

THE DOUBLE-MINDED MAN.

By Rev. L. M. Zimmerman, D.D.

A double-minded person can never be trusted, for he knows not his own mind. As such he rests upon a poor foundation both mentally and morally. Wavering men are unstable. While this is true in business relations, it is doubly true morally. The man who asks a woman for her hand and heart, and then "wavers" in his attitude toward her, sharing his attentions and love with others who have no just claims to the same, is both untrustworthy and unfaithful. The whole divorce problem is after all but the result of an evil condition. Children themselves are thrown together too promiscuously, and often think themselves in love when there is only passing fancy, so that many who are united in wedlock in their almost childhood days, are but naturally unhappy. There is a double mindedness, a wavering, as to the just requirements, the responsibilities of the home life. Many marry too young. They do not stop to reflect seriously upon the step they are about to take, nor are they competent to decide intelligently the kind of partner they should have for life. Not a few fail to discriminate between fancy and love, between flirtation and married life. Many rush into marriage without inquiring into the habits, character and life of the other. Some marry for the winter, and without a spark of manhood, leave in the spring with as little principle and regard as an animal. The man who has a sister, should ever have the highest regard for the sister of another, and should ever act toward another's sister with the same dignity and manhood that he would demand of others toward his own sister. There is too much mockery of that which God intended to be sacred and divine. It is a most deplorable condition in which not a few find themselves after marriage, for instead of the promised love and loyalty, there are but the cold embers of unfaithfulness upon the hearth of affection. Thank God there are thousands of most happy homes and devoted husbands and wives, but why should not all be true to their vows? Shame upon those who pretend faithfulness, give the kiss of love upon the lips of those to whom they promised all, and then prove traitors by sharing their love with others! We need a higher conception of home life among many. As a husband demands faithfulness from his wife, so he should give in return the same faithfulness. Did more so live, we would have less post-mortem love. The dead are not conscious of love, but the living long for affection. Some have plenty to eat and wear, a comfortable home, but that is not enough. A slave may have that much, but a slave does not have a "home" according to the true conception of the term. Give then your love, your affection, your courtesies, your flowers to those in your own home during their lifetime, for there are many hearts that ache and break for want of the tender word unspoken and the wealth of love unspent.

The Lord brought Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, but he stopped half way. He had no blessing till, having set out to go to the land of Canaan, to the land of Canaan he came. He was safe alone even in the midst of foes. Lot was not safe in Sodom, though in a circle of friends. Our safety is in dwelling apart with God.

Carry no bad habits, no corrupting associations, no enmities and strifes into this new year. Leave these behind, and let the dead bury its dead; leave them behind, and thank God that you are able to leave them.

THE NEUTRALS.

(By Rev. J. M. Millar, B.D.)

The ancient curse fell on the people of Meroz, because they held aloof at the critical hour, and sent no contingent to the battlefield on which Israel's freedom was to be lost or won. Their "masterly inactivity" became a by-word and a shame. The children of Israel smarted under the rod of the Canaanite; but no brave word of protest came from Meroz. Other communities bade the tribes "aspire," Meroz bade them "crouch."

This old incident illustrates a distressing weakness in many lives. Our temptation is not to commit flagrant crime, but simply to withhold our hands from the duty of the hour. It may be a very plain and modest duty, or it may demand sacrifice of ease, and we may have to offend the deities of popular favor. In any case, it is very tempting to acquiesce in things as they are, and to be languid on the shore, while God's occasions go drifting by. It is easy to sink into the idle spectator, who forbears even to cheer while others are playing the game of life with all their might.

Let us ask ourselves, "What have the neutrals ever done for our world?" Our blessings come to us from the red blooded men of the past, who had overwhelming convictions; and we too shall "give forth a like cheer to our sons," only if we have positive enthusiasm, a glowing love of Christ, and a burning hate of all hypocrisy and dishonor.

About us, alas! are many whose religious zeal flamed brightly for a season, but the light is gone now. They declined the tasks God set them, and so they failed. The church shall march prospering; but not through their presence. Like the ignoble citizens of Meroz, they have forfeited their share in the sweet joys of victory. It is the sad wail of the Meroz type that we hear in the liques—

"I hear the reapers singing go
Into God's harvest. I, that might with
Them have chosen, here below
Grope, slumbering at the gates at
night."

Nanaimo, B.C.

ADVANCEMENT.

We leave many things behind us as we go on. We cannot never go back again over the closing year. We never go over any life-path a second time. We never pass a second time through any experience. We have infancy once, childhood once, youth once, manhood and womanhood once, old age once, and we die once. We are forever leaving things, conditions, places, and experiences behind us. But through all these we have the same Christ; unchanged, unchanging.

The old ark was carried forward into the new land of promise, and still led the people. The Christ of childhood and of youth remains the Christ of manhood and of old age. Whatever changes the years bring to us, we must ever keep our eyes on the living Christ. He will always be a path which he cannot find for us and show us. There will never be a dark valley which he cannot light up for us. There will never be a battle which he cannot fight for us. There will never be an experience through which he cannot safely take us. We are leaving the old year behind, but we are not leaving Christ in the dead year. We need not be afraid, therefore, to go forward, if we go with him. We have not passed this new way heretofore, and it is all strange to our inexperience; but Christ knows, and he will guide us, and all will be well if we put our hand in his.—Dr. Miller's Year Book.

God will always take the best time to hand out his mercies to His people.
—Thomas Brooks.

HOW GOD SPEAKS TO MEN.*

Some Bible Hints.

God speaks to man in His creation (v. 1); but mere science does not hear him, only the faith-filled heart.

God speaks to man through His Book (v. 10); but we cannot hear him even there, if the ears of our soul are filled with the world's traffic.

God speaks (v. 11) both warnings and rewards, and always the second after the first are heeded.

God speaks to the heart (v. 14), but only when the heart waits upon Him in humble meditation.

Suggestive Thoughts.

The more we speak to God, learning His language, the more God can and does speak to us.

God can speak to us more as we speak more to men about Him, using what He has already told us.

God speaks not as we speak, but as we listen: Are our prayers listenings?

God still speaks to men in the still, small voice. Do we expect thunderings?

A Few Illustrations.

Dumb people are taught to speak by watching others speak. So we are taught celestial speech by watching God.

When the white man sent a written message upon a chip by an Indian, the chip was magic to the red man. A still greater mystery to the unbeliever is God's communication with man.

Man can telephone without wires; and who can still doubt the possibility of prayer?

The phonograph renders speech solid. Our memories are phonographs: are they stored with the words of God?

To Think About.

Am I listening to God, or talking all this time?

Shall I know the language of heaven?

Do I hide God's words, or pass them on?

A Cluster of Quotations.

As you tarry before God let it be in a deep, quiet faith in Him, the Invisible One, who is so near, so holy, so mighty, so loving—Andrew Murray.

Let prayer be the pulse of your whole life.—Frances E. Willard.

One reason we do not pray better I suppose, is that we are afraid of being answered.—Alexander McKenzie.

Prayer is the pitcher that fetched water from the brook wherewith to water the herbs; break the pitcher and it will fetch no water, and for want of water the garden will wither.—John Bunyan.

Daily Bible Readings.

- M., Jan. 13. God spoke in dreams. Job 33: 1-16.
- T., Jan. 14. God spoke in visions. Rev. 1: 1-12.
- W., Jan. 15. He speaks His Spirit. Acts 10: 19, 20.
- T., Jan. 16. Paul heard a voice. Acts 9: 1-7.
- F., Jan. 17.—Daniel heard through Gabriel. Dan. 8: 15-18.
- S., Jan. 18. God speaks through Jesus. Matt. 4: 23-25.

By a simple rule the length of the day and night any time of the year may be ascertained by simply doubling the time of the sun's rising, which will give the length of the night, and doubling the time of setting will give the length of the day.

We are not only responsible for what we are, but for what we might have been had we followed our highest ideals.

*Sun., Jan. 19. Topic—Songs of the Heart. II. How God speaks to men. Ps. 19.