

For Common Mercies.

Dear Lord, are we ever so thankful,
As thankful we should be to Thee,
For Thine angels sent down to defend us
From dangers our eyes never see;
From perils that lurk unsuspected,
The powers of earth and of air.
The while we are heaven protected
And guarded from evil and snare?

Are we grateful as grateful we should be
For commonplace days of delight,
When safe we fare forth to our labor
And safe we fare homeward at night;
For the weeks in which nothing has hap-
pened
Save commonplace toiling and play.
When we've worked at the task of the
household,
And peace hushed the house day by day?

Dear Lord, that the terror at midnight,
The weird of the wind and the flame,
Hath passed by our dwelling, we praise
Thee
And lift up our hearts in Thy name;
That the circle of darlings unbroken
Yet gathers in bliss round the board,
That commonplace love is our portion,
We give Thee our praises, dear Lord.

Forgive us who live by thy bounty
That often our lives are so bare
Of the garlands of praise that should
render

All votive and fragrant each pray r.
Dear Lord, in the sharpness of trouble
We cry from the depths to the throne!
In the long days of gladness and beauty
Take thou the glad hearts as Thine own.

O, common are sunshine and flowers,
And common are raindrops and dew,
And the gay little footsteps of children,
And common the love that holds true.
So, Lord, for our commonplace mercies,
That straight from Thy hand are be-
stowed,

We are fain to uplift our misgivings—
Take Lord the long debt we have owed.
—Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster.

Discouraged Churches.

We have them all over the land.
The members have tried this and that,
they have toiled and striven, they have
struggled and strained, and yet have
failed to grow as they hoped. The
hands hang down, and feeble are the
knees (as Paul describes it), and they
would gladly give up the effort.

But there are some things worse in
the land than a discouraged church;
it is a church that is lacking in vitality
and yet not discouraged!

As long as a sick man feels pain, the
physician has hope of his recovery of
health, but whenever he ceases to feel
pain, the worst of fears arises that he
is past recovery. We note upon the church
which ceases to feel its shortcomings!
For as long as it is conscious of its
disease, it will call more or less earnestly
upon the great Physician. Only
when a church is in the shadow of
death will it become unconcerned
about itself and cease to cry for help.

But to return to the church whose
members feel well nigh ready to give
up the strife. Their case is not hope-
less. We have seen such churches
arise and shine with the glory of God
risen above them. We have heard the
elders cry "Disband" and then have
seen the church grow united and vigor-
ous. Never despair!

In every case of discouragement,
there is one great cause—the personal
imperfections of the people. In not a
single church is the love of God as
deep and full as it ought to be; in
many churches and in many members
there is sad spiritual coldness. Where
this prevails, let no one wonder that
conversions are few, and the numbers
are declining. For God ordinarily
works by means; and the one means
which He specially uses is the pious
example and consistent life of His pro-
fessed people. If we do not use the
means, how can we hope to see the re-
sults which we desire?

In many churches whose members
bemoan decreasing numbers and few-
ness of conversions, there may be
found also a lack of discipline. By
discipline we do not necessarily mean ex-
clusion from the ordinances of the
Gospel; but rather such training as
will lead to the exclusion of worldli-
ness. To the church at Pergamos
(Rev. 2:14) God threatens the loss of
spiritual comfort and prosperity be-
cause of lack of discipline. If worldli-
ness be tolerated God sends loss of
prosperity, as a chastisement, upon
the church. "Repent...or else I
will come unto thee quickly, and will
remove thy candlestick out of thy
place." "Repent, or else I will come
against thee quickly, and will fight
against them (lovers of worldliness)
with the sword of my mouth." If a
church tolerates worldliness, she need
not be surprised to find within herself
cause for great discouragement.

In other churches there has been
an omission to keep the Gospel truths
prominent in the preaching. Either
false teachings have been tolerated, or
pleasant themes have been selected by
the minister to the partial exclusion of
the pure Gospel. Musical delights
have been introduced, it may be, until
the sermon is obscured in comparison
with the side attractions. But the

Spirit of God loves to work with the
weapon which He has chosen, the
preaching of sin and of God's remedy
for sin. If this weapon be thrown
aside, or seldom used, no wonder the
church becomes discouraged.

Discouragement sometimes arises
from erroneous interpretations of the
promises of God and the subsequent
false anticipations as to the fruit of
our labors. In the days of Christ the
Jews had interpreted the Messianic
promises to mean the temporal triumph
of the Jewish nation; the disciples of
Jesus entertained the same anticipa-
tion; and then when the crucifixion
cut across all this, the best they could
say was: "We trusted that it was He
which should have redeemed Israel."

So at the present day, Christ prom-
ises rewards to His faithful people;
but these rewards are not to be tem-
poral, but eternal. "I will give thee
a crown of life. I will make him a
pillar in the temple of my God." The
people of God are tempted to the ex-
pectation that the church shall put on
her crown at once; and when, instead,
they see her in the dust, they are dis-
couraged. The trouble lies with the
false expectations.

There may be a discouraging season
sent upon a church, not for any fault
of its own, but because God has a
lesson to present before principalities
and powers in heavenly places. Great
afflictions were sent upon Job, not be-
cause he was a sinner above other men,
but because God desired to refute
Satan's slander that no such thing as
disinterested service exists. To the
question "Does Job serve God for naught?"
the answer is substantially:
"Take away his property and health,
give him naught, and see how his piety
will continue undestroyed."

So sometimes with the church of
God. Her Maker may allow the church
to be put to the greatest trials, may
take away all her prosperity and lay
her in the dust in order to present be-
fore men and angels the constancy of
His people, and their faithfulness to
their Redeemer.

1. If the cause of the discouragement
is spiritual coldness, try the
power of prayer. Wait not for thy
fellows to pray, pray thyself.

2. If the trouble arises from the tol-
eration of worldliness, show thyself
unworldly. Not in a boastful way
which would make thy light shine, but
in an unobtrusive way, let thy light
shine, so that men may see the beauty
of unworldliness and be disciplined
thereby. Other discipline is for the
church officers to use.

3. If the difficulty lie in the lack of
Gospel preaching, seek for opportu-
nities in which modestly thou mayest
emphasize the truth.

4. If the encouragement comes from
misapprehension of God's promises,
study the word of God—carefully dis-
criminating between our conception of
the promises and their actual signifi-
cance.

5. If it be simply that God is using
these to teach some precious lesson un-
to generations yet to come, be content
to fill up that which is behind of the
afflictions of Christ. He suffered dis-
appointments that we might learn; we
also must be willing to bear that others
may learn.—Christian Observer.

Preach Christ.

In the erection of a building, the
foundation is of chief importance, for
upon it depends the security of the
superstructure. In the construction
of an arch, the keystone holds the
whole in safety. Most systems of
philosophy or religion have their main
principles, their cardinal truths. In
preaching, Christ is all this to the ex-
cellence and value of the sermon.
The discourse is deficient, if Christ be
not the foundation, the keystone, the
essential truth.

The Apostle Paul was a preacher
who worthily ranked as a model in
respect to the subject, mode and de-
sign of his preaching. He frequently
affirmed, "We preach not ourselves,
but Christ Jesus, the Lord." He was
conscious of but one ambition, which
enlisted the best energies of his being,
and that was to preach Christ unto a
dying world. A more worthy ambi-
tion never gave impulse to a human
soul. You may sit in judgement on
the character of the Apostle's minis-
try, you may summon before you ten
thousand witnesses to his fidelity and
constancy, and you can arrive at
but one conclusion, that Paul never
once preached Paul and him glorified,
but always and everywhere, it was
"Christ and Him crucified." How-
ever true it might be of some to-day
that they magnify themselves rather
than their office, it cannot be alleged
of the great Apostle to the Gentiles.
Never did he preach upon any other
theme than Christ: never did he
choose any other mode than that
which he considered most effective,
and never for one moment, did he
lose sight of the great end toward
which all preaching should tend.

The preacher's theme is not the cry
or a system, but a person. This is
the peculiarity of Christianity. You
cannot take its message and put aside
its Christ. His person is inextricably
interwoven with His teachings, a very
large part of which is exclusively con-
cerned with, and all of which center
in, Himself. He is not only true; He
is the truth. Our Christianity takes
its whole color from what we think of
Christ, its founder. If we think of
Him as less than the Scriptures depict
Him, we shall scarcely feel that He
should be the preacher's theme. But
if He is to us what He was to the
Apostle—the sole Revealer of God,
the Fountain of Life, the Reconciler
of man with God by the blood of His
cross, then the one message which a
man may be thankful to spend his
life in proclaiming will be, "Behold
the lamb!" Let who will preach ab-
stractions, the true Christian minister
must preach the Person and the Office
—Jesus, the Christ.

To preach Christ is to present the
facts of His life and death and resur-
rection and to transmute the biography
into a Gospel. "Jesus Christ died."
That is biography. To say that and
stop there is not to preach Christ;
but add, "for our sins,"—preach that
fact and its meaning in relation to
sinful and lost men, and you preach
Christ. A ministry of which the
Christ who lived and died for sinners
is the center to which all converges,
and from which all is viewed, may
sweep a wide circumference and in-
clude many themes, but every theme
should point to Christ and lead up to
Him.

It is essential that Christ be preached
in His entirety. The church should
never be turned into a dissecting
room, where Christ may be divided
up and dispensed piecemeal, the people
accepting so much of His person, and
teachings and work as they may see
fit. No authority is given to the
preacher to preach Christ, or to the
people to receive Christ in this frag-
mentary way. The commission is to
preach, not a divided Christ but a
whole Christ—Christ in His entirety;
Christ in His divinity and in His
humanity; Christ in the glory of His
mediatorial office and work, and in
His illustrious triumphs.

The promise of blessing is to such
preaching; and the great need today
is God's blessing upon the churches.
Preaching Christ—all Christ, Christ
to all, and always—is the prime essen-
tial; Christ the essence of all doctrine
the substance of all blessing, the
model of all virtue, the sum of all
happiness.—Chris. Intelligencer.

Making the Most of Life.

They who live longest do not neces-
sarily make the most of life. Long
life is desirable provided the years are
all filled with that which is good.
But an empty life cannot be redeemed
from vanity by length of days. A life
filled with good fruit is better than a
long life. Jesus, who made more of
His life than any other, did not live long.
His life was cut short by violence while
He was yet a young man. A life
poured out in blood for the sake of
righteousness is far better spent than
one which has been carefully guarded
and preserved even down to old age
at the expense of righteousness and
truth. In order to make the most
of life it may be necessary to lay it
down as a sacrifice.

One who finds most pleasure does
not necessarily make the most of life.
Some think there is nothing better in
the world than to have what they call
a good time. They count that day
lost which does not bring them some
special delight or worldly gratification.
But all wise men agree that mere
pleasure should be sacrificed to some
higher good. They who live in pleas-
ure are dead while they live. Jesus,
whose life was a perfect model, never
ran after pleasure. We do not know
that He ever sought it for a moment.
It was His meat and drink to do His
Father's will and finish the work
which was given Him to do. The joy
of a good conscience and the approval
of the heavenly Father are infinitely
superior to all worldly pleasure.

The man who makes the most
money does not always make the most
of life. Money is not to be despised
nor thrown away. Money is a means
of great good when properly used.
But "a man's life consisteth not in
the abundance of the things which he
possesseth." A millionaire may live
a narrow and unsatisfactory life. His
millions will be a millstone about his
neck unless they are used for some
good purpose in the world. It is bet-
ter far to be rich in good works, rich
in faith, rich towards God, rich in
character, than to be rich in gold and
silver.

It is thought by some that learning
is the thing that makes life rich and
grand. But one may be learned with-
out making much of life. Learning is
a good thing. The study of science

affords wonderful satisfaction. Few
things contribute more to the enrich-
ment of life than a well-stored and
well-disciplined mind. But knowledge
and learning are not the principal
things. Some men are wiser and
stronger without learning than others
are with it. Jesus was not a learned
man according to the standards of this
world; yet when He opened His
mouth and spoke such streams of
truth and wisdom proceeded from His
enlightened mind that His learned
enemies said, "Whence hath this man
these things, never having learned?"
Peter and John were unlearned fish-
ermen, yet they made the world
richer by their wisdom. John Bunyan
was not a learned man according to
the standard of this world, yet what
scientist or philosopher ever did so
much as he to enlighten the world?
The wisdom that cometh from above is
superior to the wisdom of this world.
It is not the scientist, but the saint,
that lives that life which is life indeed.
It is not the philosopher, but the
Christian, that is the light of the
world. It is not the scholar, but the
good man, that makes the most of life.
Chris. Advocate.

Baptism a Pledge of Faith.

The passage from which Philip
preached Jesus to the Ethiopian treas-
urer was a prophecy of our Lord's
death. Starting from this point, what
could there have been in the exposition
of Philip that led the Ethiopian to ask
that he might be baptized? The con-
nection between the dominant thought
of their conversation and the request
is made perfectly clear by a reference
to the thought of the early church as
found expression in a sentence of Paul.
"We were buried therefore with him
through baptism into death, that like
as Christ was raised from the dead,
through the glory of the Father, so we
also might walk in newness of life."
(Rom. 6:4.)

Under the guidance of Philip the
mind of this intelligent man had been
opened to see that the death of Christ
was the ransom for the sins of the
world. He believed that that divine
sacrifice availed for him. And beauti-
fully and naturally the desire found
expression on his lips that he him-
self might perform the symbolic act that
testified to his fellowship and personal
identification with the death and resur-
rection of Jesus Christ. He saw that
in this act he witnessed to his faith in
what the Scriptures prophesied, and in
what Philip had told him had been ful-
filled in Jesus.

From this point of view we look at
baptism in the light of the New Testa-
ment teaching. It is the divinely or-
dained mode of confessing Christ. In
the early church it took the place of
modern supra-Scriptural modes of con-
fession. The late Dr. A. J. Gordon
once said to the present writer that he
believed that we were in danger of
making "rising for prayers" or
"speaking in meeting" infringe upon
the place that the New Testament re-
served for baptism. It is the divinely
ordered method for expressing before
men and God our faith in Jesus Christ.
Nothing else can take the place of it.
Christ has ordained that his followers
shall pledge him their faith, not by
the use of words, but in the universal
language or a formal act—the baptism
of their bodies in water.

If baptism is a declaration of belief,
it is evident at once that infant bap-
tism is a violent perversion of the in-
tent of the act. No one can believe in
Christ for another. Belief and love
are intensely personal. They are ex-
ercises of the personal soul which can-
not be performed by proxy. It is easy
enough to see how the doctrine of
baptismal regeneration gave rise to the
practice of infant baptism. But there
are few perversions of New Testament
teaching that have done more to
obscure the conditions of salvation,
and to make religion formal instead of
vital, than the misconceptions and
false doctrines that have grown up
about theories of proxy religion.—
Watchman.

In the early days of Illinois some
men were traveling through the coun-
try with saddlebags of specie, which
was required for settlement of land
claims. Stopping one night at the
only available place, a log house, they
felt it needful to keep up alternate
watches during the night. But before
going to bed the rough man, whose
cabin they were in, took down his well-
worn Bible and read and prayed; and
one whispered to the other: "We
can both go to bed; there will be
no need of either of us watching to-
night." The fact that the rough man,
who was their host, was a praying
man, inspired a confidence that
nothing else could.—Dr. H. J.
Weston.

A conscience void of offense before
God and man is an inheritance for
eternity.—Daniel Webster.

Hard, Racking Cough.

Barring accidents, the person who
gets a cough with the least amount of
cough will live the longest. Of course,
the right time to attack a cough is at
the commencement, when it is a sim-
ple thing for the right treatment to
drive the cough quickly away. As a
general thing, however, people spend
so much time experimenting with vari-
ous remedies that the cough is well
under way before they know it. Then
comes the long siege. You feel the
hard racking all through your system,
and get relief from nothing. You fill
your stomach with nauseating mixtures
to no purpose. Then you use com-
pounds containing narcotic, which de-
ceive temporarily, as leave you
slightly worse. Some coughs of this
kind hang on for weeks or even
months, and of course, they frequently
develop into serious lung troubles. A
true specific for all coughs is Adamson's
Botanic Cough Balm, and it should be
kept in the house against any emer-
gency. With a cough that has become
chronic the first effect of this remedy
is a lessening of the dull sensation of
pain which usually is felt with such a
cough. Then you are conscious that
the soreness is leaving you, and pres-
ently the desire to cough grows less
frequent. All this process is brought
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with "F. W. Kinsman & Co." blown
in the bottle.

The life is no human life so poor and
small as not to hold many a divine
possibility.—James Martineau.

God is the spring of our best activity
and fullest energy; God is the haven
of deep and untroubled rest.—Mc-
Laren.

He that knows not when to be silent,
knows not when to speak.—Fred-
erick I.

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