

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

THE STILL HOUR.

Sometimes at the end of the day, when its cares have sped and the quiet night is around us, how sweet it is to be with Jesus. To be alone with Him and to feel at home with Him! What a refreshment it is, a well in the desert, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

The home feeling is everything. How the cares of life ebb away, and the sorrows of yesterday are as the clouds that swiftly pass to come no more. We can almost welcome the trials of life, for if they lead to such fellowship, they have been as the dew to Israel. We can tell our Saviour things we would not care whisper to another, knowing that in the secret of His tabernacle He will hide us. He will understand where others either cannot or will not. But here, what a refuge! He knows. He will not misunderstand. He will be pitiful, and merciful for He remembers that we are dust. His presence is light, as when the night is gone and we raise the blinds and let in the sweet and gentle morning. There is no elsewhere like this, and as one might turn aside where the springs are full and the flowers are in bloom and the birds are singing sweetly, and there is a peace above expression and a fragrance that touches the soul, so here when the day is done there wait the sweet repose and blessing.

It is a time when patience comes back, and sympathy, broad as humanity, comes with it. Hatred, with its vulture wings, flies out into the night, and the dove-like presence that hovered above the Nazarene, fills all the hour with an ineffable love. With Jesus! Is there any trust that will stir the best that is in us like that? The day is not half so dull and the night is bereft of its darkness.

If there has been a casket in the home, and the dear face within it has looked unresponsive into ours, we can look into the face of Jesus and understand that it is well. The night shall be as the morning. The grave becomes the portal of the Saviour's happy home and the grief of the rent heart is turned to the sweetness of the holiest hope. We are very near to heaven and the coming glory when we are alone with Jesus. —United Presbyterian.

A PRAYER.

O Lord, merciful and gracious, hear us as we pray that Thy blessing may be upon us who are Thy children. We are Thine by Thine own sovereign act, and Thine because we have given ourselves to Thee; Thine also because Christ has made us through himself one with Thee. Thy mercy never fails. We know it with each new day. To tell to our own hearts the sum of it would be impossible. Thou art ever, ever near. For this abundant mercy we praise and bless Thy great, Thy holy name. And now, O Lord, we pray Thee for grace to help in time of need. When are we not in need? Temptation is fierce. Its assaults cease almost never. We need Thy grace to keep us true and pure; to aid us in our struggles against self and sin; to comfort us when weary with our burdens we almost fail. Dear Father, give us this boon of abounding and abiding grace and so add to Thy mercies. Hear us, we pray. Forgive us for our weakness, we pray, and guide us still over the way that leads to Thee. For Christ's dear sake. Amen.—Philadelphia Westminster.

The soul would have no rainbow,
Had the eyes no tears.

If prayer is a task and a slavery, you must not spring up from your knees and run back into the open fields of self-reliance; you must press forward into deeper and deeper chambers of God's helpfulness.—Phillips Brooks.

HE THAT IS ABLE TO KEEP YOU.

By L. M. Ziemann, D.D.

Those who have earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints, building upon that most holy faith, keeping themselves in the love of God, need have no fear of "Him that is able to keep" them, and finally present them, "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding great joy." God is true to His promise and will never forsake them that love and serve Him. If we have been true to God, if we have been honest with our fellow-men, then "as thy day, so shall thy strength be." There come to us all testing times when we must "suffer as a Christian" in order that God may the better prove us, but Joshua's verdict was, "Not one of His promises have ever failed me."

When we were little children we nestled ourselves in the laps of our mothers, and with child-like confidence we rested our heads upon their bosoms, where with a smile of peace and trust, we looked them in the face, and found sweet rest and loving cheer. God's love is greater even than that of a mother. Shall we not then like little children go to him with our troubles, and in child-like faith believe that he that "is able to keep you," will keep you? We have not a God that is far off, one that does not hear or care for us, but a God that is very near unto each one of us. "Behold, God Himself is with us for our Captain." We may have our burdens to bear, but God will help us bear them if we will but like children humbly come to Him and "cast your cares on Him who careth for you."

Alas for many to-day who are burdened down beneath a great load of care because they have not gone to God for help! God is not only able to help and keep His children, but He is ever ready and willing to do for the humblest of those that love Him. "I am poor and needy," said the Psalmist, "yet the Lord thinketh on me." Success depends largely upon the leader, and if God is our Captain, "if God be for us, who can be against us?" "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous," and all them who put their trust in Him need fear no danger, for He brings the blind by a way they know not, He leads them into paths they have not known, He makes darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will He do unto them and will not forsake them. God is our Father in heaven, a personal God, who cares for each one of us. "Behold God is with us," brings cheer and hope to the weary and heavy laden, and He that "is able to keep you," has proven a rod and staff to not only the troubled, the sick and the suffering, but also to the dying and the bereaved. Hear then the loving Father say to you, "Come near to Me." "Come unto Me and find rest." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "Though thy father and thy mother forsake thee, yet will I not." "Lo I am with thee always." "As thy day so shall thy strength be."—Lutheran Observer.

The Present, the Present is all thou hast
For thy sure possessing;
Like the patriarch's angel, hold it fast
Till it gives its blessing.

It is recorded of an ancient that his powers of vision were so extraordinary that he could distinctly see the fleet of the Carthaginians enter the harbor of Carthage, while he stood himself at Lilyboeum, in Sicily. A man seeing across an ocean, and able to tell of objects so far off! He could feast his vision on what others saw not. Even thus does faith now stand at its Lilyboeum and sees that which is obscure to our natural vision.—A. A. Bonar.

AT HIS WORK BENCH.

Carey was a cobbler, but he had a map of the world on his shop wall, and out-did Alexander the Great in dreaming and doing. Many a tinker and weaver and stone-cutter and hand worker has had open windows, and a skv, and a mind with wings. What thoughts were in the mind of Jesus at his work bench? One of them was that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of God—at any cost! Let us go into the carpenter's shop and learn some lessons.—Maltbie D. Babcock.

Faith looks to the future. There is danger that we shall forget this, and make ourselves miserable over the sorrows and failures of the past, when we should be looking with confidence to the possibilities of the future. True Christian faith leads ever to an enlarging and unfolding future. Christians should have their faces to the morning, they should front the sunrise.

Tenderness does not mean weakness, softness, effeminateness. It is consistent with strength, manliness, truth and bravery. It does not show itself alone in the touch, but in unselfishness, thoughtfulness, consideration, forbearance, patience, long-suffering. But however it shows itself, it is as the bloom on the peach, as spring showers on the earth, as the music of the angels stealing down on the plains of Bethlehem. You may not have much of this world's wealth to distribute, but you may give something better and spend a useful and beneficial life if you will practice this lesson of shedding around you the grace of human tenderness, in word and act, and by the spirit of your life.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

IN THE HOUSE OF SORROW.

The pastor is the comfort-bearer to the house of sorrow. He lives and ministers under the command of his Lord, "Comfort ye my people." His heart goes out to those into whose home the angel of death has entered. And yet there is no part of his ministry more delicate or that requires more prudence. The heart is so very tender under bereavement that even words of sympathy may be painful. He may be without personal experience of sorrow and knows not yet the best way to the heart. Sometimes he feels that the sorrow is so great that he fears to intrude and is silent. But he should remember the special object of his ministry to the afflicted. He should school himself in the sympathy of sorrow, so that even if inexperienced, he may be able to speak a word in season.

But commonly it is not many words that are needed. Rather the quiet expression of sympathy, with a short reading of appropriate scripture and prayer. It is to be assumed that mourners are open to the words of Divine comfort from the Scriptures and to simple, earnest supplication to the God of all grace and consolation.

At the same time those to whom the visit is made should remember that the pastor often feels constrained to wait until there is some intimation that such ministrations are desired. It is to be assumed on the part of the sorrowing that the pastor comes as the bearer of consolation. He should be made to feel that his prayers are desired and longed for. If there seems to be hesitation, open the way by a request for prayer. Quietly hand him a Bible and ask for prayer and you will find there was a heart full of sympathy waiting for this opening of the way. It is thus that perfect sympathy is established.—United Presbyterian.

Christian Intelligencer: Decline of religion evidences itself in dishallowing of the Lord's day, and this is a threatening portent of the times.