# The Christian Life.

## "THIS GRACE ALSO,"

BY W. J. MOSIER.

Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians speaks of giving as a grace. It is not natural to man. It is a mark of sound conversion. When a man is saved from covetousness and avarice and selfishness he is really saved. God deserves all the credit when one has learned to give Scripturally, that is with the right motive and in the right way. A rich man in England had been noticed by his pastor to be losing interest in the spiritual and financial work of the church, and being called to his death-bed found him unwilling to give him his hand. The secret was revealed when it was found after death that he was holding with a death-grip the key of his safe. Penuriousness and piety never go together. Those who are in touch with God always realize something of the sacrifice which has been made for their salvation, that though he were rich yet for their sakes he became poor, and they love much and count it a privilege to give much according to their ability for the cause of him who gave his all for them. Usually comfort creates selfishness. Often those who suffer most are most liberal. Only the Holy Spirit can give victory over covetousness. Only he can lead one to say, "There is no joy in having money but to give it." The Holy Spirit of Christ was self-denial and self-sacrifice. The Holy Spirit is ever aiming to conform the child of God to his image. He creates the "readiness to will" and gives grace to execute. As he is obeyed he increases the ability to give. "Them that honor me I will honor." Those who make it the habit of their lives to honor the Lord with their substance are usually prospered in temporal things and able to give more and more. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty." "The liberal soul shall be made fat." The New Testament ideal is to earn money by hard work that we may have to give to him that needeth. How wonderfully this would ennoble all the callings of life! To feel that God was a partner in the work, supplying the work itself and the grace and strength to do it, prospering and blessing in it, and to feel that its results were daily and hourly being laid at his feet as a precious love-offering—this would make the dullest and most uneventful life a continual, blessed and holy romance. How this spirit would cause us to reduce our living expenses to a minimum, to economize everywhere, gathering up the fragments that nothing be lost and to give judiciously and prayerfully and generously and cheerfully. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Giving is more than twice blest. It not only "blesses him that gives and him that takes," but it satisfies the heart of God and inspires others to like generous action. Many years ago a negro entered Herrnhut, Germany, and told a carpenter and a potter the pathetic story of the degradation of his fellows in their enslaved condition in the West Indies, They said, "We wish we could," but they had no money and there was no missionary society to send them, and they feared their Moravian brethren would think them rash and unprepared. They dropped their tools and knelt upon the ground and cried, "Oh, God, let us go to the West Indies to preach the gospel. We are ready to go into slavery if need be." Soon they had the consent and prayers of the church. With three dollars in their pockets they started on foot. At last they reached Copenhagen, six hundred miles away. On every side the people with whom they talked tried to discourage them. After a time they secured something worse than third-class passage, and after untold hardship reached their field of labor. But their great work was not only blessed directly in the West Indies, but indirectly, by their example, to the ends of the earth. David Brainerd wrote in his diary, "Last year I longed to be prepared for a world of glory, but of late all my concern is for the conversion of the heathen and for that end I long to live." This saying gave a new impetus to William Carey, who was used of God to set in motion the great missionary movement of modern times. It was also an untold inspiration to Samuel J. Mills and Henry Martyn. "Are you afraid to die?" said a friend to a dying Christian. "No, I am not afraid to die, but I am ashamed to die, for I have done so little for my Lord." In India more money is spent at the shrine of one goddess, the goddess of cruelty, than our American Christians give for the cause of the world's evangelization. Let each Christian ask what his share is in this unpardonable neglect.

Is it not a question of giving to be seen of men, nor of the amount of our gifts, but of pleasing God. A ticket-man on a cold winter's night, who required of every passenger going through his gate to show their ticket, was much found fault with, and a kindly gentleman said to him, "You seem to be a very unpopular man to-night." He replied, "I am anxious to be popular and gentlemanly with only one person, and that is the superintendent." If every Christian would so give as to please God, what a transformation it would make in Christian character and what a transformation in Christian giving!

## EVANGELISTS AND EVANGELISM.

We are free to say that we believe in evangelists and evangelism. Whatever changes have come as the centuries have come and gone, there has been no change so great and unique as to make the office of evangelists merely a thing of the past and evangelism an unnecessary feature in the religious world. We cannot at this time state the reasons why we have come to this conclusion, as we desire to see the space at our disposal in suggesting a few ways by which as individuals and churches we may hope to see come to pass what has been laid upon many hearts for many months, regarding the ingathering of men, women and children into the churches through evangelistic efforts. There are sufficient reasons for believing that any man or woman who has a clear apprehension of the way of salvation, and who is able to express thought in a reasonably clear conversational manner, possesses what is requisite in order to do evangelistic work that assuredly will tell in the conversion of the unsaved. The trouble is that when a suggestion of this kind is made, most Christians at once suppose that they are urged to conduct meetings in some formal way. But we are referring to something quite apart from that. To be an evangelist, does not in the first place necessitate a meeting other than that of an individual nature. In other words, we are suggesting that individuals who themselves know the blessedness and power of God's forgiveness and saving grace, seek by personal and persistent effort to lead others into the kingdom. Surprise awaits the person who seeks—as did Andrew to bring his brother Peter to Jesus. The first awakening that is needed throughout our churches is that which stirs the individual members to understand the responsibility and privilege that are theirs to seek and to save the lost by telling in simple, though fervent and persuasive words the way of life and salvation to individuals whom they providentially meet, or whom they deliberately seek. In the second place we would like to suggest that evangelistic efforts be made within the sphere of families by those who are parents or children in the homes, where there are still those of kith and kin who have not come to the fold of Christ. Just what way may prove most effective to gain the ends desired we cannot say altogether. But we feel sure that if those in the family circle who are already participants in redeeming love rightly care about the souls of parents, children, or brothers and sisters, some ways will be envolved for impressing the unsaved members of the family with proper thoughts regarding their personal salvation. To be sure, care is needed lest wrong methods and ill-timed words should be used. At the same time greater danger lies in the mistake of leaving to the tender care of others—however earnest and well-meaning they may be, the spiritual interests of those who are as dear as life itself to the home circle. In such cases why should the evangelists not be the members of the family who rejoice in the great Christian verities, and whose experiences witness to the satisfaction and peace of the gospel of Christ? Let the fathers and mothers who for long years have made profession of Christ and his salvation, in tenderness and in faith, make a soul-saving campaign among their children, seeking all-sufficient grace and guidance from him whose they are and whom they serve.

Too many parents care for the children of others in this matter rather than for their own. The last thing we suggest at this writing is that individual churches undertake to do what they see is needful to be done to overtake the opportunities they have for aggressively prosecuting evangelistic work. We do not mean to imply that a pastor and his helpers from among his own people can accomplish always what would be done by means of an evangelist, under some circumstances. But we have great faith in what any and every pastor can do in conjunction with the men and women of his own church, when all concerned are burdened with the desire of the salvation of the souls of their community, and are determined prayerfully and faithfully to evangelize every man, woman and child whom it is possible to reach. Let not the pastors and churches wait for the wave of salvation to come from other quarters, let them rise in their own strength and desire as centered in Christ and do the work of evangelism.—*Can. Baptist.*

A little child was busy with his lessons, and they were more than he could manage; the tears came, and he burst out weeping. The father soon came to him, and said: "Laddie, does crying help you with your lessons?" The little fellow replied, "No, but crying brings some one that helps me." That is just what prayer does for us.

## PASTORAL VISITING.

It is said of Mr. Spurgeon that he remarked to a friend that the most effective sermon he preached to his immense congregation were those suggested and inspired by conversations he had with members and others upon whom he called in his pastoral round. He found books of great use, but the hearts of his people gave him better material for sermon making. He asserted that no man could preach successfully who failed to learn by conversation from his people their doubts and temptations; their joys and their sorrows. A writer has well said: "There is only one way to appear interested in people, and that is to be interested in them." To very many, pastoral visiting is the veriest drudgery, but none dare to ignore the obligations or fail to do the duty, it matters not how much distaste he has for it. It will not do for a minister to say, "I was called to preach and not to visit." Certainly, every minister took upon him the vow to visit from house to house, to shepherd the flocks of God over which he is made an overseer. The time spent in making a call should not be of such duration as to exact too much of the person to whom the visit is made, either in time or conversation, but should be enough to impress the mind with the importance of the call, and create a desire for future visitation. The frequency must be determined by circumstances.

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Give as you would if to-morrow
Found you where waiting was o'er;
Give as you would to the Master
If you met his searching look;
Give as you would of your substance
If his hand your offering took.

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Emotion is no substance for action. You love Africa? "God so loved that he gave"—what? Superfluities? Leavings? That which cost him nothing?—*G. L. Pilkington.*