

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

A GREAT NEED

It has been many years since Bishop Robert Paine said that the neglect of family religion is one of the greatest evils which can befall the church, but when he uttered it, he made a declaration which has been, now is, and ever will be, true. The Bishop also said: "Religion in the family is the only hope of the church and the world. It is the salt which must never lose its savor. It is the light which must shine constantly and brightly from Christian homes." In the light of such words of eternal verities, may we ask what dangers confront us today? Very few homes now know anything about a family altar. This was not so a hundred years ago and later. Dr. Lovick Pierce, who became a Methodist preacher in 1804, said he knew of the heads of families being turned out of the church in the early days of Methodism when they continually neglected the duty of praying with and for their families. An old book published in 1836, says:

The neglect of family prayer by the father of a family, a member of the church, would be considered censurable; and the observance of this duty is expected of a man who has a family, when he makes a profession of faith. It is probable that most evangelical ministers and churches would hesitate to receive a man into the churches, even if they were satisfied with the general evidences of his piety, if he should refuse to practice family prayer.

No longer do pastors require or expect this practise. In some homes they visit, pastors themselves are not invited to pray with the family. Fifty years ago sinners desired and expected the preacher to pray when he visited in the home. Very rarely then did a pastor leave without being requested to pray. Sad to say just the reverse is the rule now.

The cause of Christ always prospers with, but never without, family religion. As an illustration of how home religion works we quote from a letter recently received from a subscriber at Gainesville, Georgia:

Some time ago I was burdened to take up the practise of family prayer. I felt I could not live any longer without it. So I began to read and pray with my family, and three of my backslidden children have prayed through and another converted, all at the family altar. Last week two of my neighbor's girls were saved at my house, and this morning Effie Mae and another little girl took four or five little girls up-stairs, and sang and prayed till two more were saved. Praise His name forever!

This reads like a passage from the history of the early Methodists. The memoirs of Methodist fathers are full of the accounts of conversions at family prayer, also at private prayer in the woods, in the fields, at the barn, or in the bed-chamber. The Psalmist's rule was strictly followed: "Evening and morning and at noon will I pray;" and when the family altar was neglected, the family was considered backslidden.

Religion in the homes is the antidote for worldliness in the church. Imagine, if you can, a dancing card-playing, theater-going father and mother offering fervent devotions to the Almighty who has declared all lovers of the world His enemies. Leopards will change their spots before this comes to pass. Family prayers may be held in a cold, formal way for a time, but the burden soon becomes too irksome to continue. Here is the explanation of the cause of so many broken-down

family altars: when the world dominates the altar goes out.

Father, mother, let us tell you plainly, if you haven't enough religion to make the reading of God's Word and praying with your family a joyful duty, you haven't enough religion to make you enjoy heaven, if you should get there.—Methodist Instructor.

ARE YOU A SOLDIER?

Every earthly kingdom requires an army and in this particular patterns after the heavenly kingdom. In Revelation we read of the armies in heaven.

A government chooses its own soldiers, though they volunteer, they are not accepted without they meet the conditions and requirements.

Paul instructed us to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." The Tories of the Revolutionary War were the greatest enemy of the Continental army who left loved ones to suffer and themselves traveled barefoot the ice and frozen ground at Valley Forge in defense of their homes. And our modern "slacker" who brings comfort to the enemy by his anarchistic attitude while his brothers yield up their lives in the sea or are torn to atoms in the trenches, while the poor, the widows and orphans suffer privations for the sake of their country, is bringing upon himself the just scorn and derision of a patriotic people.

So likewise there are many spiritual slackers who fail to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It may be they are called of God to go into the trenches and labor for souls, but they consult their own ease and fail to answer. It may be their privilege is to stay by the staff and help furnish munitions of war for the soldiers of the cross either in home or foreign fields. Oh, my friend, life is short and opportunities are flying, be not a slacker from the service of Christ. Death is in your way.

I heard of a soldier who instead of standing at his post was found by an officer miles back from the firing line amusing himself in a flower garden. He made excuse to his officer that he was doing no harm, but it did not save him from being shot for a coward because he thus forsook his comrades in the heat of the conflict.

Another class the government brings swift judgment and to face the firing squad is the deserter. He has taken the vows of loyalty and marched to the music when hearts were light and danger far away. But the tests came and like the greater part of Gideon's army the heart failed when they saw the enemy. Oh, see the deserters from the army of the Lord. Backslidden and turned again to their own ways leaving the over-worked comrades to fall beneath their burdens.

Dare you hold back either your service or support from the faithful toilers then face the Christ in the judgment who suffered for you? Are you a deserter.

But worse than a slacker or deserter is both the work and fate of the traitor or spy. Judas was the friend who ate bread with his Master, who walked with Him to the house of God and they had sweet counsel together.

Many are posing as friends of God's work who are watching like Judas for the chance to stab in the back. They have secret meetings with the enemy and naming the price for their treachery. Are you a traitor?

The slacker, traitor and deserter are the inside foes which are striking at the vitals of Christianity to-day. Were she free from these inward foes she could easily defeat her outward enemies.

A true soldier stands out in bold contrast to those arch enemies of Christ. He passed the examination and was accepted. He donned the uniform and went into intensive training. He obeys the slightest command. Home, friends, comforts and ease are left. He delights in hardships and rejoices in the battle. His highest honor will be sung after his body lies moulding in the grave. He looks forward to the grand review in the skies.

"When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thine army shine;
In robes of victory through the skies—
The glory shall be Thine."

—M. H. Herald and The Vanguard.

THE CHILD MARTYR

In Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, a deacon from the church of Caesarea was called to endure cruel torture to force Him to deny his Lord. While he was being tortured he still declared his faith, saying, "There is but one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." His body was almost torn to pieces. The cruel Emperor Galerius seemed to enjoy looking upon him in his suffering.

At length this martyr said to his tormentors, "Ask any Christian child to worship one God, the maker of heaven and earth, and one Saviour who has died for us and is able to bring us to God, or to worship the gods many and lords many whom the Romans serve."

There stood by a Roman mother, who had brought her little boy, nine years of age, that he might witness the sufferings of this martyr from Caesarea. The question was asked the child. He quickly replied, "God is one, and Christ is one with the Father." The prosecutor was filed with fresh rage, and cried out, "O base and wicked Christian, thou hast taught this child to answer thus." Then turning to the boy he said, more mildly, "Child, who taught thee to thus speak? How did you learn this faith?"

The boy looked lovingly into his mother's face and said, "It was God that taught it to my dear mother, and she taught me that Jesus Christ loved little children, and so I learned to love Him for His first love for me."

"Let us see now what the love of Christ can do for you," cried the cruel judge, and at a sign from him the officers, who stood by, quickly seized the poor boy and made ready to torture him.

"What can the love of Christ do for him now?" asked the judge, as the blood streamed from the tender flesh of the child.

"It helps him," answered the mother, "to bear what his Master endured for him when He died on the Cross."

Again they smote the child, and every blow seemed to torture the agonized mother as much as the child. As the blows faster and heavier, were laid upon the bleeding boy, he asked, "What can the love of Christ do for him now?" Tears fell from heathen eyes as that Roman mother replied, "It teaches him to forgive his tormentors."

The boy watched his mother's eye, and no

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