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EDITORIAL

VACATION

What shall it be, a blessing or a curse? We have come to the time of year when many people take a vacation from their regular work. Schools close during several weeks in summer to give children and young people a rest from their studies, which is no doubt beneficial to them all. Manufacturers who have many men and women in their employ think that it pays to give their help a rest because they work better, and can accomplish more for their employers after having had a vacation, so some of them give them a vacation with pay.

And this desire for a vacation is not confined to the secular or business life of our country alone; but it is also becoming a very popular thing with the churches especially in our cities to feel that they must have a vacation also. Hence, many church doors are closed and Sunday schools are discontinued during two or three months in summer time. Preachers also seem glad to get away from their pulpits for a month or two and enjoy a vacation from religious work. Well! our Lord seemed to recognize the fact that even religious workers need a rest sometimes. We read that on one occasion he said to his disciples, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." But they evidently did not find time to rest, for when they reached the desert place, the multitudes were there awaiting Jesus' arrival, for they had seen which way he was going, and ran on foot out of all cities, and came unto him. And the Word says, "when He came out and saw much people, he was moved with compassion toward them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things." So it seems that our Lord and His disciples had to abandon the idea of a vacation that time because the need for gospel workers was so great.

I heard of one good man who said to his pastor, who was going on his vacation: "I don't think you ought to take a vacation, the devil never takes a vacation." Well, the preacher replied, "I never did believe in following the example of the devil." Well, when Christians, whether preachers or laymen take a vacaton, they should see that their vacation proves to be a blessing instead of a curse. First of all no preacher or Christian worker should take a vacation just because it is the custom for many to do so. If they do take a rest it should be because they really need it. Because the harvest is great, and the laborers are few, and the time for reaping is so short, for it seems that we are drawing near to the evening of the great harvest day. No one should think of resting unless he really needs it.

If people are weary in body then a vacation should bring the needed rest. I heard of one person who after returning from their vacation, said they would need a few days rest before they were able to go back to work. They evidently like many others had missed the object of their vacation. They had not rested.

Again, a vacation for Christian workers should prove a blessing to the soul, and not only a rest for the body. I was told that a certain lady whom I knew who had come home on furlough from a foreign mission field, said to some of her friends, "Now I don't want anyone to ask me to say grace at the table before meals, or pray, or take any part in religious work, for I am on furlough." It would seem that she had left her religion in the Far East. Well, perhaps it should suffice to say, that Christian workers should take their religion with them when they go on their vacation. However, if they would keep spiritual while they are resting their bodies and minds they should consider the place they are going to. Will their environment be conducive to godly piety? or will they have to compromise, and stifle their religious convictions in order to please those whom they associate with? If so they would better change their plans, and go where they can have spiritual freedom to worship and serve God as the Holy Spirit leads. They should have a chance to attend a good spiritual church where they can get good soul food, and also as they have opportunity to take part in the service of God that they might be a blessing to others. If we go away to a popular summer resort, to a beach, the seashore, as some do, where there is everything of a worldly and sinful nature going on with no opportunities for religious worship or soul culture, our vacation will probably prove to be a curse instead of a blessing. Finally, let us remember that our business as Christians, whether on vacation or at our post of duty, is serving God, and like the police of our country, we are on duty twenty-four hours of the day. There are always souls for whom Christ died, all about us who need to be saved. Let us try to speak a word to them about their soul needs, and show them by this, and a consistent Christian life, that we are ambassadors for Christ, and are beseeching men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.

A certain person said to Dr. Joseph Parker, the tabernacle preacher of London, one time: "Dr. Parker have you a hobby?" "Oh yes," replied the Dr. "My hobby is preaching the gospel." "Oh," replied the first, "that is your profession, I mean what do you do when you take your vacation?" "Yes, I understand," replied Dr. Parker, "when I am on my vacation I preach the gospei." "Now, Dr. Parker," replied his interrogator, "you don't understand me; I mean what do you do for pastime when you feel that that you can do as you please?" "Oh yes," replied the good man, "I understand now, when I feel that I can do as I please, I preach the gospel." Hence, serving God in preaching the gospel was not only a profession or duty to him, but a real love service which robbed preaching of its arduous aspect, and made it a delight. "Love knows no burdens in the service of its object," which makes the service of God our chief joy at all times, and our vacation a blessing to ourselves and others.

Movie Vileness—Movie magnates are distressed and mystified over the decline in audiences throughout the country. There is no mystery about it. The public is sick of propaganda against Christian standards and the malodorous vulgarity of the pictures.—James True, in Industrial Control Reports from Washington.

SELF-EXAMINATION FOR MINISTERS

By Mrs. Julia A. Shelhamer

1. Am I as saintly as my parishioners believe me to be?

2. Am I as white in my inner self and thought life as my friends imagine?

3. Does God have the confidence in me that my congregation things He has, and that I could wish Him to have?

4. Does Satan know that when he comes around "he will find nothing in me" that has an affinity for anything he or his children have?

5. If all the angels in heaven should search all the earth to find a person upon whom God could fully depend to fill a high position, would they with one consent choose me, or would there be a dissenting voice in favor of some less talented but more humble one?

6. Have I the qualities of Daniel in persecution, of Joseph in temptation, and of Christ in suffering?

Am I as sincere and dependable as some people believe me to be; or is there something just a bit questionable in my inner self that I would prefer that my family should not know? Do I have a propensity to evil which requires more curbing and watchful prayer than I believe a Christian should give to himself? Is there anything about me that would remind God of a whited sepulcher?

8. Will the Judgment reveal anything in my back life that has not been properly confessed and made right?

9. Am I as faithful to my congregation as their real needs require; or do I withhold some truths in order to gain money, ease or popularity? Can anyone accuse me at the Judgment of causing his soul to be lost because I failed to show him his sins?

10. Do I have a sweet, close communion with God? Does He talk with me personally, or are my devotions lukewarm or lagging in interest? Is there a person on earth with whom I would rather converse than with my heavenly Father?

11. Do I speak evil of others? Are their reputations as safe in my hands as I could wish mine to be in theirs?

12. Am I kind and considerate of the tenderest feelings of my family, or can I say things that hurt them, then go on, without apologizing?

13. Have I lost spiritual power by self-indulgence on any line, or am I with St. Paul "in fastings oft," and do "I keep my body under?"

14. Would I be willing to pray all night if I thought it might bring a blessing to my church or to my own heart?

Lord, let me die to self, and become all to Thee and to a lost world that is possible.

-Free Methodist

Sin is repulsive to divine love. It neither fellowships nor lends its countenance to smile upon or pity that which is enmity against God.

Love is slow to accuse, quick to yield righteous judgment, and ever willing to exert itself to the limit in setting aright its fallen brother.

More entire Bibles were distributed in China in 1937 than in any year in that great mission field's history.—American Bible Society.