

The Lord's Appointment.

I say it over and over, and yet again to-day
It rests my heart as surely as it did yesterday:

"It is the Lord's appointment!"
Whatever my work may be,
I am sure in my heart of hearts
He has offered it for me.

I must say it over and over, and yet again to-day.

For my work is somewhat different from yesterday:

"It is the Lord's appointment!"
It quiets my restless will
Like voice of tender mother,
And my heart and will are still.

I will say it over and over, this and every day,

Whatever the Master orders, come what may,

"It is the Lord's appointment!"
For only His love can see
What is wisest, best, and right,
What is truly good for me.

The Watchman.

Cross-Currents.

BY WAYLAND MOYT, D. D.

Very real and often frequent is our experience of cross-currents.

For example, a great sorrow lowers before you. I sat in a house of sorrow once. Suddenly smitten, and out of the prime of life, and out of the fairest prospects, the husband and father lay with death's seal upon him. And in the heart of the wife and mother, with all her future draped and with unwonted and unexpected burdens crushing, clashed the cross-currents. Could she still believably trust God, rest in Him, commit the whole dark problem to His love unfailing and wisdom infinite? Yes, she would, she did. Then clashed back the cross-currents. How could she? What was the use of faith and hope? Prayer had not availed. He was quenched. Loneliness scared. So her heart lay before the sorrow amid the turmoil of the cross-currents.

For example, a great and noble confession and setting things at rights with a brother man, presses itself upon you. You have fallen out with him. Perhaps he has done you injury. Perhaps you have injured him. At all events, you are out of right relation with him. It troubles you—this awyness with him. You remember the Scriptures about leaving the gift before the altar and first being reconciled with your brother; about telling the whole blistering thing out in personal interview. You will. You are set on doing it. Then the cross-current begins to push and urge. How will he receive you? Is it worth while? Why should you humiliate yourself? Let him come to you first. You doubt and hesitate.

For example, there appears itself before you some real and perhaps hard sacrifice for your Lord's sake. In certain moods you are quite persuaded you will make it. You have almost made up your mind. You even actually go forth to lift the dreaded cross. Then tides of reffluent feeling set in and set you back. Why should you? Why should not others do it as well as you? Why should you not wait till you can get others to take share with you? You are troubled and perplexed. Perhaps your nights are restless and your days darkened. You are tossed amid opposing influences.

Do you not know something about cross-currents?

The inexpressibly precious fact is that our Lord knew about them, too; felt them within Himself as really as you have ever felt them.

I beseech you, do not allow your self to get wrong notions of your Lord's earthly life. You must miss much of His gracious ministry to you if you so allow yourself. Not a placid stream, unexposed by rocks, unswayed by winds, holding itself so steadily and evenly to its main purpose that no reffluent ripple even could break upon its surface—such was not our Lord's life.

Rather, it was a life like yours and mine. For, verily, he took not upon himself the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren. You know something of rocks and winds and backward setting currents. You know that life is not unexposed. You know the hesitant, balancing, awaying, now here, now there, mood of self-disputations. You know the frequent conflict of discordant feeling and desire.

O tossed, troubled, tempted one, all this, and precisely this, your Lord knew also.

But our Lord mastered and calmed the cross-currents. How? By holding determinedly to His main purpose, notwithstanding cross-currents. "Father, glorify thy name," He immediately exclaims. Nothing, not the jagged sacrifice of Calvary, shall prevent Him from steady grasp on the chief thing He came into this world to do. He will keep Himself under the empire of that, and so the cross-currents cease their clashing, and the

approving voice from heaven falls, and even joyfully He goes on with the abyssal duty.

So let us, by our Lord's method, calm the cross-currents. We can calm them by distinct volition for the highest, even amid their swirling. If we are Christians this is the main purpose of our lives—the serving and the glorifying God. At all hazards, crown over yourself this main purpose. So shall you go on right nobly, and compel the cross currents into smoothness and placidity.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes;
'Hinder me not!' shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

—Morning Star.

The Gift of Power.

BY D. L. MOODY.

The late Dr. Gordon, of Boston, once said at Northfield that as you walk up the thoroughfares of our great cities you often see the sign, "This store to let, with or without power."

Back in the building somewhere there is an engine, and if a man wants to manufacture he can hitch on to the power; if not, he can hire the store without power.

Dr. Gordon thought it would be a good thing to ask a man who wants to join the church if he wants to be a member "with or without power." If he said, "Without power," we could honestly say, "We have plenty of that kind already."

What the Church needs to-day is more members with power. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit." I have no sympathy with the idea of toiling all night and catching nothing. And yet nine-tenths of Christian workers, not to speak of church members in general, never think of looking to the Holy Ghost for this power.

There is a difference between strength and power. Goliath had strength; David had power.

There is a difference between influence and power. The high priests and the Pharisees had influence. Peter and the other apostles, after Pentecost, had power.

There is a difference between the indwelling of the Holy Ghost and His filling one with power. Every true child of God, who has been cleansed by the blood of Christ, is a temple or dwelling place of the Holy Ghost. But yet he may not have fullness of power.

In the third chapter of John, Nicodemus went to Jesus by night to get light, and I have no doubt he got it; but he did not receive it in abundance, or he would not have stayed in the Sanhedrim three years, listening to all the mean, cutting things they said of Jesus. It took the death of Christ to bring him out manfully and boldly.

In the seventh chapter of John we find a different character. That last day of the feast Christ stood in the temple crying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

A man like that would not have stayed in the Sanhedrim for three years; he would have smashed up every Sanhedrim on earth. Four walls cannot contain the influence of a man who is full of the Holy Ghost and power. "Rivers of living water!" Think of the rivers that flowed from C. H. Spurgeon and George Muller!

Let us pray for this power. The disciples were told to wait ten days, but, thank God! we don't have to wait now, because the Holy Spirit is here.

The power of the Holy Ghost is the one thing that can save the Church and save our country. We need more preaching in his power, not in the power of human eloquence and mental gifts. We need more singing in power, the way that the Levites were singing when the Shekinah came and filled the temple of Solomon.

Many a church has lost power because of an ungodly choir, or a choir that sings in an unknown tongue. Fathers and mothers need power to live aright, and teach their children the ways of righteousness.

I wish we were all dead in earnest. What does a hungry man want? Money? No. Food? No. Good clothes? No. He wants food. What does a thirsty man want? Stocks and bonds? No; he wants water. When we really hunger and thirst for the Holy Ghost power nothing else will satisfy us.

God has commanded us to be filled with the Holy Ghost. We have His promise that He will pour water on him that is thirsty. Calm that promise now in faith, fulfil the conditions laid down in the Word, and God will not disappoint you.

The Habit of Private Devotions.

It is safe to say that, unless the habit be maintained conscientiously, the quality of our piety suffers. Doubtless neglect of it has been the cause of more backsliding from spiritual success and service than any one of what we commonly call severe temptations. There is a peculiar and vital profit in common, public devotions. They enrich and upbuild the soul by kindling our holiest sympathies and quickening our most sacred purposes. But they do not, and cannot, do for us what private, individual communion with God accomplishes.

We need to be alone with him sometimes and often. Otherwise we cannot enter into those close and confidential relations with him which mean so much to the truly Christian heart. In public worship, even though we do but join as silent participants, we cannot make confession of our faults, lay before our Father freely our own personal and special needs, and become aware of his Holy Spirit's response and interest, as we can when we are in our closets. We need, and most who truly belong to Christ have learned how to profit by, such personal intercourse with God. It is an unspeakable privilege which must not be disregarded.

But the spirit of our times in a large degree is unfriendly to it. Engagements of many sorts press upon us until to reserve even a little time for it becomes hard. This or that excuse is allowed to justify neglect of it until, insensibly yet really, we have grown to regard it as of minor consequence. Moreover, not a few declare frankly that it is not essential to true godliness. They might as truly urge that the mutual knowledge and love of a mother and child would not weaken if they never were to meet and converse.

But the testimony of Christian history is conclusive. The purest, noblest, holiest souls, those whom even the most careless of us all cannot help revering, have been those who have lived in the closest fellowship, the most regular and intimate devotional union, with the Almighty. Have we not known in our own experience, too, some memorable hour when we have tasted of the blessedness of being, as it were, face to face with the divine Father, when his Word has taken on a new richness and pertinence of meaning as we have studied it by ourselves, and we have talked with him in prayer with a precious freedom never possible in the presence of others, no matter how sympathetic? We may, we ought to have such an experience frequently. To neglect private devotions means loss and sorrow incalculable.—The Congregationalist.

Work and Worry.

Where work wears out one, worry wears out thousands. There is less happiness among the great than among the humble, among the rich than among the poor. "But if these limitations could only be removed!"

"If I did not have to work so hard!" "If I could be my best self!" "If I could have that for which I know I am fitted!" Ah, greatness of gift always implies greatness of responsibility; if one limitation goes, another comes; that which seems to give freedom only increases slavery. Almost all men, like birds, beat themselves against their cages, longing to get into some different world, to soar beneath some more splendid skies, ignorant of the abysses in that larger world and of the storms which sweep those skies. Of the Master it was said: "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross." The cross preceded the joy, as the mountain climb is before the vision of the earth and sky. The story said: "The way to be happy is to cease to desire or aspire"; in other words, deny yourself. Christ's message is: "The way to be happy is the way of the cross. Sacrifice yourself! Make all you possibly can; give every faculty its fullest development; be as beautiful, as cultured, as wise as circumstances will permit, not that you may be happy, but that you may use powers, faculties, gifts, as I have used mine—for humanity. In that way, and that alone, lies happiness."—Amory H. Bradford, D. D.

Sabbath Desecration.

It is a matter of deep sorrow and of considerable alarm that so many of our railroads are advertising Sunday excursions to run from almost every city in the land to some popular mountain or seaside resort.

We are glad indeed that the recent announcement of the New York Central Railroad of special excursion rates to New York on Sundays has led the Poughkeepsie Ministers' Association to frame a petition to the company begging it to desist from the practice of inducing people to go to New York

on the Sabbath. The petition declares that Sunday excursions are an additional temptation to the desecration of the Sabbath, repugnant to the best interests of the community, and detrimental to the interests of the public. The petition was circulated in many of the churches, and numerous signatures were obtained, and then forwarded to President Calloway of the New York Central.

The congregation of the Presbyterian church adopted resolutions denouncing not only the railroad excursions but every class of trade that attempts to do business on Sunday and ordered copies of the resolutions sent to the mayor, common council, police commissioners, and to the presidents of the New York Central.

These are steps in the right direction and we hope the ministers of other churches will take up this subject of Sabbath labor and Sabbath pleasure and create a healthy sentiment in favor of the observance of the fourth commandment. God has always punished Sabbath-breaking, and this nation has been too highly blessed and exalted by the good favor of God to now turn against him in disobedience by the breaking of this day of rest, which he has written in the very constitution of our being.—Zion's Watchman.

Sunday Reading.

BY CHAS. E. JEFFERSON, D. D.

Keep your Sundays free for earnest reading. Burn up the Sunday newspaper. It is an indefensible, intolerable curse. It exists simply and solely to swell the income of wealthy and greedy newspaper proprietors. A Christian ought to be ashamed to have it in his house. Is not a man sufficiently secularized by six days, contact with the world without dipping his mind on Sunday morning once more into the muddy stream in which he has dipped himself on the preceding six days? What can be expected of a Christian in public worship who comes to church with a newspaper stuffed into his mind? He is a cold as a clod to the touch of the preacher and lowers the spiritual temperature of the entire congregation. William E. Gladstone was an ideal worshipper in God's house. He concentrated all his great powers upon the sermon. He was interested because he was informed. He was informed because throughout life he had made diligent use of his Sundays. He declared in old age that he would not have lived so long had he not always kept his Sundays quiet apart from his political life. It was pure refreshment to him to turn to holier things on that day. It enabled him to learn more of religious subjects than perhaps any other layman of our century. It gave him that firm and splendid ground which ennobled and hallowed all his actions. "Go thou and do likewise."

Acquaintance With God.

Cultivate acquaintance with God. He is your Father. Why not be on familiar terms with him? Why hold him away off at arm's length, or shy away from him? He loves you. Why not draw near and lovingly, confidently nestle in his bosom? Look at him in the person of Jesus Christ. Read his loving words, take notice of his kind and sympathetic acts, learn what is his good will concerning you, and then do it. Remember that the life and teachings of Christ, as set forth in the four Gospels, are to you a revelation of the mind and will of the Father. Acquaint yourself with him by carefully studying that divine revelation. In Job 2:21, we read, "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." Good comes to us by being at peace with God, and acquaintance with him brings the peace of God to the soul. A knowledge of his will is acquired through acquaintance with him. The reasonable man, the more he becomes acquainted with God and his laws, the more does he see how loving and wise God is, and how true it is that all his requirements are in harmony with man's best interests. Both for time and for eternity, therefore, study God as seen both in nature and in revelation, in the longings of the universe and in the person of Jesus Christ. Invite him into your soul. Make him your companion, your confidant and thereby "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" will come and dwell with you.—Tele-scope.

Religion.

There is religion in everything around us: a calm and holy religion in the unbreathing things of nature which man would do well to imitate. It is a meek and blessed influence, stealing in, as it were, unawares upon the hear; it comes quietly, and with-

out excitement; it has no terror, no gloom in its approaches; it does not rouse up the passions; it is untrammelled by the creeds, and unshadowed by the superstitions of man; it is fresh from the hands of its Author, glowing from the immediate presence of the great Spirit which pervades and quickens it; it is written on the arched sky; it looks out from every star; it is on the sailing cloud and in the invisible wind; it is among the hills and valleys of the earth, where the shrubless mountain-top pierces the thin atmosphere of ether at winter, or where the mighty forest fluctuates, before the strong wind, with its dark waves of green foliage; it is spread out, like a legible language, upon the broad face of the unsleeping ocean; it is the poetry of nature; it is this which uplifts the spirit within us, until it is strong enough to overlook the shadows of our place of probation—which breaks, link after link, the chain that binds us to materiality, and which opens to our imagination a world of spiritual beauty and holiness.—Ruskin.

A Blessed Secret.

It is a blessed secret, this of living by the day. Any one can carry his burden, however heavy, till night-fall. Any one can do his work, however hard, for one day. Any one can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, and purely till the sun goes down. And this is all that life ever really means to us, just one little day. To-day's duty, fight to-day's temptations, and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see and could not understand if you saw them. God gives nights to shut down the curtain of darkness on our little days. We cannot see beyond. Short horizons make life easier and give us one of the blessed secrets of brave, true, holy living—Christian Work.

How AWFUL is the consciousness of unforgiven sin. There are those who turn away from the thought on earth, but the day will come when every stain of unremoved sin in the heart will lie uncovered to the eyes of the sinner and the eyes of God. The presence of Christ rebukes sin. When the accusers brought the guilty woman to Christ we are told that, being convicted by their own consciences, they went out one by one. Sin can not remain in Christ's presence, and at the judgment those who have evil in their hearts will go out silently convicted, not by any scathing words or show of force, but by their own consciences, realizing that the exile is just and right. To-day hear His voice and harden not your hearts.

The best defense of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a clear illustration of its spirit and teachings in the life and conduct of its professors. Men may resist logic, but they cannot over-brow facts; they may reject a theory, but they cannot gain-say a life. If professing Christians lived their religion and exemplified in their everyday conduct the power of Christ to save from sin, it would stop the mouths of gain-sayers, and prove their religion to be divine.—Rev. John Scott, D. D.

Bring God down into your heart. Enbalm your soul in him now, make within you a temple for the Holy Spirit; be diligent in good works, make others happier and better.—Ariel's Journal.

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