that your work is hard if it is sure to be noticed and admired? What does it matter that it is easier than most people's if you receive no sign from one long day to another, that your efforts are believed in or thought successful.—*Margaret Meredith in Presbyterian*.

## WHO SHALL ASCEND?

I will picture to you the man who is able to ascend into the hill of the Lord. Methinks I see him. He has nothing in himself, but he has everything in his God. Let us look at him from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. You notice, first, that he has put on shoes of iron and brass; his feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. You will want these shoes, O heavenly pilgrim! When the Lord said he would give you those shoes of iron, you thought they would be too heavy for you, but you will find out you have to tread on stones that are as hard as iron. When he said he would give you shoes that were made of brass, you thought they would be too strong. You will find it a long way, and a stern, stiff ascent, and anything else than brass would be worn out. Young Christian, have you had your feet shod yet? You are of no use for climbing unless you have. Unless you have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord, which is the preparation of the Gospel of peace, you can never ascend into the hill of the Lord. But observe that the pilgrim is girt about his loins, to keep his garments from tripping him up; he is girt with the girdle of truth and sincerity. You, too, my hearer, must be sincere in your profession; your heart must be right in the sight of God, or else climbing would be fatal work to you, because you climb presumptuously, and you shall come down desperately. I observe that the pilgrim has in his hand a strong staff; it is cut from the tree of life; it is called the staff of promise. See to it that you get it. Get a promise every day. Don't be content when you pray, unless you can plead the promise of God, or else you will be like the man going to the bankers without a check. You must take the promise when you go to God, and you will get that bestowed on you which the promise guarantees. Go not up the mountain, pilgrim, without this staff.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*.

## QUERIES.

1. Do you say grace at the table?
2. Do you have family worship daily, reading the Scriptures, and praying?
3. Do you teach your children as soon as they are teachable, to pray daily on arising in the morning, as well as on retiring at night?
4. Do you either take or send your children to Sunday-school?
5. Do you require them to go to hear the preaching of the Word?
6. Are you as careful of their spiritual and religious training as of their physical and mental?
7. In a word are you training your children for God and eternity?
8. You ought to be able to answer "yes" to each of these questions. Will you not ask God to bless and help you to do your duty toward the souls He has committed to your care?

If you are especially profited by a sermon from your pastor, make it a point of conscience to tell him of it. It will be to him like a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul to know that he has found you and administered exactly the prescription you need.

Rashness and indolence are Satan's two most trustworthy servants. He plays them off on us also most ingeniously. We have always one to tempt us.

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