

and fruitless thing. So the Spirit directs our praying in keeping with the mind and purpose of God. Basic guidance comes through the Holy Scriptures. Special guidance comes through that mysterious play of Mind on mind, that voice of the Holy Ghost in the soul.

"I cannot tell why there should come to me

A thought of someone miles and miles away,  
In swift insistence on the memory,

Unless there be a need that I should pray.

"Perhaps, just then, my friend has fiercer fight,

A more appalling weakness, a decay  
Of courage, darkness, some lost sense of right.  
And so, in case he needs my prayer, I pray."

But suppose I do not! Suppose I am pettily preoccupied. Suppose I am neglectful and heedless. Then what? The answer is unavoidable: I quench the Spirit; I damp the prayer flame. And the mischief of this sort of thing is that it tends to repeat itself. The Holy Spirit does not leave us on the slightest provocation (God forgive us if we leave that impression with the people who wait upon our ministries!), but these failures, be they never so small, do have a numbing effect upon us. Shortly the correction and reproof of the inner Monitor must be heeded or paralysis will settle upon our praying. And when this occurs, the defenses of the soul go down and all manner of temptations may tramp in upon us to crush us. And when these evil intruders reach the Holy Place of the now defeated life, they find upon its cold altar the dead ashes of a once glowing prayerfulness. Oh God, the pity of it!

### III

Don't Put Out the Spirit's Love Flame!

The next Scripture to pass before us in this review is Ephesians 5:30-32, which reads: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

It is possible to make a distinction between the offense of grieving the Spirit and that of quenching the Spirit. But the difference is not great, and our present purpose is practical; hence this treatment of the matter.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love." Love is at once the inclusive and the indispensable grace. Other Christian virtues are phases and expressions of love. To allow things that are alien to love to have any place in our hearts is to wound and hinder the Spirit of God. Such things as:

Bitterness! You, or someone close to you, receive some slight that is either real or imaginary. Instead of committing the matter to God, you brood on it. Soon you have opened a crack in the door of your mind through which sour-visaged censoriousness stealthily passes. He begins to play a steady stream of icy water on the fire of your love. There is trouble ahead.

Wrath! Anger! A critical spirit may easily seek outrush, in some moment of pressure, in ugliness of temper. And then what?

Clamour! There is strife—in the home, in the board meeting, in the church.

And evil speaking! How cruel and unfair and hurtful the tongue that has been loosed from the sweet restraints of Christian love!

Look now. Love's fire, once a thing of kindling beauty, is a smouldering by-gone or an ashy deadness. Kindness gone! Tenderheartedness gone! Forgiveness gone! Christlikeness gone! Incidentally, is there anything more devilish than a loveless profession of "perfect love?"

### IV.

Don't Put Out the the Spirit's Hunger Flame!

Finally we turn to Hebrews 3:7, where we read, "The Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

Harden not your hearts! That tenderness of conscience you have felt toward the truth of Christ was created by the Holy Spirit. Be thankful for it and act upon it, lest it turn stony within you. Those anxieties about the salvation of your soul were generated by the Holy Spirit. Recognize them as angels of grace and give expression to them in earnest prayer, lest they perish on the threshold of light. Those urgings of the striving Spirit are not coercive; such is not God's way with His morally choosing creatures. You can stifle them all. By your persistent indifference you can kill them dog-dead within your breast. Consider now the peril of it, the shame of it, the ultimate and eternal cost of it.

But this passage before us in the Epistle to the Hebrews is particularly and properly a warning to the saved rather than unsaved. It is a plea addressed to believers who have begun with Christ in the forgiveness of sins but are hesitant about going on with Christ to the experience of sanctification and to all the higher ranges of holy living. By faith they should "enter in" to that rest that remaineth for the people of God; they should "go on unto perfection"; they should partake of the "full assurance of faith"; they should "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset" them; they should "follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man see the Lord."

And what are they doing? Like their forefathers who stood hesitant and finally disobedient on the border-line of the land of Canaan, they are failing to advance with their light and enter into their inheritance in the Canaan of full salvation.

To hunger for heart purity and heart fulness without light as to the way of satisfaction is pathetic; to have such hungers and aspirations with light but without obedience is tragic. Such hungers, unappeased, will before long lose their strength. Heart hardening will be the deadly process by which the once enlightened soul goes out into a hapless, hopeless eternity.

The alternative is obedience, abandonment to God, faith in the power of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to make us what we ought to be.

"Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul,

Love is the only angel that can bid the gates unroll;

And when he comes to seek thee, arise, and follow fast,

The way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last." —Christian Witness.

### THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

A very old book, Imitation of Christ, and one of our own generation. In His Steps, in their respective ways advocate and promote the following of Jesus as our great example. The idea is excellent and the effort is worth while. But know that disappointment and defeat must ever attend such aspiration, while the heart remains unregenerate.

Therefore, the Lord said, "Ye must be born again." George Whitefield preached from this passage often. A friend said to him,

"Why do you so often use that text?" He said, "Because 'ye must be born again.'" Modern preachers will do well to bear down at the same point; for our modern Christendom is full of men and women who are but sinners, some of whom are striving to walk as He walked, but find no power within to do so. Others do not bother to strive. Church membership is good enough for them.

Nevertheless, one may be born again. He may be so transformed that his loves, his hates, his ambitions and those tastes which bear on moral things are changed. He is then a "new creature in Christ Jesus." Then he is not miserable while he tries to go God's way, but he rejoices in the will of God. He finds the Christian way delightful and this service a "glad service."

So there is no objection to the Imitation of Christ. Verily we must. But begin by submission to the will of God. There is the beginning of peace and power.—Free Methodist.

### THE DIGNITY OF THE BODY

Even among the poorest and most lowly people there is a deep respect for the dead. As we approach the casket there is no rough or loud talk or heavy footfall. And at the grave we stand with uncovered heads. With the beast it is not so. We take his hide away to find a place in our clothing or industry. We eat his flesh, or devote it to some other useful end, or dispose of it without ceremony.

The difference is here, "Ye are the temple of the living God." It is this God capacity within the human being which invests our bodies with such dignity.

Then when the brute is dead the disposition of him is final. With the human body this is not true. Christ's resurrection has brought a new prospect. His dead body received His spirit again, and that body was glorified. The promise is that our bodies will be made like unto His glorious body. This, of course, to the Christian. But the bodies of all humans shall be gathered from the dust or from the sea. "It will be very difficult," you say, "to bring the bodies of the dead and invest them again with life?" Indeed, that is true. It is an act big enough for the One who gave the bodies at the first and invested them with life. However, to remake is not greater than to make at the first. To send the spirit to reinhabit is not greater than to give the spirit to the body at the first! Is there not in what we most certainly know of the natural support for our faith in the supernatural?—Free Methodist.

### THE OLD MAN

(Continued from Page One)

means of reconciliation. That is, if Christ avoided the death penalty, God could not forgive sin without compromising with it.

So, Christian friend, as the self life stands between us and God, we are assured that death to sin is the only way to avoid compromising, hampering our services to God, limiting the power of the Blood and ultimately barring us from heaven. As Christ died for sin, so must we die to sin.

The eternal life, the life of faith, is simply the life of the higher vision.