

## THE SINS OF OLD AGE

By Rev. E. E. Shelhamer

Young people have their besetting sins peculiar to their age and disposition, such as foolishness, flirting, amusements and extravagance. But as old age creeps on, we find other kinds of sins, perhaps not so open, yet more subtle and damning. Let us mention a few.

**Covetousness.** As a rule those from the teen to middle age struggle with poverty. They are forced to practice self-denial. In this way they sometimes get ahead financially. Then as they grow older they continue to hold their former rigid economy, though they need not do so. But their habits and character have become fixed and they cannot change. It is too bad that many of these dear aged people do not enjoy their hard-earned money, but skimp and pinch as though they were about to land in the "poor house."

Some sins indulged in to excess will disgrace a person. Not so with covetousness. One can yield to this and give less than his full share, and yet be an acceptable member, yea, an official in high standing. But Paul calls him "an idolater," and declares he has "no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Think of it! This idolater sits on the front seat, says prayers, and is looked up to. But he is unfit for heaven!

**Deep-seated prejudice.** We read, "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children." Children may have their little spats, but as a rule they cannot hold malice. It takes old people to do this. How sad to see an aged person reaching back into the dark recesses of memory and pulling out old skeletons, which should have been buried out of sight years ago. But he rather takes satisfaction in digging up and rehashing unpleasant things, because he has never learned the great art of forgiving and forgetting. He or she must have a puny, sour soul, who has the ability and disposition to recall little slights and insults of long standing. Paul surely could have remembered much, but he admonishes us to forget "those things which are behind." And again he says, "Whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Being hard to please. Elderly people have through the years formed certain habits and ways of doing things which have become second nature and are as dear as life. Now, when for some reason they are crossed, it is no easy thing to give in graciously. You are not to blame for having an opinion of your own, but you are to blame when your opinion is disregarded and you do not keep sweet about it. If you could only realize it, you will grow in grace more when you cannot have your way.

Brother, sister, would it not be too bad if, after you had sacrificed and supported much, after you had suffered and endured much, yea, after you had wept and rejoiced much, that in your declining days you should allow yourself to get peevish and sore and cranky and in the end be unprepared when the angel comes to summon you home? God forbid!

Personally I have prayed this prayer frequently: "Good Lord, let me live as long as possible; as long as I can be a blessing and bring glory to Thy name; as long as I can build up more than in my awkwardness I knock down. But when, through infirmities, or old age, I am no longer an asset to Thee; when I grieve rather than gladden; when I scold rather than soften; in short, when I am in the way rather than in demand, please, Lord,

kiss my life away quickly and take me to Thyself, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen."

Brother, would it not be a good thing for you to go home, and after thinking over these things write your own epitaph for your tombstone and tack it up on the wall where you and your family could read it occasionally? It might have a salutary effect on your life. Write something like this:

"Here lies an old man who in his declining age had learned to grow old pleasantly. Children loved him; young people sought his counsel and company; old people eagerly desired his friendship, and no one ever called him a bore after he went out. He knew how to be silent at the right time, and when he spoke everyone stopped to listen and do him reverence. He was never disturbed because he was not noticed, and maintained his serenity when his opinion was set at naught. He loved God and thought of Him more than of himself. He lived to bless others and died happy, at a ripe old age, loving God and all men."

Say, if you do not quite measure up to this, begin now to amend and, if need be, do some apologizing so that those around you will have respect for your sincerity. You cannot afford to start out well, build up a good name, and then in your latter days be looked upon as a covetous, unsympathetic, self-centered old man.

## REJOICING IN HOPE

Rom. 12:12

Mrs. Ida M. Kierstead

The glad Easter season has come again and how we love it! It always brings new inspiration to our souls as we meditate upon the resurrection of Christ on that first Easter morning.

Many times throughout the Word of God, we read of the hope of His people. The Psalmist says "happy is he whose hope is in the Lord," and again, "My hope is in Thee."

We hear Jeremiah saying, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."

Hope held an important place in the life of Paul, and the other apostles as well as with the prophets of old.

The apostle's armour was incomplete without "the breast plate of faith and love; and for an helmet the hope of salvation."

St. Paul declared "that of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." His faith was steadfast amid all the opposition with which he had to contend.

This apostle had much to say concerning the resurrection in 1 Cor., 15th chapter, assuring us that "Death is swallowed up in victory."

We unite with Paul in "giving thanks to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," causing us to rejoice exceedingly in the hope of our salvation. I. M. K.

## AN UNKNOWN HERO

A brilliant Oxford student who went to Africa, and died after a year's work, said:

"I think it is with African missions as with the building of a great bridge. You know how many stones have to be buried in the earth, all unseen, for a foundation. If Christ wants me to be one of the unseen ones, lying in an African grave, I am content, for the final result will be a Christian Africa."

Such "unknown" heroes shall yet be "well-known" (II Cor. 6:9) in the day of "the recompense of the reward", (Heb. 11:26).—Glad Tidings.

## EASTER MEDITATIONS

(Continued from Page One)

man's greatest foes, can defeat those who are enemies of his freedom and peace.

A living Christ not only gives us hope as a nation, but even greater hope as individuals. We cannot decide for the whole nation, and choose ways that will put us wholly in line with the will of God, but we can for ourselves. We can know the power of His atoning blood to cover the guilt of our sins. We can have His Sanctifying Grace in our hearts by His Holy Spirit. We can put our hand into the hand of a living Christ and go out to face life, wars, and if need be, death, knowing that by His Grace we can "fear God and keep His commandments," and thus fulfill the whole duty of man.

## TAKE COURAGE

By Rev. Cecil M. Phillips

The sun appears in the east to bring forth a new day, the exactness of the mighty hand of God. Man beholdeth the handiwork of the Lord as He paints beautiful pictures in the clouds; how they respond to His touch. How God needs men who will respond, who will be submissive to His will, that He might use them to bring salvation to the lost, to strengthen and encourage the weak.

Many are groping in the dark. Also there are so many blind leaders of the blind, so many preaching a sinning religion—a challenge to those who have passed from death unto life, to pray and work throughout this day, to bring those in darkness into His marvelous light; to tell them not alone of One mighty to save, but also of One able to cleanse and to keep by His power, living victorious lives every moment of the day.

As David's faith in God gave him the courage to go to battle against Goliath, so that same faith in God helps men to defy false religions and point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

The Son of God shall appear in the clouds with power and great glory for His bride. God help us to have on the wedding garment. Let us take courage, let us look up, for our redemption draweth nigh. Amen!

## EFFECTUAL PRAYER

A young man in Indiana left home for a business opening in Ohio. There, a man from his own native place found him, and was shocked to discover that he had become a profane swearer. Returning home, he felt constrained to tell the pious parents of his awful degeneracy. They said little, and, in doubt whether they had understood him, he called the next day and repeated the statement. The father calmly replied: "We understand you; my wife and I spent a sleepless night on our knees, pleading in behalf of our son; and about daybreak we received the assurance from God that James will never swear again." Two weeks after, the son came home a changed man. "How long is it since this change took place?" asked his rejoicing parents. He replied that just a fortnight before he was struck with such a sense of guilt that he could not sleep, and spent the night in tears and prayers for pardon. Mark, there had been no time for any parental appeal, or even for a letter of remonstrance. While they were praying for him God moved him to pray for himself.—Illustrator.