

The King's Highway

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When We Worship

Oliver G. Wilson in "Wesleyan Methodist"

Have you not observed how difficult it is to really worship in spirit?

A thousand duties come clamoring for attention, some of them important and some trifling.

A good lady of unquestioned piety once declared: "When I settle myself in the sanctuary on Sunday morning for worship I am disturbed with: The pot roast!—did I turn that oven low enough? or, I wonder if I turned off the burner under the coffee pot. Then a look at Johnnie and I am reminded that I should have had his hair cut yesterday. If Mrs. Blank and her family are here this morning, I should invite them home for dinner, but my house—the children did not get their room in very good order."

This good lady is not the only one who is thus plagued while in the sanctuary for worship of the Almighty.

We have one hour on Sunday morning for worship. We herd our well-scrubbed brood into the sanctuary, each one placed so that he can make the least disturbance possible by quarreling with another one of our lively family. We fall into the pew and look about us. There is Mrs. Jones, she does look pale this morning, but no wonder after all she has been through. There is that new family from the old mill house, dressed "fit to kill." Everyone knows he makes such a small wage; I'd think she would be more considerate.

And we are supposed to be in the act of worshiping God, the Being to whom we must give account of every idle moment.

Distracting thoughts come tumbling over each other when a soul goes to the place of worship. Often a weariness settles upon the soul until concentrated thoughtful worship is almost impossible.

The Master asked the disciples in the Garden the night of the betrayal: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" It could be that the Lord is speaking to you and to me, preoccupied worshipers, lest the good seed of the kingdom fall among the thorns and it be choked.

It is highly probable were we to be the judge of others who were guilty of such irreverence we would be very harsh with them, but we excuse ourselves, we make allowance and explain. We then go home at the end of the worship hour and wonder why the minister was so dull this morning. I guess we should have changed preachers this conference.

The disciples missed their greatest hour — preoccupied, asleep, when they should have been praying. Many another disciple has missed the great hour of spiritual blessing by preoccupation. In order to avoid irreverent attitudes in the worship hour—

1. Rise early enough Sunday morning so that there

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God and Your Income

Editor, "The Church Herald"

St. Paul, in his Corinthian letter, tells us that we ought to practice stewardship to the tune of the Hallelujah Chorus. Therefore he moves at one point, the close of chapter 15, from contemplation of the victory over sin and death in God's gift of eternal life, to the matter of the "collection" for the saints. It may seem to some that this transition from the resurrection to the collection is disconnected, somewhat of an anti-climax. But not so to Paul. He was not ashamed of the collection plate. He was not afraid to urge upon Christians the practice of stewardship of their possessions. What value is the resurrection hope, if it does not have power to make believers abound in the Lord's work through sacrificial giving? What is immortality without generosity?

The New Testament presents certain rules for giving. There should be a definiteness about it. It is to be systematic, planned, not haphazard. It is to be periodic—"on the first day of the week"; personal—"let each one of you"; provident and fore-handed, not a leftover—"lay by him in store"; and proportionate—"as he may prosper." We are not to give as emotion stirs us, or fails to stir us, but keeping an account, and setting aside His portion. What is that portion? I believe it is the tithe, not as a command, but as a guide. There are many people who ought to give much more than a tithe, because they can. And many do, because they love the Lord's work. As Mr. R. Le Tourneau, who gives 99% of his income to Kingdom causes. Jesus' statement about the tithe is expressed. "These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone." What was rendered obsolete in the Old Testament law was the ritual, the sacrifices, the temple. If that tithe was a true proportion then, how much more ought it to be gladly accepted by those who live under the fuller light and blessing of the Gospel of grace. You may object that the New Testament says little about the tithe. It also says very little, for instance, about the Lord's Day. But that silence was due to the fact that worship on the Lord's Day and giving of the tithe were such accepted practices that there was no disagreement or conflict concerning them. All the Jewish people were already tithing. Does the New Testament Church appeal to you as one which was alive in a new vitality of prayer, a new richness of fellowship, a new radiant faith and devotion, but a letdown in giving? There was not much need to teach or urge tithing in a church where they sold their possessions to share with those in need. Even the pagans customarily gave a tithe to their gods, their religions. When Paul wrote "as he may prosper," they knew and understood what proportion he meant. God asks for one day in seven especially set aside for His worship and service, and one-tenth of our income especially set aside for the promotion of His work among men.

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