

that the gospel of the Kingdom has been preached in all the world.

"Blessings abound wher'er He reigns:
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blessed."

Nevertheless, the unregenerate world is still, manifestly, in a state of rebellion against the rule of Christ. When God made man, He gave him dominion over earth and sky and sea, but he himself was required to yield unquestioned obedience and submission to his Maker. This our first parents failed to do—sin entered and sin's awful night began, and in the course of history deepened over all the earth.

When the angels sang over Bethlehem's hills of "Peace on earth, good will toward men," it was a song in the night—the night of the sad and tragic consequence of man's failure to govern and rule himself.

This failure was never more in evidence than now. Empires, kingdoms and governments arise, flourish awhile, and fall. The determination to rule has ever been accompanied by cruel force; and as the mastery of men over the elements of nature increases, so the force employed in the determination to rule becomes more deadly and frightful in its destructive consequence: but it will never reach its goal.

The Christ for whom the unbelieving powers of earth have found no room, He it is who is destined to reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. He who rules the world must rule in the hearts of men, and the peace for which the weary heart sighs cannot be had without submission to the Prince of Peace.

But "the darkest night is just before the dawning," and the angels' song "in the night" was never more strong and clear in the ears of true believers than now. The stage is rapidly being set for a tremendous struggle. The powers and authorities of earth are lining up on either side of two great opposing ideologies of human government, and the final clash seems inevitable and imminent; but we have this sure word of prophecy: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

The Prince of Peace shall reign; He will reign on earth; He will reign over the nations of men; He will put down all rule and all authority; He will reign in power; He will put an end to war. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea," "And his rest shall be glorious."

Thank God for the Holy Child; for the undimmed radiance of the Bright and Morning Star; for the promises which never fail; for the hope that never dies; for the King whose right it is to reign; and for the Kingdom which is increasing in strength and scope and which will be universal and everlasting.

BEFORE YOU GO TO CHURCH

Many people miss much of the value of a church service because they give no thought to it before they go. Like most human activities, worship, if it is to be real and satisfying, requires prior preparation of mind and spirit. But how many of us do come to church "a people prepared for the Lord"?

To Go, or Not to Go

On Sunday morning we may argue with ourselves whether we should get up and go to

church—which seems an irksome duty; or stay in bed and read, which seems a more pleasurable way of spending our time. If we decide to go to church, there is probably a rush to dress, a hurried breakfast, and a dash to church before the bells stop ringing. And so it often happens that we enter the house of God flurried, disgruntled, and wishing we had stayed at home. Surely, not the proper spirit in which to worship God.

The Real Preliminaries

If we are to make our worship of true value to God and to ourselves, we must prepare ourselves for the service before we go to church. It used to be said that the praise and prayers leading up to the sermon were the "preliminaries," but the real preliminaries begin **before** the service in our thoughts, prayers, and preparations for worship.

Let us think, then, about the service before we come to it. During Saturday, or on Sunday morning, we should find some quiet time to consider the act of worship in which we are to take part, and let our mind dwell on the wonder of the experience that will be ours. So we shall pray that we might be prepared to enter into communion with God in company with our fellow-worshippers.

The Secret of Success

And let us find a moment to think of the conduct of the service, committing to God in prayer those who will take part. Let us pray for the minister that he might be endowed powerfully with the Spirit of God to proclaim His message. Spurgeon was once asked the secret of his success, and he replied simply: "My people pray for me." Let us remember, too, those who lead the praise, the office-bearers, and those who will worship with us, that all might be united more closely in brotherhood and love, and that many will find new power and joy in life.

Self-Examination

Next, let us think of ourselves and our own frame of mind. What can I contribute to the fellowship in sympathy and understanding? Is there anything in my life which hinders me from full participation in the worship? If we discover any cankerous growth, like anger or resentment, we should remove it before bringing our gift to the altar. Let us pray for those who are estranged from us, for we cannot truly worship God if in our hearts there is bitterness or enmity.

Expectancy and Hope

Finally, let us set out for the service in an attitude of hope and expectancy. We are going to church to keep tryst with God in Jesus Christ. All He has promised will be ours. We know that during the worship we shall be given grace for our present and future needs. We shall find strength in fellowship with others, and we shall be led into new truths. All our fears, problems and disappointments will be left with God, and we shall experience an exhilaration of body, mind and spirit. So shall we go to church "expecting great things from God."

Source of Disappointment

People sometimes say, "Our services are dull and uninteresting." There may be truth in that criticism. Perhaps the worshippers are failing to bring to the service the spirit of hope and joy and happy expectation, because they have not prepared themselves to worship God.

Let us all endeavor to fit ourselves for future worship by taking time beforehand to attune ourselves to the experience, to cultivate the proper frame of mind, and to go ready and

expectant into the house of God. We shall know the difference in church next Sunday.

—The British Weekly

THERE IS A LAW AGAINST IT

By J. B. Chapman, D. D.

Our statute books, they say, are burdened with laws. Some of these laws are fundamental and important, some are local and of little value. The lawmakers themselves admit that the maze is baffling, but some of them explain that it is the fault of the people, for as soon as a citizen is irritated by some minor infraction of his neighbors, he sets up the cry, "There ought to be a law against that," and he is not content until provision is made for collecting penalty from any who further invade the heritage of liberty at that particular point.

But there are those who think law is nothing but the will of some arbitrarily enforced upon the conduct of others. Such people commonly suppose that the offender is immune if he can escape detection.

But in the true sense, law is fundamental. That is, order is superior to chaos. In the beginning "the earth was without form and void," but God brought order out of confusion. This is law only in its simplest form. The moral law, which is the law with which we are especially concerned, is what it is because God is who and what He is. The commandment to be holy is not based upon the ground of God's infinite wisdom or power, but upon His absolute holiness—"Be ye holy for I am holy." Codes, like the Ten Commandments, are useful not only in condemning those whose motives are bad, but also in directing those who will to do right. The cry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" demands a concrete as well as a general formula in answer, and that formula is imbedded in the rules of conduct passed on by the Lord, and agreed upon in the congresses of righteous men.

There is a law against sin, although men sometimes forget that it is so. It can never be right to do wrong, and a man's sin will find him out, whether the officers of the law can locate him or not. The fundamental law involved in the statement, "The wages of sin is death," is written in our physical, mental, moral and spiritual constitutions just as truly as it is written in the Bible. "He that sins must suffer," and there is no exception. There is, in the atonement of Jesus Christ, provision for substitution in penalty and for pardon for the sinner's guilt, but even this does not save from all the penalty of sin, for sin's effects outlive its guilt, and it is a maxim as applicable to pagans as to Christians, "The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind very fine." No man can really "break" the law. He may violate the law, but the law remains and will finally break its violator. Only the holy are truly happy, and only the righteous are free.

DOES YOUR CHURCH WANT A REVIVAL?

If all the Sleeping folk will WAKE UP
And all the Lukewarm folk will FIRE UP
And all the Dishonest folk will CONFESS UP
And all the Disgruntled folk will SWEETEN UP
And all the Discouraged folk will CHEER UP
And all the Depressed folk will LOOK UP
And all the Estranged folk will MAKE UP
And all the Gossipers will SHUT UP
And all the Dry Bones will SHAKE UP
And all the True Soldiers will STAND UP
THEN YOU ALL CAN HAVE A REVIVAL

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