### What we Know.

That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good:—

That death seems but a covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight:—

That care and trial seem at last,
Through memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast
In purple distance fair:

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

### Singleness of Purpose.

BY REV. CURTIS LEE LAWS

This one thing I do.—Philippians 3:13

The greatest results in art and science, in poetry and philosophy, in commerce and in the professions, have been achieved by those who were actuated by some master passion. It was a master passion which sent Carey, Marshman and Ward to India, and Adoniram Judson to Burma. It was a master passion which drove Henry Martyn to Persia, "where the laurels of Cambridge University faded upon his fever-stricken brow." It was a master passion which caused the great Duff to give up all for the glory of winning souls to Christ, which caused Whitefield to speed from continent to continent, with a heart on fire, and a voice which rang out as he cried, "The world for Christ!"

It was a master passion which girded the thoughts and enchanneled the efforts of the great apostle, who could glory in the agony of his sufferings. Hear what he endured for Christ:

"Are they ministers of Christ! (I speak as a fool), I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness." (2 Cor. 11: 23-27.)

It was the same master passion which enabled him to stand before the philosophers of Corinth and declare that salvation could come only through Christ and him crucified: which enabled him to preach boldly on Mars' Hill, under the shadow of the colossal statue of Minerva, and with a thousand glittering images around him. Paul's motto was, "This one thing I do." What was that one thing? "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." How many of us are trying to serve Jesus Christ with such singleness of heart?

CONSECRATION.

Our first and best thoughts must be for our Saviour, and all other interests must be made subordinate to the progress of his kingdom. The gratification of personal ambition, the triumph of personal plans and theories, success and prosperity in secular pursuits, must all be made subordinate to the interests of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our primary business must be pressing forward for the prize. We labor most industriously for the possession of that which is dearest to us. Are there some things dearer to us than the glory of God?

Not so with Paul. The first thought of his mind was for his Redeemer. Day and night he labored for the spread of the kingdom. This intense activity for Christ is not inconsistent with the active and energetic pursuit of some secular calling. Be eager in your money making, and ask God's blessing upon your plan and your business. But do not forget to come to God when the transaction is over, saying: "Dear Lord, I am thy steward; all that I have is thine." And beyond there should be earnest effort to spread th kingdom, and to realize in our hearts the perfection of Christ's character. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

SEPARATION.

We must make no league with the inhabitants of the land which we have been sent to subdue. God brough Israel up out of the land of Egypt, and promised them that he would never break his covenant with them, but he commanded them, saying: "Ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall break down their altars." So God has brought us up out of the land of Egypt, and now in our redeemed state we are to make no league with the inhabitants of this world.

If we are living for the glory of God and for the realization of Christ's character, we have sealed our enmity to sin. We shall hate the sin of our own hearts as much as the sins of an enemy. We shall throw down the altars of the devil wherever we find them. We shall fight to the death impurity and vice. We cannot serve both God and the devil, both righteousness and sin. Men are crying for the bread of life, Christ is yearning over a lost world, which he died to save; we are frittering away our time, some of us in league with this world, some of us in partnership with the devil. God, heaven, and the saints in glory are encouraging us to do our duty. Oh, shall we hold back and hesitate, or shall we spring forth, once blind, but now seeing, once dumb, but now singing, once deaf, but now hearing, once lame, but now leaping, once dead, but now living, and shout above the din of the confusion of worldly ambition: "This one thing I do; I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—The Examiner.

### The Fountain of Benevolence.

According to Christ no religion is acceptable to God which does not serve to light with heavenly comfort the path of human sorrow. The test of character is in its fruits. And in this world of misery the character that bears no fruits of practical benevolence is not fit for the kingdom of God. Men who talk loudly about the love of God, and yet love not their neighbors, are either self-deceived or arrant hypocrites. "Woe unto you, hypocrites," said Jesus to the Pharisees who made long prayers for a pretense but devoured widow's houses to satisfy their greed. "Therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." There is hope for the publicans. The mercy of God is so broad that even penitent harlots may be pardoned. But for the Pharisee who oppresses the widow and the orphan there is no hope. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, to keep himself unspotted from the world.' How different is this religion from that which the infidel tries to palm off on the world as Christianity!

No one claims that practical benevolence is the whole of the Christian religion. In His picture of the last judgment Jesus says nothing at all about faith as a condition of salvation. The love of God is not mentioned as a requisite element of the character of a saint. Not one word is said about conversion, regeneration, or repentance and yet he would be a thoughtless or unfair man who would claim that these things are ignored or repudiated by our Lord because they are not mentioned here. Yet some have been so rash as to set up this claim. They say, "This is our idea of religion. Christ teaches that practical charity is the only essential qualification for heaven. Doing good and showing mercy comprise the whole duty of man." This reasoning is not sound. When James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world," he does not say that the whole of religion is comprehended in these two things. This is a sample of the stock of articles which compose the great system. There are other elements in religion also, but there is no genuine religion without these.

But where these fruits exist the root and seed of faith and Christian love will most surely be found. Men talk about the religion of upright and benevolent practices without faith, but where can it be found? What one of the many boasting infidels who decry Christianity has ever been seen at the side of the afflicted, ministering consolation and material aid? What one has founded and supported a charitable institution for the blind, the deaf, the lame, or the feeble-minded? There are in the United States thousands of such institutions. Many of them have been founded by States, but many also by societies and benevolent individuals; many of them by Churches and Christians. But what home for the aged, or refuge for the needy, or asylum for the unfortunate, or school for orphans has been founded and supported by atheists? Perhaps one can be found, but not more than one or two, and these were established by wealthy skeptics, who, under the influence of our Christian civilization and institutions and thought, received the impulse which led to this noble deed of charity. So long as these facts continue what becomes of the assertion that practical benevolence without religion is better than religion without benevolence? There is no genuine religion without real benevolence, and there is no benevolence worth the name apart from true and genuine religion.—Religion for the Times, by Lucien Clark, D. D.

### The Power of a Holy Life.

No Christian is so poor, so weak, so lowly, but that he can do much for God, and for his fellow men. He may not be able to give largely, or even to give at all, to advance the progress of the Gospel, but he can recommend religion in all its beauty by his life. Thus his light will shine with a power and effectiveness which nothing can dim. There is a power in a holy life which nothing can resist. Men may stand out successfully against every argument and motive which can be brought to bear upon them; they may be utterly indifferent to the evidences of God; they may resist every appeal found in the Bible; they may successfully silence the clamors of conscience—nothing, indeed, may disturb their way to hell but a godly example. This has been effectual in instances where nothing else was in the least regarded.

In a certain community lived a man, infidel in his sentiments and profligate in his practice. He was subtle in disputation, and could greatly embarrass the most of those who encountered him and sought to turn him into a better channel. But there was one man who would never dispute or argue with him. This was a plain, but devoted and consistent Christian. His life was a bright focus of vital godliness, and it had more power upon this wicked man than any other sort of artillery that could be brought to bear against him. He was often heard to say that the holy life of this man was the only thing that gave him trouble. He could resist and turn aside all arguments but this one, but against this he was powerless. He could not withstand the conviction that religion was a reality when he contemplated it as shining forth in such a life.

The influence of this man is within the power of every Christian. None so poor or lowly in station but can exercise it. Very many religious professors are ready to excuse themselves for doing no more to advance religion, by the plea that they have not the talent to address and persuade men. They cannot find words and arguments that are persuasive, nor will their lack of means allow them to labor for Christ in other ways. But this is not necessary. They may not be able to talk the Gospel into the unbeliever, they may not be able to give for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ, but they can live in their own lives the life of the Gospel, and thus with even still greater effect show forth the power and excellence of a holy life. They can so live Christ that it will be a more convincing argument to the truth and reality of religion than all the arguments of the most profound scholars and eloquent divines. The power of a holy life is something that cannot be successfully combated or resisted.

If every member of the Church would live as he ought, it would not be necessary for him to speak a word on the subject of religion. He himself would be a living recommendation of it in all its beauty and excellence by his life. In such a community the ministry even might be dispensed with, because every Christian would be a minister of the Gospel in the very best sense. He would preach the Word daily in his life, and in such a way that there would be no possibility of gainsaying or resisting it. Then the Word would have free course and be glorified. The truth of the Gospel would be seen and felt and acknowledged on every side, and the ends of the earth would soon see the salvation of God. And this power of a holy life is in the possession of every Christian, however humble.—Christian Work.

### Does the Church Need Converts?

The pastor of a certain church made the remark the other day that he had decided not to hold a protracted meeting this winter, as the membership of the church was already large, and he thought they needed something more than they needed converts.

This was no doubt true; they probably needed to be taught and trained. but the misconception which evinces itself in the preacher's words is too serious to be lightly put aside.

Are we to convert men and women, or leave them to die unsaved, according as it may profit or inconvenience the church? The question is not, does "your church" need converts, but do men and women need the Lord Jesus Christ? A note of warning ought to be sounded. There is danger that our devotion to the church become nothing better than devotion to a club, whose object is to minister to the intellectual and spiritual enjoyment of congenial souls. It is to meet the needs of men and women, and not the reverse. The church that is run on the principle that is a sort of a hotel, to take only as many guests as it will comfortably hold, or as will meet the running expenses of the house, has no right to wear the name of Christ. If your garners are too small to hold any further gleanings from the Lord's harvest, it is time for you to pull down and build greater.

The business of every saved man is to search, with torch and lantern, if need be, for the unsaved, to go out and compel them to come in. God pity the church that would pick those to be saved, whom it deems to be of advantage to it! God pity us when we imagine that we have the right to open or close the door of the kingdom, as it may suit our personal convenience.

Does your church need converts? That is not your business. Just so long as the old commission is unrepealed, it is your business to execute it.—The Lookout.

### Sincerity.

An insincere Christian is a contradiction in terms. To assume it is to attempt to mix two utterly incongruous quantities; it assumes that a man can be true and false at one and the same time. A sincere infidel is infinitely better than an insincere Christian. The one may be a mistaken zealot, but the other is a subterfuge, a sham, and a hypocrite. * * * Sincerity is truth and uprightness joined together; sincerity and truth are the basis of every virtue. It is an agreement of the heart and tongue, of the motive and conduct, and is opposed to all double dealing and deceit. It will not permit the sentiments of the heart to be contrary to the language of the lips. In Scripture the word signifies pure—without mixture. So Paul would have the Philippians to be pure, their behavior innocent and free from offense, 'That ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ,' and he always associates sincerity and truth, purity and truth, in opposition to the leavened bread of iniquity. He reproaches the false apostles with not preaching Jesus Christ sincerely, purely, with upright and disinterested sentiments. In his day Pollock knew preachers of whom he wrote:

"In sermon style he bought
And sold and lied, salutations made
In Scripture terms. He prayed by quantity,
And with his repetitions long and loud
All knees were weary.'

We may agree with Carlyle that sincerity, a deep, great genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic. Truth must not be a matter of belief simply, a mere accepted proposition; it must be a conviction that cannot be changed by cajolery or fear; that will not yield to the siren of flattery nor to the persuasions of cupidity and selfishness.—Methodist Protestant.

### The Loneliness of Age.

The loneliness of age! How few think of this and treat with tenderness and consideration those who have outlived their generation, and whose early companions and friends have been taken from them! Unable to engage in the activities of life, they are no longer brought into contact and sympathy with those around them, and no tie of common interest and mutual dependence binds them together. They necessarily, to a greater extent, live in a world of their own, with which those around them are not familiar. The communings of their hearts are with the scenes of the past, and the companions of other years, who have long ago passed away. Lover and friends have been taken from them, and their acquaintance laid in darkness. The forms they admired and loved are gone, the eyes that looked into theirs with the tenderest affection are sightless, and the voices that cheered and stirred their souls have long since been silent. Their early world of hope and joy has become desolation, and they sit in silence contemplating the ruin that has been wrought. They are—

"Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown."

to pass on to the reunion that awaits them, and the great greetings of those they love. Who would not do what he can to cheer the loneliness of the aged, to smooth their pathway, and comfort them in their declining years?—New York Churchman.

### Compassion.

There are many things in the character of Jesus which excite our admiration and love—his wisdom, his strength his manliness, his gentleness, his unselfishness. But one thing outshines them all—his compassion. We have been reading about it today: "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them." Again: "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean."

You are striving to be like your Master. Have you compassion? Do you really love the souls of the suffering about you? Is your heart melted into tenderness when you think of their spiritual destitution? Do you yearn to see them saved? Has a holy passion to rescue them taken possession of your soul? Do you understand what William Carvosso meant when he said, "I felt such a longing desire to save souls that I said in my heart to the Lord that if he should condescend to use me to bring one more soul to himself, I would praise him forever for it?"

O thou compassionate Christ, touch us with thy compassion! Melt our icy selfishness! Kindle in our cold hearts consuming fires of love! May we yearn, yearn, yearn, for outcast souls!—Epworth Herald.

### Moral Courage.

A large proportion of people are greatly lacking in downright, honest, moral courage. Many times it has been the case that one man, having rugged moral courage, will boldly speak out his mind on some unpopular question, concerning which a dozen of his neighbors have the same opinion, but dare not openly declare it, from sheer cowardice. A whole company, large at that, have been known to hold certain views concerning a matter, but kept solemnly quiet until one brave man expressed the same views without apology, and then the rest of the company have cheered him and said, "Them's our sentiments exactly." The great, strong leaders of men are they who have the highest type of moral courage.

### Heart Ability.

It is not always the most capable men who do the most good. Men of fine attainments often devote them to a bad purpose. Men who are not naturally blessed with such rare gifts often do more good than those of finer attainments, because with a consuming love they devote their energies to the upbuilding of that which is pure and noble. Again, those with brilliant intellects often counteract their influence for good by some eccentricity. Furthermore, their service is not with all the heart; and a divided service, backed even by great ability, does but little good. Hence the Saviour says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."—Gospel Advocate.

A learned Chinaman said to a missionary, "I like your doctrine, though I have never heard you preach it.' "How so?" said the missionary. "Why," replied the Chinaman, "I have seen it." "Seen it, how?" said the bewildered foreigner. "Why," said the Asiatic, "my servant there was a devil before he professed your religion, and now he is like an angel; I can trust him with anything and he is in love with everybody." What a blessed thing it would be if we all lived so that the truth of our doctrine would be seen.—Baptist Record.


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