

MISSIONARY VOLUNTEER Spring Week of Prayer

March 17-24, 1923

Including

Missionary Volunteer Day

TO BE OBSERVED *in all the Churches in the United States and Canada*

PROGRAM

Sabbath, March 17: Missionary Volunteer Day	
The Call of the Mission Fields to Our Young People	Meade MacGuire
The Parents' Part	M. E. Kern
Junior Possibilities	Harriet Holt
Sunday, March 18	
The Value of a Right Purpose	C. K. Meyers
A Place for the Youth	E. F. Collier
Monday, March 19	
The Victorious Life	Meade MacGuire
Faith and Feeling	Selections from the Spirit of Prophecy
How to Have Victorious Faith	Selected
Tuesday, March 20	
Knowing for Ourselves	H. T. Elliott
How Light Came to Lady Somerset	Louis Albert Banks
Faith	Sarah K. Bolton
Wednesday, March 21	
Personal Service	E. F. Peterson
The Earthen Vessel	
Thursday, March 22	
Home Religion	C. A. Russell
What Sort of a Father Are You?	Selected
Friday, March 23	
How to Overcome Temptation	H. S. Premier
The Sufficing Bible	Amos R. Wells
Sabbath, March 24	
The Consecration Sacrifice	H. T. Elliott

"THERE are many who ought to become missionaries, but who never enter the field because those who are united with them in church capacity or in our colleges do not feel the burden to labor with them, to open before them the claims of God upon all their powers, and do not pray with and for them. The eventful period which decides the course of life passes, their convictions are stifled, other influences and inducements attract them, and temptations to seek positions that will, they think, bring them financial gain, take them into the worldly current. These young men might have been saved to the cause."—*Counsels to Teachers*, pp. 500, 501.

"THE youth who finds joy and happiness in reading the word of God and in the hour of prayer, is constantly refreshed by draughts from the Fountain of life."—*Testimonies*, Vol. IV, p. 624.

The Church Officers' Gazette

Issued monthly
Printed and published by the

REVIEW AND HERALD PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
at Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., U. S. A.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Yearly Subscription - - - - - \$.90
Clubs of two or more copies to one address, one year - - - - .75

EDITOR - - - - - T. E. BOWEN
ASSOCIATE EDITORS - - - - M. E. KERN, J. A. STEVENS

Entered as second-class matter, January 20, 1914, at the post office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on June 22, 1918.

Purpose and Plans

THE purpose and scope of this week may not at once be fully comprehended from the title, Missionary Volunteer Spring Week of Prayer. This is not merely a departmental feature, but it should be rather an awakening of the whole church for the salvation of our young people. The custom has prevailed among our schools of having a Spring Week of Prayer, when a special spiritual effort is made to quicken the religious life of the students. Many of our youth in training have thus been greatly benefited and helped to a more complete sense of their privileges and duties as Christians.

Why not extend the influence of this work? The answer is found in the effort which is being made to bring a special spiritual revival to all our youth in this special week, March 17-24. It is very fitting that this special week should be the same as that of the Spring Week of Prayer in our educational centers. As a result of this week of endeavor to assist our young people, we trust that a large number of them may be converted, and that great blessings will come to the entire membership of the churches.

It is the plan that the entire force of laborers in each conference, as far as can be consistently arranged, visit the churches during this week; and that a special effort be made to reach all our children and youth, to bring such as are not in the fold to a decision for Christ, and to lead others to a deeper sense of their responsibilities and to a complete consecration to God.

It would be well for the local conference committee, with the Missionary Volunteer secretary, to plan for the placing of ministers and workers in churches and companies where the largest number of needy young people can be reached, and in the most effective way.

Definite calls have come in from the field, asking that material be furnished and a definite program suggested for each day. It is in compliance with these requests that the Missionary Volunteer Department submits this program.

In some conferences, no doubt, there is not a sufficient number of laborers to supply each church during the week. It is thought that this matter will prove especially helpful in churches and companies where no worker from the conference is sent.

Do not forget the Juniors. Seek to simplify the talks given so as to make them helpful and interesting to the children. Do not place the manger so high that the lambs cannot reach the food.

It is earnestly desired that this special effort be continued through the week, even in churches where there is no conference laborer present. If much prayer and careful planning are put into the work of preparation, this special Week of Prayer can but result in a real revival. Let this be your prayer: "O Lord, bring a revival into our church, and let it begin in us."

Plans for Evangelistic Work

A SERIES of resolutions were passed by the Missionary Volunteer Department at its council held in connection with the 1920 Fall Council, along the lines of evangelistic efforts for the young, a part of which follow:

1. "That very careful study be given to presenting the gospel in its simplicity, that the young people may have a thorough understanding of what it means to make a full surrender to God, to exercise faith, and to live the victorious life.

2. "That ordinarily in a series of meetings, a few meetings he devoted to a clear presentation of these great truths before making a call for full surrender, recognizing the fact, however, that it is often helpful to call for definite decisions on special lines, day by day, such as Bible study, and pledges against reading novels. That when calls for surrender are made, they be very definite.

3. "That when individuals give evidence that such definite decisions have been made, the workers should heartily recognize the fact.

4. "That the organization of prayer and personal workers' bands should always precede a revival effort, to the end of doing thorough work for the unconverted, and training Christian young people in soul-winning.

5. "That very careful plans be made for holding the results of our revival efforts, by having local church workers unite with us in the efforts, so that they can intelligently continue the work; by continuing the prayer and personal workers' bands; by enlisting the co-operation of parents and interested friends of individuals who have surrendered; and by personal correspondence with special cases.

6. "That when young people have been brought to a decision for Christ, the work be followed up by preparing these young people for baptism, and encouraging them to go forward in this sacred ordinance and in uniting with the church.

7. "That while mature women workers can do good work for boys and young men, and likewise men for girls and young women, the greatest care should be exercised to observe strictly a proper degree of reserve toward those of the opposite sex."

Methods

To introduce young people to Christ, we must be near to the young people and near to Christ; we must *know* both. To do this will take time, and study, and prayer.

If we *know* young people, doubtless the most important "method" is to find a point of contact and begin there. Be genuinely friendly. You need not fear to have it known that your one great burden is for their salvation, but you do need to let the young people understand that you are keenly alert to other things that are of special interest to them. Choose your themes and illustrations with the nature and interests of the young in mind. Your life, your thoroughness of preparation, your prayers, your thoughtful consideration of feelings, your interest in them outside of meeting, your appeal,—all will tell the young people in no uncertain tones just what your interest is.

A few preliminary meetings with the church officers, together with the Sabbath school and Missionary Volunteer officers and any others who are working for the youth, are very essential. Study and pray with these church workers until they have the spiritual vision and a genuine burden. With them put forth united action for a revival in the church, and especially for the salvation of the younger members of the Lord's family.

If there are already Prayer and Personal Work bands in the Missionary Volunteer Society, take a special interest in them. These young people can more than double the efficiency of your efforts. Besides, if you can vitalize and stabilize these bands, you have provided for holding and increasing the results of your effort, leaving in the church the elements of spiritual growth and power.

In laying a firm foundation for intelligent decisions, we have found it helpful frequently to pursue a teaching method, drilling the young people in the repetition of important statements, and frequently reviewing the fundamental truths taught.

It is also very helpful to place leaflets in their hands on vital subjects. The Missionary Volunteer Department publishes an extensive series of leaflets for this purpose. It seems to us that it just about doubles the influence of a talk on courtship and marriage, for instance, to pass out at its close the leaflets, "What God Hath Joined" and "Marrying Unbelievers."

Printed pledges or resolutions are often helpful in getting the issues before the young. Some are suggested in the section, "Literature Helps."

Literature Helps

PRAYER bands should be organized at the beginning of the week. A sufficient number of Missionary Volunteer Pledge No. 13 (Prayer Band Pledge Card) should be ordered from the tract society so that one may be placed in the hand of

each member of the bands. Price, 70 cents a hundred. It reads as follows:

PRAYER BAND PLEDGE CARD

Since Christ Himself makes soul-winning work the evidence of true discipleship, I consecrate my life to Him for service, and especially for the sake of those named on the back of this card. God helping me, I agree to pray much in secret, to meet faithfully with my band, and to put forth continuous, definite effort for one or more persons.

On the reverse side are lines for recording the members of the band and also for a prayer list.

Another card, Missionary Volunteer Pledge No. 12, should be ordered for use on Decision Day. Price, \$1 a hundred. It reads as follows:

MY DECISION

Without Christ I am lost. He died to save me. Not to be wholly Christ's means at last to be wholly lost.

The Spirit of God tells me: "Every act of transgression, every neglect or rejection of the grace of Christ, is reacting upon yourself; it is hardening the heart, depraving the will, benumbing the understanding, and not only making you less inclined to yield, but less capable of yielding, to the tender pleading of God's Holy Spirit." — "Steps to Christ," p. 33, pocket edition.

**I MUST DECIDE THIS GREAT QUESTION
IT MAY BE TOO LATE IF I DELAY
MY DECISION IS MADE**

Lord Jesus, I give myself wholly to Thee. Henceforth, by Thy grace, Thy will shall be my will; Thy life, my life.

Other helps suggested are the following:

Missionary Volunteer Camp-Meeting Helps	\$.25
"The Ministry of Healing"	2.00
"Education"	1.25
M. V. Pledge No. 10, Personal Resolutions .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 50, Lives of Great Men .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 19, Messages to Young People (Testimonies) .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 23, The Life-Work .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 35, Marrying Unbelievers .....	.03
M. V. Leaflet No. 49, What God Hath Joined .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 16, Parents' Meetings .....	.03
M. V. Leaflet No. 59, The Christian Home .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 60, Your Mother .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 71, Keep the Home Fires Burning .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 67, God's Remedy for Sin .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 61, Our Young People and Their Work .....	.01½
M. V. Leaflet No. 64, The Secret of Soul-Winning .....	.00½
M. V. Leaflet No. 47, Personal Work .....	.04
M. V. Leaflet No. 68, For Backsliders Only .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 69, Is Jesus Real to You? .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 66, Margaret's Morning Watch .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 72, Others May; You Cannot .....	.00½
M. V. Leaflet No. 74, Living the Life That Wins .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 75, With the Book of Books .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 76, Storing Light (Junior Bible Year) .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 77, To Love, Honor, and Cherish (Marriage Experience) .....	.02
M. V. Leaflet No. 78, Life's Purpose at the Judgment Bar .....	.01
M. V. Leaflet No. 79, What Shall I Read? .....	.03

Suggestions to Church Officers and Workers

The program outlined below and the material given for each day are intended for helps, but are not given with any idea of binding to a set program. Study and pray concerning your local needs. It is the spirit of longing for salvation, and not a program followed to the letter, which will make the work of the week a success before the Lord. The minister will, of course, use his own judgment in each case regarding the method. The following are merely suggestions:

1. Organize prayer and personal workers' bands to meet daily.
2. If possible, hold a service each day in the church, using the program outlined as a basis for study.
3. Urge that whoever takes any leading part in these meetings shall be thoroughly prepared. Give the articles as talks if possible. If others are asked to read questions or scriptures, pass them out before the meeting.
4. Endeavor to make the meetings deeply spiritual. Seek God earnestly. Give opportunity for testimonies by individuals at several of the meetings.
5. Urge earnestly that all engage in personal work especially for the youth. It would be well for the leaders to call to mind all the young people connected with the church by church membership, family ties, and close friendship, and arrange for every one of these in the community to be personally visited by a reliable personal worker of the church, and invited to take his stand for Christ.
6. Furnish the names of all the youth connected by church membership, family relationship, and close friendships with the message in the community, to the conference Missionary Volunteer secretary, with a brief statement of the facts in each case for future follow-up work.
7. Remember the Missionary Volunteer devotional features, the Morning Watch and the Bible Year. (See "Missionary Volunteers and Their Work.") Have the youth take the Morning Watch pledge. This could well be done Friday evening. At the close of the week it may be possible to organize a Standard of Attainment class among the young people, to meet week by week.
8. Urge those who ought to attend school to go. Furnish their names to the conference Missionary Volunteer secretary.
9. Some of our churches are so situated as to make a meeting on every night of the week impossible. Let the leaders plan for the people to meet in groups at their homes. Let us bring a spirit of study and prayer for our youth to the family altars in the home.
10. Endeavor to make the last Sabbath a very earnest spiritual meeting, in which old and young renew their consecration. Give opportunity for the expression of their decisions after the reading. At this time it would be fitting to present the decision day pledge, Missionary Volunteer Pledge No. 12.

The Program

The program suggested for Missionary Volunteer Week is outlined on the front page of this paper.

It is left with the elder or leader of the meetings to arrange the details of the program for each day, select the hymns, arrange for special music, arrange the order of the service, etc. Do not feel you must use all the material given, nor that you must confine yourself to this.

With a prayer that the efforts put forth this week may result in the saving of many precious souls in the kingdom of God, we submit the following studies as a suggestive outline.

COMMITTEE.

Sabbath, March 17, Missionary Volunteer Day

The Call of the Mission Fields to Our Young People

MEADE MAC GUIRE

For years we have been saying that the success of our work in the future depends to a great extent upon the salvation and training of our young people. There is still much territory to be claimed for Christ, and it will take many willing hands and strong hearts and cultivated minds to reach the unnumbered millions of heathendom. The ideal placed before us in the Testimonies should mean more and more to us as we see more clearly the magnitude of our work.

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!" — "Education," p. 271.

Conditions in the world indicate that time is short, and that there must be no mistake as to the nature of this right training and the necessity of imparting it without delay. In order

to do this, it is most important that we understand more and more fully what is required of us in giving the message to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Hundreds of Millions in Darkness

There are certain expressions current among us, which if not rightly understood may be quite misleading. It is said that "our literature is now published in languages reaching fifteen sixteenths of the world's population." In this connection we must not forget several facts, actually staggering from a human viewpoint, and which can be faced bravely and hopefully only as we exercise absolute faith in God's word and His movement.

There are in the world approximately fifteen hundred languages and dialects. This message is published in one hundred of them. The Bible itself is published in only seven hundred, or less than half. It is true that many dialects are spoken by only a few thousand or hundred thousand people, but surely some one must learn all these hundreds of languages and give the message to these people.

Then again, while it is true the message is published in several of the leading languages and dialects of China, we should remember that at least four hundred millions in China cannot read any language, and they are in dense spiritual darkness, without a vestige of knowledge of the true God. Other scores of millions of illiterate heathen living in India, Africa, Japan, Korea, and many other lands, constitute a tremendous challenge to our young people. A young person in one of our schools in America or Europe cannot imagine how insignificant and helpless he would feel if placed in the midst of millions of illiterate heathen, to whom the Bible is an unknown book and Jehovah an unknown God.

It is said by careful students of missionary conditions in the world that the heathen are increasing so rapidly that, notwithstanding the operation of all missionary societies, there are more heathen in the world today than ten years ago, or one year ago. Also that the proportion of Christians and heathen throughout the world today is approximately the same as in the days of the apostles.

These facts should arouse us to realize the necessity for every young person capable of service, to volunteer his life and talents for these perishing millions for whom Jesus died, many of whom will respond to His message and prepare for His coming.

For Educational Work

It is evident that among the heathen much must be done in educational lines. Hundreds of consecrated teachers are needed and would be welcomed in heathen lands. Many of the schools we now have are undermanned.

I visited schools where a worker from the homeland was struggling with a difficult language, teaching children who know nothing of Christianity, and with no help but native teachers who are little better off than the students. In the Philippine Islands we have hundreds of children of our own people for whom we have no teachers. In China we can probably accomplish as much by starting schools and reaching the parents through the children as in any other way. There are millions of children, and the opportunities are unlimited for Christian teachers, but the teachers are few indeed.

Medical Work

Some time ago I was in a little city in America where several graduate nurses from our sanitarium training schools were located. There were so many trained nurses in the place that often these young women were idle. There were not enough sick people to keep all the nurses busy.

I told them that if they would go to China, they could locate where they might have millions of sick and no competition. One cannot conceive, without actually seeing, the awful conditions which prevail where there is no idea of hygiene or sanitation, no protection against contagion or infection. There are millions of cases of sore heads, sore eyes, skin diseases, tuberculosis, social diseases, and all manner of maladies. It is so pitiful to see them, and no one to help. Oh, if our young people could once see the awful misery and suffering unrelieved by the simple means we all know, they would be hard-hearted indeed not to respond, and go as quickly as possible to carry the gospel of healing.

Evangelistic Work

Probably the most extensive and oft-repeated calls are for evangelists. The way may be pioneered and the seed sown by schools and medical work, and the circulation of literature, but far more must be done in all heathen lands in evangelistic work. Where the people cannot read, there is no other way to reach them except by public preaching and personal work with individuals and from house to house.

Conditions vary greatly in different lands. A few of the heathen seem actually eager to learn of God and to accept Christianity. But our young people should not volunteer for the foreign fields with the idea that the millions of poor people in heathen lands are standing with outstretched hands, begging for the bread of life. Nor should they imagine that though they have never won a soul to Christ at home, it will be easy in the foreign field. As a rule, I believe it is vastly more difficult to bring a soul to Christ in almost any heathen land than in an English-speaking country. Therefore, every young person should know from experience that he has learned the secret of soul-winning before he goes out to win the heathen.

It is difficult to think of anything more unfortunate and pitiable than for a young person to volunteer and be sent out to save the heathen when he himself is not saved. The exhibition of selfishness, pride, anger, or impatience, and a lack of real Christlike sympathy on the part of the missionary, simply paralyzes the work, and makes progress almost impossible. It is hard to understand how some can volunteer for service in heathen lands, apparently because they are church members, and have gone through our schools, yet who read fiction, go to theaters, or play cards. Such persons cannot advance the cause of God in heathen lands. God calls for heroic young men and women, who are willing to renounce the world, and live a life of prayer and self-denial. Such a life is full of thrilling adventure, for it is a continual conflict with the mighty principalities and powers of darkness, but with victory always certain. The call of the heathen was ever ringing in the ears of the apostle Paul, and we might honestly say as he said, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians." Shall we not as earnestly say, "So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel" to the hundreds of millions now sitting in darkness?

The Parents' Part

M. E. KERN

ALL that concerns the lives of young people likewise concerns their parents, for God has made parents responsible for their offspring. From birth to maturity, constant effort, watchcare, and sacrifice are necessary. God-fearing parents recognize this sacred obligation. Their lives are bound up with the welfare and development of their children. For them they live, and for them, if need be, they would die.

The Bible condemns those who fail to provide for their own. 1 Tim. 5: 8. The provision referred to doubtless includes the physical necessities of life. It is the duty and privilege of parents to feed and clothe their children, to maintain by all possible means their physical health, and to care for them in sickness.

But does the responsibility stop here? The mind is more important than the body, and the spiritual nature—the moral and religious life—is more important still. Those who fail to provide mental and spiritual food for their children, have most surely denied the faith, and are worse than infidels. As the spirit of prophecy has said:

"On fathers and mothers, God has placed the responsibility of saving their children from the power of the enemy. This is their work,—a work that they should on no account neglect. Those parents who have a living connection with Christ will not rest until they see their children safe in the fold. They will make this the burden of their life."—*Testimonies*, Vol. VII, pp. 10, 11.

It is the duty of parents who gave their children birth, to travail in soul that they may be born again. It is the duty of those who teach their children to walk, to teach them also, day by day, to walk in the ways of righteousness. It is the obligation of those who teach the child to speak, to teach him the wonderful art of communion with God in prayer. It is a sacred obligation upon those who have had most to do with the nurture

and training of their children, to render them every possible assistance in choosing their course, and in making their plans for life. The failure to perform these obligations, whether because of ignorance, lack of genuine love, or absorption in less important things, is the tragic failure of parenthood.

The parent who senses the sacredness of these obligations will study to show himself approved unto God, a workman in the home that needs not to be ashamed. He will study and restudy the great principles of right living, in order that he may make them clear to his children. He will carefully consider what has been written in the Bible and in the spirit of prophecy with reference to the parents' part. He will prayerfully study children and young people themselves, to be able to adapt the great truths of life to their needs, and efficiently teach them.

How Parents May Help

The parents' part, then, in this Missionary Volunteer movement, is to manifest a deep interest in the young people's work in the church, and to encourage the children and young people to take an active part in it. Here the church takes hold, co-operating with the parents, to train the children in missionary endeavor. But the church cannot do this work alone.

The missionary spirit should be generated in the home. In Volume VII of the "Testimonies," page 11, we read:

"As you take your children with you into the service of the Lord, what a victory you gain. . . . If fathers and mothers would work for the members of their own families, and then for those around them, uplifting Christ by a godly life, thousands of souls would be saved. When God's people are truly converted, when they realize the obligation resting on them to labor for those within their reach, when they leave no means untried to rescue sinners from the power of the enemy, the reproach will be removed from our churches."

And let me tell you, my dear brethren and sisters, among the thousands saved by this kind of home missionary effort will be your own boys and girls; for young people who grow up in this kind of atmosphere will, as a rule, find victory over sin, and will take up soul-winning as a life business.

Not Self-Centered

I am writing this on the steamship "Makura," bound for Australia. For seven days we have sailed on this broad expanse of water without so much as sighting a ship. The only sign of life seen outside the ship has been a few birds, and in the last two days a few flying fish that jump out of the water and sail along the surface for a few yards and disappear again. But the passengers are interested in each other. They converse, they play games on the deck. Once or twice on the upper deck they have had a dance in the evening. There is an orchestra on board which plays quite well, and entertains us at luncheon and dinner. Suppose we should conclude that we are quite happy and contented thus, and that we do not care to land or to come into contact with others again, but just to keep on sailing and enjoying one another's society the remainder of our lives. It is unthinkable, isn't it? Every passenger on this boat has broader interests than are centered here. There are people they love and desire to help in various lands.

Even so sacred a place as the home must not be self-centered. If the homes of the church are vitalized by this atmosphere of unselfish ministry, there will be no lack of interest in the Missionary Volunteer work on the part of the children or their parents. The parents will recognize this as a broader sphere of missionary activity, and a valuable training for their children in association with other young people along lines of service especially adapted to the youth. And they will recognize in the Missionary Volunteer Society a training school for still broader service, and will encourage their children to make the Missionary Volunteer aim their life purpose,—“The advent message to all the world in this generation.”

Parents' Co-operation Needed

It is safe to say that no Missionary Volunteer Society can succeed in the truest sense without the co-operation of the parents, in encouraging their children in the work, and in carrying out the ideals of the society in the home. If parents, by word or action, indicate that they consider the Junior Missionary Volunteer Society as of small importance, the Junior superintendent will likely have a difficult time in interesting

those children. And the lack of interest on the part of the children from one family may have an unwholesome influence on the whole society. And when there are special activities of any kind requiring the assistance of older ones, the parents should always stand ready to help. Any general missionary activity of children needs adult supervision; and in such supervision, or chaperonage, parents may show their appreciation of the children's work, and at the same time enter into companionship in religious service that will be invaluable to both.

Parents should attend some meetings of the Missionary Volunteer Society, in order that they may intelligently co-operate with the society, and that they may understand the influences and training being received by their children.

But above all things do not go to criticize. The young people may not be doing it even as well as you could, but they may be doing it even better than you could have done it at their age. Remember that you can do far more by commendation than criticism. The boy may have become confused in presenting his part on the program, but he did his best, and is improving. Tell him how you appreciated it, and you will probably turn discouragement into victory, and contribute something toward the preparation of a future worker. If you feel that some corrections should be made, perhaps you should counsel with the church elder about it. Or you may make kindly suggestions to the leader, or to your own children if you think that might help. Your attitude may be such that your own children and others will come to you for advice; and that is best of all.

If there is a Missionary Volunteer picnic or social gathering, for the sake of your own and others, interest yourself in knowing whether it is properly chaperoned. And if the older members of the church are included, be sure to be there. It is very wholesome for young people and their parents to play together. And, of course, you will help financially, if need be. One of the best ways to render such help may be to make it possible for your children to earn the money which they need.

In closing I wish to direct your attention to a ministry open to Christian homes which is altogether too much neglected. In "The Ministry of Healing," pages 354, 355, we read:

"Our homes should be a place of refuge for the tempted youth. Many there are who stand at the parting of the ways. Every influence, every impression, is determining the choice that shapes their destiny both here and hereafter. Evil invites them. Its resorts are made bright and attractive. They have a welcome for every comer. All about us are youth who have no home, and many whose homes have no helpful, uplifting power, and the youth drift into evil. They are going down to ruin within the very shadow of our own doors."

"If we should show an interest in the youth, invite them to our homes, and surround them with cheering, helpful influences, there are many who would gladly turn their steps into the upward path."

Junior Possibilities

HARRIET HOLT

We are apt to shake our heads over the boys and girls of the adolescent age, and think that if we can only get along some way until they come to themselves, we have done the best that can be expected of us. We fail to realize that those years between twelve and sixteen are the years of greatest possibility that ever enter the life at any time, that it is an age of great awakening. For the first ten years of life, the boys and girls have looked little farther than the confines of their own homes. At most, their horizons have gathered in no more than their school and community. Now, breaking over all barriers, they are getting their eyes on the world, and it is a wonderful place. They see no obstacles to marvelous achievements. And so the Junior age is often irresponsible, impractical.

We judge that boy heartless who spends hours perfecting some useless toy water wheel, while his tired mother pleads, or scolds, for a little more kindling. We wonder if he will ever amount to "a row of pins;" but some day that boy is going to bridge the gulf between his dreams and the every day. And then with toes on earth, he'll harness his dreams for the world's use.

Age of Conversion

It is during this age that dreams often take some altruistic form. Several very practical, helpful people in the world have

told me that they had great dreams in which they were always the hero or heroine, feeding thousands of helpless children (the cost of such food never seemed to enter their minds), or rescuing helpless natives from the terrors of man-eating tigers. Now stop and think, practical business man, doctor, or teacher, did you ever live in a world of dreams? Then let us not harshly judge the sincerity of the junior who longs to alleviate suffering in foreign lands while making selfish demands in this home.

Just as this great awakening comes into the junior's mental world, just so does a great awakening come into his spiritual life. There are more conversions — the kind that hold through — at the age of ten than at twenty-four; the two extremes of the adolescent age. There are more at the age of fifteen than seventeen. The sixteenth year marks the zenith of susceptibility to the pleading of the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that with broadening of vision comes the deepening of vision, until it may catch a glimpse of the great Fatherhood of God. And let us put forth every effort to encourage such an awakening.

The junior age is a habit-forming age. Mental and physical growth is about complete. The lines which thought and act make in the brain are deepening, and becoming fixed for life. As one student of adolescence remarked, "O that sixty could make the choices of sixteen!" But it cannot. This fact is a challenge to you and me. No helpful habit is too small to encourage in our boys and girls.

Purpose-Forming Age

It is not my purpose to describe at any length the characteristics of this junior. There are, however, one or two predominant features of this age, which so link it with the life of the adult that every one of us should take it into consideration when we associate with boys and girls.

I have already mentioned the world of dreams in which most juniors live. But they not only idealize the world in general; they idealize people. They weave a wonderful mantle of perfect manhood or womanhood, and then they look about them to choose some young man or woman of their acquaintance upon whom to drape this robe. That is why we often find a junior critical. Once, however, that person is found, he is perfect. It is a joy for the boy to watch his hero, to follow him step by step. What greater calling could a young man or a young woman have than to be worthy of such devotion?

It has been said that the highest purpose of great men is to furnish worthy ideals for the boy. The young man who said: "I am that boy's hero, and I must not let him down," had a vision of what it meant to have a boy friend.

A young woman who has done, and is doing, a noble work in this third angel's message, told me that the turning-point in her life came when a woman she admired very much put her hand on her shoulder and said, "You are going to be a worker for God some day, aren't you?"

One of the most successful ministers in our work today spent his early boyhood as a newsboy on the streets of New York. Just as he entered these vital years of his life, he was invited into a class of boys taught by Miss Vanderbilt. Every week she gave her time and thought to these boys. She did more, she invited them to her home. She took them into parks, laid out with the exquisite taste used by the gardeners of the rich. She read, she played, she prayed with them. "I wouldn't be here in this ministry," he said, "if it hadn't been for Miss Vanderbilt. God grant that there may be more Miss Vanderbilts in the world, not in purse, but in heart!" he added fervently.

A Call to Church Members

The great possibilities of this age are calling to you and to me, church members. First, are we safe patterns for our junior friends? Does our Christianity go down into our lives until the boys and girls know that we live up to our belief? Are we always true to the word we give?

Second, do we understand our boys and girls? To understand them is to love them, and love begets love. Out of two hundred girls who were asked to describe their ideal young woman, only three mentioned beauty, none spoke of age, but every one did say something about kindness, thoughtfulness, pleasantness; and phrases like the following were common: "She

smiles at us as though she meant it," "She acts as though she likes us," "She writes to us when we're sick." That's it, just plain Christian love, and sympathy, the duty, if not the joy, of every honest Christian. The requirements are small, but the results are enormous. Is the goal, "A Junior Leader in Every Church," too much to expect? Every Seventh-day Adventist can be a junior leader. How about you and me?

Now the third charge we must take upon ourselves if we, the every-day church members, are going to win our juniors: *Have faith in the boys and girls.* Many young people have passed through these critical years successfully because they have felt beneath them the solid rock of some one's confidence. So in spite of the peculiar lapses of good behavior which neither you nor the junior himself may understand, keep the heart free from suspicion of base motives, and the faith steady.

And last, but not least, do not forget that we are depending on our juniors of today for the successful accomplishment of our great cause tomorrow. There is no limit to what our boys and girls may become for God if they but yield completely. That aged minister who counted but one convert for a year's work, little dreamed of the far-reaching results of that year. He had won only a boy, but that boy was Robert Moffat. The rapid and strenuous movement of the last days may develop some Pauls. Who knows but that boy, the perplexity of the Sabbath school, may be one of God's appointed ones who will know his God and "do exploits"? It is ours to love sincerely, to understand sympathetically, and to win for God our boys and girls.

Sunday, March 18

The Value of a Right Purpose

CECIL K. MEYERS

THE aims and aspirations of youth need careful testing so that each desire may be judged in the light of a serious, earnest consideration of its intrinsic value as an incentive to the development of character. To have a purpose in life is not enough, it is absolutely necessary to have a right purpose, squared and hewn by the sharp tool of a daily experience.

Equipped with a right purpose, any young man or woman is able to stand the emergency tests of life.

The greatest purpose of all is that which relates to one's spiritual welfare. To arrive at the decision to be a Christian, to live in subjection to the principles of the kingdom of God, to enthrone the Lord Jesus in the heart, is the most valuable decision in life. Like the man in the parable who sold the pearls that he had in order to buy the pearl of great price, it is an expression of confidence in the very best desires known to the human heart. It represents life's highest purpose.

The sweet singer of Israel chants in swelling notes the prayer: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Ps. 144: 12.

Both the figures here represented illustrate fixtude. The individual beauty of the plant results from its fixed roots running down to the moist, fertile beds from which it draws its nourishment. The corner-stone is the fixed stone lending its strength and weight to the support of the superstructure. In its fixedness the whole building grows to completion.

It must have been this same thought that Paul had in mind when he said: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Col. 2: 6, 7.

Here he emphasizes the value of being rooted and built up in Christ. The work we must attend to in youth is to build in the permanent things and get rooted. Fixed principles — a belief in God, confidence in His word, the exercise of devotion, a surrendered life — should become very real to every young person as the basis upon which he can apply all through life, a dynamic force to keep him moving in the right direction.

The First and Fundamental Purpose

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," is the counsel of the wise man. Would to God this Spring Week of Prayer might find every one of our youth, in college or academy, in the home or church, giving earnest attention to

the matter of making this supreme decision to surrender the heart to God. This is the place to begin. All else will fall into right relationship if we will enthrone Christ in the heart. On this everything hangs. With the power of this decision Whitefield was taken from behind the bar of a saloon, where he was serving out the pewter pots to the drunkards, to become one of England's greatest preachers and reformers.

Begin at the point of surrender, and God can and will take you to the highest heights in Christian living and Christian service. This is so well stated in the book "Education," page 257, where Sister White says:

"Through faith in Christ, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed."

All history attests to the influence of the surrendered life. Joseph, alone and friendless, struggled through because he knew in his life a personal walk with God. Esther, the little Hebrew maiden, lifted in a moment through a strange providence from the obscurity of her humble surroundings to queenship in a universal kingdom, rendered the most signal service ever rendered by a woman, because she staked all on the best choice in life.

The recognition of this brings us to the conclusion that a surrendered life is in God's hands for Him to do with it as He pleases. Growing out of the personal surrender is the desire for personal service. The two are inseparably linked, and the moment a human heart is warmed by the divine presence in the life, so soon a call comes to fellowship with Jesus in service. The definite program and means of service come with the molding of the years, but the call is never so distinct as when it is made in the quiet stillness of the first peaceful consciousness of acceptance in Christ.

Opportunities for Effectual Christian Service

In the face of the growing demands for workers in all lands, one is led to hope earnestly that many hearts will burn with the longing to co-operate with Jesus in the work of soul-saving. There is no higher service than Christian ministry, and I use the word in its broadest sense, for not only is it necessary to proclaim the truth by word of mouth, but it is also necessary to live the things we teach; and sometimes the living is as effective as the preaching.

I have just been reading a letter from one of our union superintendents in the South American Division. It is a lengthy but most interesting survey of the growing needs. It refers to the work of individuals, and writing of the work of a missionary family in a newly opened up section, he says:

"I found Brother — and family happy and very much interested in their work at the mission. He thinks there is no line of work so important and so interesting as the Indian work; and he is admirably adapted to it in every way. He has won the hearts of the Indians and whites far and near by his genial way and his readiness and efficiency in helping the sick and afflicted. The officials are friendly to him, and always lend a helping hand in every need. The railroad men know him. The conductor on the passenger train never tires of telling the passengers about him and his work, and points out the mission as the train passes.

"When I first visited his station, I spoke to the Indians, and tried to tell them about the 'Best Friend.' I began by asking them if they had any friends; and then I asked one Indian to tell me who his friend was. We were all deeply gratified to hear him respond, 'Doctorcito,' and then turn and point to our missionary. I asked the Indians what made the missionary their friend. They said: 'He helps us. When we are sick, he gives us remedies and cures us.' I thought that was the best foundation I could find for my talk, and so I began to tell them about Jesus, the best Friend, whom our missionary had come to represent."

This illustrates the effective service resulting from a surrendered life. There is really nothing academic about it. It is just living out the Christ-life and seeing the result in souls won to the Lord.

Would to God that this same spirit might enter many another breast. When one surveys the need of the world, it is found to be immeasurable. Yet in the face of this there is the possibility and the certainty of a finished work if our young people will but give themselves whole-heartedly and earnestly to the Lord for service. There never has been, and is not now, any insuperable barrier in achieving the desire for

service to any whose hearts are determined on using their faculties in this great cause. We must look away from the present disabilities to a God who can and will use the humblest of instruments if the channels are cleared for His power to flow through them.

It is said that in Napoleon's army every soldier carried in his kit bag a field marshal's baton, and it is equally true that every Christian life is definitely attached to divine possibilities. Our own pioneer history as a denomination bristles with the story of notable service for God growing out of an equally notable consecration and devotion in the personal life of the pioneers.

Centuries look down upon us and encourage us to believe in God and in His power to redeem and prepare the human life for service. How effectively Paul testifies of this when writing out of the fulness of his own experience he says:

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Cor. 4: 6, 7.

A Place for the Youth

You elders in Israel, we're making
This earnest petition to you;
We honor, we trust you, and love you
As youth and as children should do;
We're asking a place at the table
Of service in God's sacred hall,
For we know that His bounty's not stinted,
And are sure He invited us all.

We ask but a place at His table
Of service where older ones meet:
No honor, no vaunting, but only
To wait in the lowliest seat,
To be there each wonderful moment
The Master is sitting at meat;
To rise and to serve Him, if bidden,
Or wash, if permitted, His feet.

Yes, servants, we know, are unworthy
To dine at the board of a king;
But He said "whosoever" and "any,"
And such is the password we bring.
The veriest crumbs will suffice us,
The lowliest, humblest place,
If only you bid us to enter
The chamber of service and grace.

Give place,—O! give place at His table!
Ye elders, for all of the youth;
Awaiting your welcome, we linger,
Abashed, by the doorways of truth.
We're sure that His grace is sufficient
For all who are willing and true;
So we ask for a humble position
At His table of service with you.

—E. F. Collier.

Monday, March 19

The Victorious Life and How to Obtain It

MEADE MAC GUIRE

MUCH confusion results from a variety of notions as to what the victorious life is. Victory over sin does not mean freedom from temptation. While we are in this world, we shall always be tempted; but God has made ample provision that we may always be victorious.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10: 13.

Victory over sin is not achieved by resolutions, nor by struggles, nor by any human effort. It cannot be attained by a gradual growth. The "victorious life" is only another expression for "righteousness by faith." When we speak of a man's having righteousness by faith, we do not think of him as having attained sinless perfection. We do not think of the man at all. We think of the Saviour whose righteousness the man has received. We do not recognize the man's resolutions

or struggles or obedience to the law as the ground of his righteousness. It came to him through grace as a gift, wholly in response to the exercise of faith. The law says, "Do and live;" but grace says, "Believe and live." Those who are seeking righteousness, or victory over sin, by doing, are under the law, and what they attain will be their own righteousness, or filthy rags; "for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

What a Victorious Life Means

Victory by faith does not mean a life of ease and inactivity. The consciousness of Christ within, bringing freedom and peace, arouses and intensifies the highest energies of mind and body, and inspires to the most earnest and self-sacrificing service for God.

To have the victorious life does not mean that we can never again fall into sin. Victory is in Christ. There can be no victory apart from the Victor. Christ dwells in the heart by faith. So long as the presence of Christ within is a reality, there is victory. But he who looks away from Christ, looks away from victory, and invites defeat.

Many fall because they depend for salvation upon what they believe—the facts of faith—rather than upon Jesus the Saviour from sin. The victorious life is inseparably associated with the only One who ever has or ever can overcome sin in human flesh. Only when a child of God loses the sense of Christ's presence can he voluntarily yield to sin.

"The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ. When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* pp. 419, 420.

There is a parable about an ugly brier that grew in the ditch. One day the gardener came and dug it up. The brier said, "What can the gardener possibly want of me? Surely he does not know that I am only a worthless brier." The gardener took the brier and set it among the beautiful roses in his garden. Then the brier said, "What a great mistake he has made! It can only end in disappointment." But the gardener came and grafted some buds into the brier, and in a few months it was bearing as beautiful roses as any in the garden. Then the gardener said, "It was not something you had in yourself which produced these lovely flowers, but what I put in you."

When a man, with full realization that he is utterly sinful, utterly helpless and lost, turns his back upon all his own efforts to get right with God and accepts Christ's righteousness as his own, he has taken the first step in the victorious life. He maintains that life by resolutely turning from all efforts of his own to be good, and accepts Christ moment by moment as his indwelling goodness.

This matter of our relation to sin may be stated in another way: We are sinful by nature, and it is impossible for the sinful nature to resist and overcome sin successfully. But if we are willing, God proposes to work a miracle within us whereby we become partakers of the divine nature, and it is impossible for the divine nature to be overcome by sin. This experience comes in response to our faith; that is, we meet the condition, and then believe it is done, and God makes it so. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:11.

Sin is not dead, but we are dead to sin so long as we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ. We must remember that victory has already been won for us, and it only remains for us to let Christ win the victory in us.

"By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* p. 312.

"When a soul receives Christ, he receives power to live the life of Christ."—*Id.*, p. 314.

How to Obtain Victory

All true Christians know what it is to accept God's offer of pardon and cleansing from all sin when confession is made.

They simply believe that God has kept His word, and that their sins are forgiven. The instant they believe it, God makes it so. They are freed from the condemnation and penalty of sin.

In exactly the same manner may they obtain freedom from the power and dominion of sin. As surely as Christ has paid the penalty for our sins and made pardon possible, so surely has He overcome sin and made freedom possible.

Were you ever conscious of your sinful and lost condition? Did you go to God and confess your sins, praying for pardon through the merits and, in the name of Christ? Did you then believe that God had forgiven you, and did you rejoice in the sense of His pardoning love? In the same manner and on the same terms you may obtain immediate and complete freedom from the bondage of all your sins. Every gift of God comes to us, not through Christ, but "in Christ." It is of vast importance to remember this great truth.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ." Eph. 1:3, margin.

Through sin, we lost life, purity, peace, power, fellowship with God, everything that is of value for eternity. In Christ all is restored to us again. A wonderful key-passage is found in 1 John 5:11, 12:

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

How to Maintain Victory

"Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." 1 John 3:6.

To the beloved disciple it was inconceivable that one should really know Jesus and go on sinning. He wrote: "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not." 1 John 2:1. Evidently he wrote this epistle, explaining the secrets of fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, for the very purpose of making plain how Christians can live without sinning. He adds: "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

"If any man sin" shows that even a saint may sin. But if the saint should sin,—mark that,—"we have an advocate with the Father." There is a perfect propitiation provided. There is no allowance for sin, but a perfect provision in case we do sin—no need to sin, no right to sin, no compromise with sin, no license, but a provision in case we do. On board ship the provision for life belts is not associated with any intention to have a shipwreck, but they are there in case of need."—*"Must Christians Sin?"*

Having sought and claimed victory by faith, it is to be maintained in the same way that it is received. The words used by the Holy Spirit to describe the relation of the believer to Christ, are submit, commit, yield, abide. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Abide in Me, and I in you." The branch did not connect itself to the vine, nor does it struggle to keep connected.

"Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. Say with the apostle Paul, 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you."

"When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand."—*"Steps to Christ,"* p. 72, pocket edition.

Finally let us remember that surrender, though ever so full and complete, is only half the secret of victory. Many have surrendered all and yet have not been victorious. It is as essential to claim victory in Christ as it is to confess defeat without Him.

"By faith you became Christ's, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to give all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all,—Christ, the

fulness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,—to give you power to obey.”—*Id.*, p. 70.

“Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 15: 57.

Faith and Feeling

“At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light.”—*Review and Herald*, May 3, 1881.

“Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to Him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults.”—*Ibid.*

“We are not to make our feelings a test by which to discern whether we are in or out of favor with God, whether they be what we consider encouraging or not. As soon as one begins to contemplate his feelings, he is on dangerous ground. If he feels joyous, he is confident he is in a favorable condition; but when a change comes, as it will, for circumstances will be so arranged that feelings of depression will make the heart sad, then he will be naturally led to doubt that God has accepted him.

“It is not wisdom to look at the emotions, and try to test your spirituality by your feelings. Do not study yourself; look away from self to Jesus. While you acknowledge yourself as a sinner, yet you may appropriate Christ as your sin-pardoning Redeemer. Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Satan will not be slow in presenting to the repentant soul suggestions and difficulties to weaken faith and destroy courage. He has manifold temptations that he can send trooping into the mind in succession; but the Christian must not study his emotions and give way to his feelings, or he will soon entertain the evil guest, doubt, and become entangled in the perplexities of despair. Expel the suggestions of the enemy by contemplating the matchless depth of your Saviour’s love.”—*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 3, 1894.

“It is no sign that Jesus has ceased to love us because we experience doubts and discouragements. Affliction comes to us in the providence of God in order that we may see that Christ is our helper, that in Him is love and consolation. We may receive grace whereby we may be overcomers, and inherit the life that measures with the life of God. We must have an experience so that when affliction comes upon us, we shall not depart from our faith, and choose fables.”—*Signs*, May 7, 1896.

“When we go to Him for wisdom or grace, we are not to look to ourselves to see if He has given us a special feeling as an assurance that He has fulfilled His word. Feeling is no criterion. Great evils have resulted when Christians have followed feeling. Satan can give feelings and impressions, and those who take these as their guides, will surely be led astray. How do I know that Jesus hears my prayer? I know it by His promise. He says He will hear the needy when they cry unto Him; and I believe His word. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek ye Me in vain.’”—*Signs*, May 15, 1884.

How to Have Victorious Faith

It is easier to recognize the duty of belief than it is to believe. To many there is no comfort in the word, “All things are possible to him that believeth.”

“Yes, I know that,” they cry; “but that is just the trouble: I cannot believe as I ought to.”

Yes, they can. We can never “believe,” or have faith, in the victorious way by attempting to furnish that faith ourselves. But here is the secret that makes complete, victorious faith immediately possible for all: “God requires absolute faith from us, and supplies it, just as He claims entire holiness and offers to give it.”

Faith is the work of God and the gift of God. “The faith of God” is the only victorious faith. Let us stop unconsciously making a “works” of our faith. Rather let us, as Frances Ridley Havergal has said, “intrust to Him our trust.” Then we shall know the joy and the restfulness and the victory of the apostle who praised God for the surpassing miracle of his life: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.”—*Selected*.

Tuesday, March 20

Knowing for Ourselves

H. T. ELLIOTT

THE world is seeking peace and cannot find it. It is looking for a sure foundation to build again the structures of political, economical, and moral peace, but it can find no such foundation. Since men have abandoned faith in God and His word, and as long as they refuse to make the abiding principles of His word the foundation of their action, there will be little success in alleviating world conditions. The human heart must find itself and undergo a divine transformation individually, or there can be no betterment of exterior conditions.

In a time of similar world turbulency, Jesus stood before Pilate, the railing mob outside clamoring for His conviction. Suddenly a new cry went up, “He made Himself a king!” Grasping at a chance to please the people, Pilate asked Jesus, “Art Thou a king then?”

Jesus replied by asking Pilate the heart-searching question, “Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?”

That question rings across the ages to us who at this time profess to be following Him. Do we know Jesus for ourselves? Is the faith we exercise our own faith, or is it an attempt on our part to accept blindly the faith of our mother or father or our church leader?

A few years ago, talking with a young man upon the campground concerning his Christian experience, I inquired, “Do you believe the Bible?”

“Of course I do.”

“Do you read it?”

“I have never read a word of it.”

“How do you know that you believe the Bible if you have never read it?”

“Well, I have some Christian friends who read the Bible, and I have every confidence in them, and they say it is true. That’s why I believe the Bible.”

We smile, and yet is it true that we have found the foundation of our belief in our own personal experience in Jesus Christ? Are we Seventh-day Adventists because we know and understand for ourselves? or are we following along, keeping in the shadow of the church, not having a faith of our own, but hoping and desiring to be saved because of those who do?

One of our workers was talking with a young woman concerning her personal experience. A girl of twelve was standing by. As the worker told the young lady to take her question to the Lord in prayer, assuring her that the Lord would give her an answer, the twelve-year-old girl spoke up and said, “Brother —, why do you tell her that? You know it isn’t so. Why, I have prayed and prayed and prayed, and God has never said a word to me.”

We are living in a time when the coming of the Lord is nearer than it has ever been before. The fulfilling signs of the Bible prophecies indicate that His appearing must be near. It is therefore high time that we examine ourselves to know if we have an experience of our own, or whether we are resting in some one else’s experience.

Jennie Lind, on shipboard, was called to watch the sunrise on the ocean; and as the glory of its rays, streaming across the water, filled her sight, she exclaimed: “I know that my Redeemer liveth!” David had this assurance. He says, “This I know; for God is for me.” Job was personally certain, and he tells us, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” And Paul’s heart, charged with the indwelling love of God, pulsates with the thought as he cries, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” A Christian may know

whether he is a Christian. A lack of personal experience will lead us to have a cringing experience before the world. We shall be inclined to hesitate and stumble in our groping for faith, and to lead a miserable existence, and to feel that after all we are only trying to keep up a shell of appearances.

"There are many among us who are deficient in spirituality, and who, unless they are wholly converted, will certainly be lost. Can you afford to run the risk?"

"Pride and weakness of faith are depriving many of the rich blessings of God. There are many who, unless they humble their hearts before the Lord, will be surprised and disappointed when the cry is heard, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!' Matt. 25: 6. They have the theory of the truth, but they have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Our faith at this time must not stop with an assent to, or belief in, the theory of the third angel's message. We must have the oil of the grace of Christ that will feed the lamp, and cause the light of life to shine forth, showing the way to those who are in darkness.

"If we would escape having a sickly experience, we must begin in earnest without delay to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. There are many who give no decided evidence that they are true to their baptismal vows. Their zeal is chilled by formality, worldly ambition, pride, and love of self."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. IX, p. 155.

We shall have to lay hold of something more than mere theory to succeed in the Christian experience. Where are the youth of today who have sufficient spiritual grace to stand firm as Huss, Jerome, Wycliffe, and Luther, and as the apostles stood? If we cannot resist the call for pleasure, for the moving-picture show, for dress, for money, how shall we be able to stand and hold to our faith when our very lives shall be involved in the decision? It will take effort on our part to gain a spiritual experience that will stand. A magnet gathers electrical strength by use. The more it lifts; the more it can lift, up to a certain limit. So our faith, though weak and feeble to begin with, will grow stronger and stronger as we exercise it and trust our Lord to help our unbelief.

"The way to become a Christian is clearly revealed. Though difficult to a proud and stubborn heart, it is a simple way that all who will may know. Christ has not hidden Himself or His word. "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Accept Him into the heart, and the victory of a personal experience is begun. Spirituality will come by prayer, by meditation, by the study of God's word, and through service.

When the children of Israel left Egypt, we are told that there went with them a large company called the "mixed multitude." How sad it will be in the consummation of our lives if some of us were to find that instead of being Israelites indeed, we are merely camp followers. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Our lives will reveal whether we have had a personal experience or not.

"The true, joyous life of the soul is to have Christ formed within, the hope of glory."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 47, pocket edition.

How Light Came to Lady Somerset

ONE of the most influential Christian workers of recent years is Lady Henry Somerset, leader of the temperance hosts of Great Britain. Before her conversion she was surrounded by a rich and fashionable circle of titled men and women, few of whom were Christians. Through infidel books she had come to doubt the very existence of Christ. Yet she could not rest in such a state of uncertainty. She pondered and thought, and read and even prayed, but found no resting-place for her faith. Finally one evening, as she was walking in her grounds, she heard a voice speaking to her inmost soul, "Act as if I were, and thou shalt know that I am." The more she pondered on the message, the wiser it seemed. And from that hour she began to try to do the will of God. Whatever a Christian woman ought to do, that was her law. And she did come to know, and came into a joyous and inspiring fellowship with Jesus Christ.—*Louis Albert Banks*.

"Your chief work is to win men. . . . It is the toughest task you ever undertook. It will take supernatural power."—*Gordon*.

Faith

If I could feel my hand, dear Lord, in Thine,
And surely know
That I was walking in the light divine,
Through weal or woe;

If I could hear Thy voice in accents sweet
But plainly say;
To guide my trembling, groping, wandering feet,
"This is the way;"

I would so gladly walk therein, but now
I cannot see.
O give me, Lord, the faith humbly to bow—
And trust in Thee!

There is no faith in seeing. Were we led
Like children here,
And lifted over rock and river bed,
No care, no fear,

We should be useless in the busy throng,
Life's work undone.
Lord, make us brave and earnest, true and strong,
Till heaven is won.
—*Sarah K. Bolton*.

Wednesday, March 21

Personal Service

E. F. PETERSON

SERVICE is an essential part of the experience and life of every one who professes to be a child of God,—service to God and needy humanity. Personal service is that in which one individual tries to help another in the Christian life. We are told,

"Every sanctified heart will be pressed into service as an instrument of divine power."—*Testimonies*, Vol. IX, p. 47. "God expects personal service from every one to whom He has intrusted a knowledge of the truth for this time. Not all can go as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhoods."—*Id.*, p. 30.

Our mission in the world is the same as that of Jesus. He said in prayer to His father, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John 17: 18. And of Himself He said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19: 10. It is said of Him that He went about doing good; that as He began His public ministry, He commenced by personal work, by personal appeals. "Now as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. . . . And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway He called them." Mark 1: 16-20.

He further stated of His followers, that He "gave . . . to every man his work."

"God calls upon every church member to enter His service. Truth that is not *lived*, that is not *imparted* to others, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Every one must learn to work, and to stand in his place as a burden-bearer. Every addition to the church should be one more agency for the carrying out of the great plan of redemption."—*Testimonies*, Vol. VIII, p. 47.

We each have a work to do that no one else can do for us.

"Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 327.

"Every Christian is called to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ."—*Id.*, p. 336.

"He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 105.

We are not only to pray and give of our means for the work, but we are personally to engage in service for others. It is a great privilege to have a part in such a glorious work. To save a soul in the kingdom of God is the greatest work one can do.

Personal work requires a sanctified life. Jesus said, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John 17: 19. If Jesus sanctified Himself that He might sanctify His disciples, surely we need to do likewise if we expect others to be helped through our labors. We must be what we ask others to be.

Personal work requires that we pray much, and thus be in communion with God, so He may impress us as to what we ought to do and give us courage to do it. We need to pray that God will reveal to us the opportunity to help some one at just the right time.

Mr. Moody at one time in his life determined not to let a day pass without doing some personal work for God. Late one night the thought came to him that the previous day he had spoken to no one personally about his soul's welfare. He could not rest satisfied to retire for the night without making an effort to help some one. Going out into the street, he spied a drunken man leaning up against a post to keep from falling to the ground. Approaching the man, Mr. Moody spoke to him about his soul. The man swore, and Mr. Moody left him and returned to his room. The next morning a friend of Mr. Moody called on him and told him he was too zealous for the welfare of others, and how the man to whom he had spoken the night before had taken offense. Being a friend of his, he had told him Mr. Moody had approached him the night before. Mr. Moody began to think, "Well, perhaps I am too zealous," and felt somewhat disheartened at his efforts to do personal work.

A few days afterward Mr. Moody heard a knock at his door. Upon opening it there stood the man he had spoken to a few nights before. The man said, "Mr. Moody, I should like to have a talk with you." He was invited inside, and then in a broken voice and with tears on his face he said, "I was angry when you spoke to me the other night about my soul's welfare; but since then I have thought better of the matter, and have come to ask you how to find peace with God."

We never know when our interest in the welfare of others will result in their salvation.

We must have a sincere desire to help some one, and with God's help know what to do at the right time. It should be a passion with us. Matthew Henry said, "I would think it greater happiness to win one soul for Christ, than to gain mountains of gold and silver for myself."

Doddridge cried: "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything else besides. Methinks I could not only labor, but die for it with delight."

Some one has said, "Opportunities for personal work are as abundant as are people." They are everywhere. We of course should begin by "doing good to those of the household of faith;" in other words, help those already professing Christianity. First of all, personal work should begin in our homes and with our own loved ones. We should not rest satisfied as long as there is one member of our family unconverted and unsaved.

Then one should find an opportunity in every unsaved person outside the immediate family circle.

The opportunity at one time may be to talk to some one directly about his soul's welfare, or to make a visit to one who is ill, and interest ourselves in the matter. It may be to write a letter to some one at a distance, and mention the question of the Christian life.

It may be the mailing of a paper or tract or book, accompanied by a personal letter. Or it may be by Christian help work. Or it may be by inviting a neighbor to a religious service. It may be by speaking to some one on the street, in the cars, or in your place of business. The opportunities are many and varied. We must be on the alert, and take advantage of them as they present themselves.

To do personal work, we must be tactful and sympathetic. We must agree with people all we can, and not compromise principle. We must often guide the conversation into right

channels, so a word in season may be spoken. We must not argue with people. We might better lose the argument than the soul.

In personal work nothing should be considered too small to be of value. Sometimes the little courtesies we show to others open the way for great results. I know of a young man who was disheartened, and who was encouraged by a hearty handshake and a few words of encouragement at one of our camp-meetings.

Another case in my own experience is that of a young man won for the kingdom by a few friendly visits and talks over his need of giving himself to Christ.

D. L. Moody was won by the personal effort of some one. Charles H. Trumbull, a great personal worker, was himself won by a letter from a friend which he at first was reluctant to read. I think, too, of the marvelous work among the Indians of South America which is due largely to the personal efforts of those already in the church.

While in La Paz, Bolivia, last year, a young Indian came to us stating he had met another Indian a few weeks before who spoke to him about the Bible and the work of our mission for the Indians, and how he taught them to live right. He said, "I was not satisfied after that, and made this trip to La Paz to find the true church that keeps the commandments of God and teaches the Indians the Bible and how to live better." He searched for us for several days without finding us. He was about to return to his home, four or five days' journey on foot, when he decided to try again to locate us.

After further diligent inquiry on the street, he was directed to a Salvation Army hall. He made known to the captain in charge his desire to learn about God and secure a Bible and hymn book. After securing these at a nominal price from the captain, he began asking questions about the Bible. These at first were answered by the captain, but as he continued to ply him with still more questions relative to the commandments, etc., the captain said, "I know the church you are looking for, and I will take you to it." He then accompanied the Indian to our hall, where a general meeting was in progress. The poor Indian was very happy to find us, as he wanted to learn more and prepare for baptism and church membership.

He returned to his home at the close of the meetings, but said before leaving, "I am the only one in my village who believes this way, and it may cost me my life, but I am determined to follow the light that has come to me."

Here is another example of the power of personal work. The Indian brother who met him a while before, witnessed for the Master in the road as they met, and thus another soul was directed to God and His saving message for this time.

Thousands of cases could be cited to show the effectiveness of personal work. It is the most effective kind of work one can do. It is seeking people out one by one. It is a sure method of winning souls. Many times we feel incapable and insufficient for such a work, but we have the promise,

"It is not the capabilities you now possess, or ever will have, that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* p. 146.

Let us all go forward in a new resolve to do more personal work in the name and strength of God.

"God never called a man to work, and then left that man without power to do the work. When God called you for service, He made the way open so that you could do something real for Him. God has called us all, for 'He gave to every man his work.' Therefore you can make a success of your effort if you yield yourself wholly, so that you will be in the line of work He has chosen for you."

"How little do we enter into sympathy with Christ on that which should be the strongest bond of union between us and Him,—compassion for depraved, guilty, suffering souls, dead in trespasses and sins! The inhumanity of man toward man is our greatest sin."—*"The Ministry of Healing,"* p. 163.

"SEND me anywhere, only go with me; lay any burden upon me, only sustain me; sever any tie except the one that binds me to Thy service and Thy heart."

The Earthen Vessel

THE following poem is one that was a favorite of Mrs. E. B. Stoddard, who was under appointment to Korea, but who died of the "flu" in January, 1919. It was found in her Bible and used at her funeral services.

The Master stood in His garden,
Among the lilies fair,
Which His own right hand had planted
And trained with tenderest care.

He looked at their snowy blossoms,
And marked with observant eye
That His flowers were sadly drooping,
For their leaves were parched and dry.

"My lilies need to be watered,"
The heavenly Master said;
"Wherein shall I draw it for them,
And raise each drooping head?"

Close to His feet on the pathway
Empty, and frail, and small,
An earthen vessel was lying,
Which seemed of no use at all.

But the Master saw it and raised it
From the dust in which it lay,
And smiled as he gently whispered,
"This shall do My work today.

"It is but an earthen vessel,
But it lay so close to Me;
It is small, but it is empty,
That is all it needs to be."

So to the fountain He took it,
And filled it to the brim;
How glad was the earthen vessel
To be of some use to Him!

He poured forth the living water
Over His lilies fair,
Until the vessel was empty,
And again He filled it there.

He watered the drooping lilies
Until they revived again;
And the Master saw, with pleasure,
That His labor had not been in vain.

His own hand had drawn the water
Which refreshed the thirsty flowers,
But He used the earthen vessel
To convey the living showers.

And to itself it whispered,
As He laid it aside once more,
"Still will I lie in His pathway,
Just where I did before.

"Close would I keep to the Master,
Empty would I remain,
And perhaps some day He may use me
To water His flowers again."

(This poem was printed in a compilation entitled, "The Uplands of God," which is probably not now obtainable. No author's name was given.)

Thursday, March 22

Home Religion

C. A. RUSSELL

THE ultimate success of our work does not depend upon the number and size of our churches, upon the strength of our institutions, nor upon the perfection of our organization; but upon the true home religion of our people.

"In all that pertains to the success of God's work, the very first victories are to be won in the home life." — "Testimonies," Vol. VI, p. 352.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Ps. 127:1.

If one does not live a Christian at home, pray tell, is he one anywhere? And where is the sweet, unselfish thoughtfulness so much needed or appreciated?

Home! Few words in our language are sweeter. "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." Home! "A world of strife shut out; a world of love shut in."

As Mr. Gordon in his book, "Quiet Talks on Home Ideals," which is in the Parents' Reading Course for this year, so beautifully puts it:

"Home is where love lives. Not where it boards, nor pays occasional visits, even long visits, nor even where it may be a sort of permanent guest, with familiar access to certain rooms and cozy corners. But where it owns the front door key, sits by the glow of a hearth fire of its own kindling, and pervades the whole house with its presence. It may be a king's spacious, luxurious palace. It may be the poor man's narrow-walled cottage, or anywhere in between these two extremes. . . .

"The home is the holy of holies of a man's life. There he may shut himself in from all the world. There he comes in from the cold and strength-sapping strife and work of the outer world. He warms himself at love's fires. He renews his strength in love's atmosphere. He rests both spirit and body in love's faith and confidences. It is his starting-point out on his errands in the world, and his returning and retiring place for the nourishing of his life afresh."

Home is "where love lives and reigns and trains." A home without love is unthinkable. It is not a home. And religion without love is impossible. Home religion means that the black angel of discord and strife, of envy and jealousy, of criticism and fault-finding, of impatience and fretfulness, has been banished; while the beautiful bright angel of love and courtesy and harmony and appreciation and good will has come to stay.

Value of Encouragement and Commendation

How many times the little annoyances of the family "get on our nerves," as we say, and we become cross and irritable instead of seeking to make home the happiest, cheeriest spot on earth. We fret and scold the children for every little misdemeanor, but fail to commend them for the many little ways in which they try to please, until they become discouraged, and perhaps almost cease trying.

"Commend your children whenever you can. Make their lives as happy as possible. Provide them with innocent amusements. Make the home a Bethel, a holy, consecrated place. Keep the soil of the heart mellow by the manifestation of love and affection, thus preparing it for the seed of truth. Remember that the Lord gives the earth not only clouds and rain, but the beautiful, smiling sunshine, causing the seed to germinate and the blossom to appear. Remember that children need not only reproof and correction, but encouragement and commendation, the pleasant sunshine of kind words.

"The home should be to the children the most attractive place in the world, and the mother's presence should be its greatest charm. Children have sensitive, loving natures. They are easily pleased, and easily made unhappy. By gentle discipline, in loving words and acts, mothers may bind their children to their hearts.

"Above all things, parents should surround their children with an atmosphere of cheerfulness, courtesy, and love. A home where love dwells and where it finds expression in looks, in words, in acts, is a place where angels delight to dwell. Parents, let the sunshine of love, cheer, and happy content enter your own hearts, and let its sweet influence pervade the home. Manifest a kindly, forbearing spirit, and encourage the same in your children, cultivating all those graces that will brighten the home life. The atmosphere thus created will be to the children what air and sunshine are to the vegetable world, promoting health and vigor of mind and body." — "Counsels to Teachers," pp. 114, 115.

A few words of commendation spoken in a mild tone of voice will win where harsh words of censure drive away. No more fruitful spot can be found into which may be dropped some seed of love, than the garden soil of a child's heart. 'Tis the law of the harvest, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Be sure that no seed of disloyalty, distrust, or insincerity is implanted there.

"An angel paused in his onward flight,
With a seed of love, and truth, and light,
And asked, 'Oh, where must this seed be sown,
That it yield most fruit when fully grown?'
The Saviour heard, and He said as He smiled,
'Place it for Me in the heart of a child.'"

The Altar of Father and Mother's Religion

Every home should be a life-saving station — an eternal life-saving station. Like Manoah of old, the prayer of parents should be, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?" Judges 13:12. In this hour when Satan is seeking to captivate the senses, when his alluring temptations are flaunted in the very face of youth, or so subtly concealed as to catch their unwary feet, how necessary that the life of the par-

ents in the home be such as to appeal to the younger members of the Lord's family. Nothing will hold like the cords born of confidence in the religion of father and mother. "The greatest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."

"Fathers and mothers, however pressing your business, do not fail to gather your family around God's altar. Ask for the guardianship of holy angels in your home. Remember that your dear ones are exposed to temptations. Daily annoyances beset the path of young and old. Those who would live patient, loving, cheerful lives must pray. Only by receiving constant help from God can we gain the victory over self."—*"The Ministry of Healing,"* p. 393.

"Will the Lord of heaven pass by such homes, and leave no blessing there? Nay, verily. Ministering angels will guard the children who are thus dedicated to God."—*"Counsels to Teachers,"* p. 110.

The Power of Faithful Love

More than one member of the family has been won to Christ through the faithful living of another member. "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" 1 Cor. 7: 16.

She was an earnest Christian woman; he a rough, worldly man. There were horses in the stable and carriages in the shed, but none for her to use on Sabbath to go to church. But if the threshers or hay balers or corn huskers were in the neighborhood, he saw that they came to their place on Sabbath, if possible. She would make her preparation on the preparation day as far as she was able, and on Sabbath, after the meals were served, would retire to her own room, where, alone with God, she could hold sweet communion. Her Bible, the lesson quarterly, and the good old *Review*, that inspiration to many a shut in, were her companions.

One Sabbath the husband came in from his work in the field and found her thus engaged. In an outburst of insane rage he stormed out of the room and into the kitchen, where seeing a bucket filled with swill for the hogs, he took it up and slopped its contents all over her clean kitchen floor. A little later she came out, saw the condition of the room, took the broom and swept out the worst of it, and after the sun had sunk to rest, mopped the floor. Not a spark of impatience, not a thought of retaliation.

One day she grew sick. Then she grew worse. The brutal man thought to bring her to time. He refused to send for a doctor. At last, fearing what neighbors might say, perhaps, he did send. After a brief examination the doctor simply shook his head and started for the door.

"What is it, doctor? What can you do?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing? Why, doctor, come back."

"No, it is too late. Perhaps a few hours ago I might have done something, but not now. It is too late."

"Doctor, you must save her. Set your price. Half the farm! Anything!"

But he had gone, and in a few short hours that saint of God closed her eyes in death.

The man was frantic. To the one who conducted the funeral service he said, "Is there any possible hope for a wretch like me? My Mary was an angel all these years, and I've been a devil."

"Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost," came from the lips of the man of God. And the fruitage of that sweet, patient, consistent Christian life won another miracle of divine grace, the conversion of that husband. And now he is waiting for the time when he may clasp his Mary in his arms and say, "It was the life you lived that brought me here."

Let Love Have Expression

Too many times we fail to give expression to the love we too do feel. "There ought to be a well-beaten track between the heart and the lip."

"There are many who regard the expression of love as a weakness, and they maintain a reserve that repels others. This spirit checks the current of sympathy. As the social and generous impulses are repressed, they wither, and the heart becomes desolate and cold. We should beware of this error. Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy."—*"The Ministry of Healing,"* p. 360.

"Home should be a place where cheerfulness, courtesy, and love abide; and where these graces dwell, there will abide happiness and peace. Troubles may invade, but these are the lot of humanity. Let patience, gratitude, and love keep sunshine in the heart, though the day may be ever so cloudy. In such homes angels of God abide.

"Let the husband and wife study each other's happiness, never failing in the small courtesies and little kindly acts that cheer and brighten the life. Perfect confidence should exist between husband and wife. Together they should consider their responsibilities. Together they should work for the highest good of their children. Never should they in the presence of the children criticize each other's plans or question each other's judgment. Let the wife be careful not to make the husband's work for the children more difficult. Let the husband hold up the hands of his wife, giving her wise counsel and loving encouragement."—*Id.*, p. 393.

The place of all places where the fires should burn the brightest on love's altar, is in the home. The span between cradle and grave is too brief to be spent in nagging and strife and bitterness. Let the home mean more than four walls within which some people live who are related to one another. Let it indeed be a "little heaven to go to heaven in," "a world of strife shut out, a world of love shut in."

Margaret E. Sangster, the poet of the heart, puts it very beautifully in her little poem, "Life:"

"Life is too brief
Between the budding and the falling leaf,
Between the seedtime and the golden sheaf,
For hate and spite.
We have no time for malice and for greed;
Therefore, with love make beautiful the deed;
Fast speeds the night.

"Life is too swift
Between the blossom and the white snow's drift,
Between the silence and the lark's uplift,
For bitter words.
In kindness and in gentleness our speech
Must carry messages of hope, and reach
The sweetest chords.

"Life is too great
Between the infant's and the man's estate,
Between the clashing of earth's strife and fate,
For petty things.
Lo! we shall yet who creep with cumbered feet,
Walk glorious over heaven's golden street,
Or soar on wings!"

What Sort of a Father Are You?

WHAT sort of a father are you to your boy?
Do you know if your standing is good?
Do you ever take stock of yourself, and check up
Your accounts with your boy as you should?

Do you ever reflect on your conduct with him?
Are you all that a father should be?
Do you send him away when you're anxious to read?
Or let him climb up on your knee?

Have you time to bestow on the boy when he comes
With his questions—to tell him the truth,
Or do you neglect him and leave him alone
To work out the problems of youth?

Do you ever go walking with him, hand in hand?
Do you plan little outings for him?
Does he ever look forward to romping with you?
Or are you eternally grim?

Come, father, reflect! Does he know you today?
And do you know him as you should?
Is gold so important to you that you leave
It to chance that your boy will be good?

Take stock of yourself and consider the lad.
Your time and your thoughts are his due.
How would you answer your God should He ask
What sort of a father are you?

—Selected.

Friday, March 23

How to Overcome Temptation

H. S. PREMIER

THE first Bible mention of "temptation" is in Genesis 3. The first young people to face temptation were Adam and

Eve, and ever since, in summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, temptation has always been with us.

It's an uneasy thing; it seems omnipresent. Go to the heights of the clouds, there it is; go down to the deepest recesses of the earth, behold, it is there; take ship and sail, speed overland, take the subway, or fly, behold, temptation is even there.

It seems almost omniscient; it is wiser than Solomon. In spite of Adam's wisdom, as doer of universal knowledge, capable of naming all the animals and directing the movements of birds and fishes, temptation defeated him.

It seems almost omnipotent. Angels that excel in strength, Samson, and still greater giants, have fallen under its spell. Adam was empowered with unlimited dominion over himself and over all dumb creatures. He was a divine-right king, with the round earth as his universal empire, yet one cherished temptation dissipated all his power, glory, and kingdom, teaching us that divine power will not overcome temptation for any young man without his individual co-operation.

A special creation and protection from difficulties will not avail you. Adam and Eve never were horn, they never passed our way, they never endured the trials of infancy, the tragedies of childhood, youth, or young manhood. They were launched full grown, with all the power of choice, reason, and judgment, to begin their career physically and mentally in full development. And yet they fell under temptation.

Special spiritual advantages will not overcome temptation for you. Adam and Eve inherited only tendencies toward good and uprightness; they entered life a sinless, perfect creation, and they had privileges that no young people ever enjoyed,—direct communion with the Creator Himself. They could enjoy and interview Jehovah, in heart-to-heart fashion, and receive the revelations and sacred oracles directly from God's holy lips. Yet temptation came.

Environment will never save you from temptation. The glorious garden of Eden was divine perfection; well watered, and luxuriant in never-dying green, with fruits and nuts in abundance; no cost of living for the holy pair, and the land of Ophir-gold close at hand, with no way of spending money.

Marriage will never save you from temptation. Adam had the best wife that the Creator could furnish,—the best woman that ever walked the earth, for the Lord Himself said, "Very good!" when he crowned His perfect creation with a perfectly lovely woman. She, too, had the advantage over every woman since, to know all things worth knowing, from her earliest consciousness. Yet they both fell together.

Whence Came Temptation?

Adam pointed to his wife. Eve pointed to the serpent. The serpent could only blame God. But James says: "God . . . does not Himself tempt any one. A man is in every case tempted by his own passions—allured and enticed by them." James 1: 14, Twentieth Century New Testament.

Adam and Eve had the superlative in inheritance,—sound minds, sound bodies, perfect environment, best companionship, plenty of gold, food, and pleasure. Compared with the modern city youth, theirs was a charmed existence, free from fashion and follies, sex problems, bad associates, and questionable amusements.

Consider against what odds you young people must battle,—against spiritual degeneracy, physical depravity, moral decadence, and evil men and seducers getting worse and worse. You have a struggle of which the more mature and aged know little. The "intensity" that "is taking possession of every earthly element" possesses your minds to your handicap. Your highly electrified sensory system, intensified to the highest voltage, amplifies sensations beyond the field of your fathers, leaving you to your highly colored imagination and to your modern genius of the sensual, far exceeding the knowledge of your forefathers.

Ways to Overcome

Some of you young people are joyriding through life. You have passed the green light of caution, and are heading on toward the red light—danger! Your faces are set toward Sodom, and your foot is hard down on the accelerator, rushing on in the pursuit of vain pleasure or empty riches, with little or no thought of the consequences. Outside of Christ there is

no prospect but the ditch. Without Him there can be no other outcome of your life but wreck and destruction.

Ask your parents to pray for you! Parents, pray for your young people. Prayer is a mighty factor in overcoming these overwhelming giants of temptation. "It came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow." Gen. 19: 29.

Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Lot, . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17: 28-30. Abraham by prayer and earnest intercession called God to save the young people. Will you not do as much for your own? He'll do it again. God answers prayer.

Young people, you pray! You will overcome temptation by prayer. The Lord "rescued righteous Lot, whose heart was vexed by the wanton licentiousness of his neighbors; for, seeing and hearing what he did, as he lived his righteous life among them, day after day, Lot's righteous soul was tortured by their wicked doings. The Lord, therefore, knows how to deliver the pious from temptation." 2 Peter 2: 7-9, Twentieth Century New Testament.

Pray! Jesus did. He had temptations. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He was the perfect overcomer.

You will overcome temptation through Christ. "The fact that He Himself suffered under temptation enables Him to help those who are tempted." Our High Priest, Jesus Christ, who has passed into the highest heaven, "is not one unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has in every way been tempted, exactly as we have been, but without sinning." Heb. 2: 18; 4: 14, 15, Twentieth Century New Testament.

Drop the negatives out of the text, and it reads, "Jesus is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, one who has in every way been tempted exactly as we have been."

You will overcome temptation by the word of God. Every time in the mount of temptation when Satan presented a new test, Jesus could say, "It is written." The word of God "is a living and active power, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing its way till it penetrates the soul and spirit." Hebrews 4: 12, Twentieth Century New Testament. We shall need to be well acquainted with the Scriptures to call it to mind.

"It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 671.

"By what means did He [Christ] overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. 'It is written,' He said. And unto us are given 'exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' Every promise in God's word is ours. 'By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' are we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours. 'Thy word,' says the psalmist, 'have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.' 'By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.'"—*Id.*, p. 123.

Quick, direct offensive will overcome temptation. Through the five senses,—hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, smelling,—sensations come loaded down with temptations. The more vigorous and worldly you are, young folks, the more vigorous the temptations seem to you. The more the five senses are awakened, sensitive to sensations of sense, the greater the multitude of temptations generated within your life. Guard these five avenues to your heart, "for out of it are the issues of life." Do traffic officer's duty on these five important boulevards to your soul. When temptations come down the middle of the road, have only one sign—STOP.

Jesus always faced temptation promptly and fairly. Say with Joffe, "They shall not pass;" then start a drive, force out the invaders. The sooner you attack, the easier you win.

"Jesus gained the victory through submission and faith in God, and by the apostle He says to us, 'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.' We cannot save ourselves from the tempter's power; he has conquered humanity, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall become a prey to his devices; but 'the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds 'refuge in that mighty name.'"—*Id.*, pp. 130, 131.

The Sufficing Bible

WHEN I am tired, the Bible is my bed;
Or in the dark, the Bible is my light;
When I am hungry, it is vital bread;
Or fearful, it is armor for the fight.
When I am sick, 'tis healing medicine;
Or lonely, thronging friends I find therein.

If I would work, the Bible is my tool;
Or play, it is a harp of happy sound;
If I am ignorant, it is my school;
If I am sinking, it is solid ground.
If I am cold, the Bible is my fire;
And it is wings, if boldly I aspire.

Should I be lost, the Bible is my guide;
Or naked, it is raiment rich and warm.
Am I imprisoned? It is ranges wide;
Or tempest-tossed? a shelter from the storm.
Would I adventure, 'tis a gallant sea;
Or would I rest, it is a flowery lea.

Does gloom oppress? the Bible is a sun;
Or ugliness? it is a garden fair.
Am I athirst? how cool its currents run!
Or stifled? what a vivifying air!
Since thus thou givest of thyself to me,
How should I give myself, great Book, to thee?

— Amos R. Wells.

Sabbath, March 24

The Consecration Sacrifice

H. T. ELLIOTT

(It would be well to arrange for a consecration service following this reading. Close with a consecration prayer. During the consecration service or at its close is a good time to present the decision pledge, M. V. Pledge No. 12.)

Our text this morning is Romans 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

As we study this verse from God's word, let us divide it into four parts.

"By the Mercies of God"

The apostle says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." Really there is no greater appeal that could be made to us than through the mercies of God. Abraham on the plains of Mamre was called out to look at the starry heavens, and promised that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. I suppose that on a clear night one might count as many as four thousand stars with the naked eye. But with the use of the powerful telescope some are bold enough to say that there a thousand times fifty or sixty millions of stars, and that as the range of the telescope is pointed into the distance of the universe, it continues to appear an unlimited field of starry bodies. Thus it is with the mercies of God, the more we look at them the more they appear.

Anything that is man-made when placed under the microscope and examined carefully, shows defects, saw marks, imprints of the tools, rough edges. We are told that even as fine an edge as that of a razor, placed under the microscope, looks like a rough saw; but take a white pansy, put its fresh-cut stem into a bottle of red ink, and there will appear before you in the petals of the pansy the most beautiful interlacing of veins. The more minutely we look at the created things of God, the more wonderful they appear. So the mercies of God grow more wonderful as we behold them.

Think of it! Out of love for lost sinners, heaven risked its most precious gift, the Son of God. And Jesus Christ risked all heaven in order that He might redeem us. Picture for yourselves the scene on Calvary. Watch the coarse officers and soldiers stretch the weakened body of Jesus Christ upon the rough cross, see them grasp His hand and hold it down upon the cross-piece, and another with a heavy hammer drive the iron spike through the flesh, causing intense pain at every stroke. Watch them as they try to lift the cross into position. Heavy and tall, it is difficult to raise, and it sways back and forth until nearly upright, when it slips into place with a dull thud. Excruciating pain and agony—and yet it was not the physical pain that brought the greatest grief. It was the fact that He came to His own, and His own received Him not. His

great heart was broken. All heaven was emptied to redeem mankind.

"Present Your Bodies"

Over this wonderful sacrifice Paul beseeches us by the mercies of God that we present our bodies. This means that we must give to God our lives. Years ago I remember hearing a minister say that not one in twenty was prepared for the things that are coming to pass, and in Volume V, page 115, of the "Testimonies," we read:

"There is not one youth in one hundred who feels his God-given responsibility. Every physical and mental capability should be carefully preserved, and put to the best and highest use, to advance the glory of God."

We have suffered ourselves to be too easily diverted from the great work to which God would call us, and from the preparation we ought to have made.

The solemn words on pages 119, 120, of "Early Writings," should make a lasting impression on our souls:

"I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. . . .

"I saw that God's people are on the enchanted ground, and that some have lost nearly all sense of the shortness of time and the worth of the soul."

In all our weakness and frailty of faith, Jesus comes to us today as He did to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and asks, "Wilt thou be made whole?" It is a startling question, and yet a plain one. The tendency of the people is to evade it, and instead of answering it, to raise innumerable objections and questions of their own. But Christ asks us not for our views on this or that problem, but simply, "Are you willing? wilt thou be made whole?" It is a personal question, a searching question. There are many who, if they were honest with themselves, might have to admit that they are unwilling to be made whole. The question compels us honestly to ask our own souls if we are willing. It is an urgent question. Are you willing to be made whole? Note the following assurance given from "The Ministry of Healing," pages 84, 85:

"The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, 'Wilt thou be made whole?' He bids you arise in health and peace. Do not wait to feel you are made whole. Believe the Saviour's word. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is 'dead in trespasses.' He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin."

And again from "The Desire of Ages," pages 323, 324, the assurance is given that if we will make the decision to present our bodies to Him, we shall gain the desired victory and peace:

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ, becomes His own fortress, which he holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies, is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one."

"A Living Sacrifice"

The call is to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." God wants us to be *living sacrifices*, not dead. There is a certain glory which attaches to summoning all of one's courage into a supreme decision and giving one's life for a cause. We honor a hero like Arnold, who gathered the spears of the Hapsburg line into his own breast, and fell, yielding his own life, in order to make an opening for his Swiss comrades. There is a thrill about it. But it is vastly more glorious to be able to live for a principle. It means that our whole heart and will and service will be given to God without reserve. It is easy for us to fall into the habit of thinking that because we are associated with the church and have the right belief, we shall be saved.

"The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was, that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth

has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 309.

"Our standing before God depends not upon the amount of light we have received, but upon the use we make of what we have. Thus even the heathen who choose the right as far as they can distinguish it, are in a more favorable condition than are those who have had great light, and profess to serve God, but who disregard the light, and by their daily life contradict their profession."—*Id.*, p. 239.

"There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit."—*Id.*, p. 172.

Thus we see that we shall have to follow carefully and earnestly the light which is given us, if we desire to meet the ideal which God has in mind for us, and be ready for Him when He comes. In order to be a living sacrifice, we shall have to let go of every sinful desire.

"Worldly policy and the undeviating principles of righteousness, do not blend into each other imperceptibly, like the colors of the rainbow. Between the two a broad, clear line is drawn by the eternal God. The likeness of Christ stands out as distinct from that of Satan as midday in contrast with midnight. And only those who live the life of Christ, are His coworkers. If one sin is cherished in the soul, or one wrong practice retained in the life, the whole being is contaminated. The man becomes an instrument of unrighteousness."—*Id.*, p. 313.

"In Jesus' life on earth He showed us what it is to live only for the will of God. In His death and resurrection He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He had done."—*Andrew Murray*.

For us to live in this confident, victorious way will mean that we shall have to give up those friends and associations that we know are drawing us away from the Christian ideal. Every habit which deteriorates the character will have to be given up. We shall have to see to it that our choice of reading follows what God wants us to read. Our pleasures will be Christian pleasures. Moving-picture shows, the dance, the following of extreme fashions, the wearing of unnecessary jewelry, even our ambitions to hoard money and gain a position in the world, will be cast aside to meet the ideal God has in mind. We cannot sin, and excuse ourselves. God does not excuse sin. He did not excuse Adam. He has not excused any one, and He will not excuse us. The only reason we sin is because we want to. As we learned last night, sin is the result of our own desire; but all this may be overcome if we will let the love of Christ fill our hearts.

"He who loves Christ the most, will do the greatest amount of good. There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 250.

Our great trouble is that we are inclined to offer ourselves as a sacrifice to God, but when He brings the trial and test to bear upon us, we climb down from the altar, and say within ourselves, "O Lord, I never expected you to make it so hard for me."

The story is told of an old man with stooped shoulders walking along the road with a heavy bundle upon his back. An automobile truck driver caught up with him, and stopped and offered him a ride. The old man climbed in, and they started on, but soon the truck driver looked up and said, "My dear sir, there is plenty of room in the back of the truck, why don't you lay your burden down? Why are you carrying it?" To which the old man responded, "If you please, sir, I thought it was so kind of you to offer to carry me that I did not think I could ask you to carry my bundle."

It seems simple to us, and yet it is just like ourselves. We try to accept Jesus Christ, and still go on carrying our burdens ourselves, and fighting the battle in our own strength. Let us give Him all there is of us. He will take even our sin-polluted nature and our weaknesses, and make them our strong points.

"It is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the work of redemption. Its mystery exceeds human knowledge; yet he who passes from death to life realizes that it is a divine reality. The beginning of redemption we may know here through a personal experience. Its results reach through the eternal ages."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 173.

"All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God, will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through co-operation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 327.

"Which Is Your Reasonable Service"

We are asked to make this decision, and to sacrifice, because it is a "reasonable service." God never asks us to do anything unreasonable. Unto us who believe the prophecies of God's word, and especially in view of our times which are a fulfilment of those prophecies, it is reasonable that we should present our bodies a living sacrifice. Just a sentence or two from "Early Writings," pages 56, 57:

"I was shown that it is the will of God that the saints should cut loose from every encumbrance before the time of trouble comes, and make a covenant with God through sacrifice. . . . I saw that a sacrifice did not increase, but it decreased and was consumed."

And again on page 50:

"The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth, and to sacrifice for God and His cause."

Over on page 270 we find the meaning of the shaking:

"I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people."

The message to the Laodiceans was the message to a people whose hearts were lukewarm in their service to God. We must arouse out of our spiritual stupor and indifference, and make a complete consecration, or we shall fail to meet God's purpose for our lives.

"If we consent, He [Christ] will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

There will continue to be temptations and trials. The more our soul yearns to become like Christ, the more our adversary, the devil, will be aroused to prevent us. But the soul whose support is the Saviour need not fear. He is abundantly able to sustain every earnest, praying believer, and He will.

Beseeching God in behalf of His people, Paul prays, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5: 23, 24.

Will you let Him? It is no ordinary consecration that is demanded of us in these times. Are we equal to presenting our bodies a living sacrifices? My dear friends, we cannot make ourselves right, we cannot of ourselves do one thing to perfect our own characters, but we can choose Him, and He has assured us that every one who chooses Him will be made whole. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Will you not choose to let Him do it? Who today is ready to present his body, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God"? This "is your reasonable service."

A Place for Me

Use me, God, in Thy great harvest field,
Which stretcheth far and wide like a wide sea.
The gatherers are few, I fear the precious yield
Will suffer loss. O, find a place for me,
A place where best the strength I have will tell —
It may be one the other toilers shun;
Be it a wide or narrow place, 'tis well,
So that the work it holds be only done.

— *Selected.*