

many and far-seeing equipments, and in an evil moment he is overthrown, and all his past diligence counts for nought. *Constant, unremitting vigilance* is an absolute condition of security.

FLASHLIGHTS

Mon., Feb. 4.	My life to-day.....	Jas. 4: 13-17
Tues., Feb. 5.	Faithful in little.....	Matt. 25: 14-21
Wed., Feb. 6.	Relations to others.	
		Matt. 5: 43-48; Phil. 2: 1-4
Thu., Feb. 7.	Diligence and prayer.....	Luke 1: 1-8
Fri., Feb. 8.	Welcoming Christ.	
		1 John 2: 24-28; Rev. 22: 20
Sat. Feb. 9.	Seeing and being.....	1 John 3: 1-6

It is not expecting too much from the Lord. Christ to assert, 'hath said he should be questioned by the Lord a. ny time. The question was once asked John Wesley, what he would do if he knew he were going to die that day. The saintly servant man replied, that he would do just what he had done yesterday—his work and his duty. There should be no necessity for special preparation for the coming of Christ at death or judgment—we should be always ready by faith and obedience to render an account. If a man after looking at his life and conduct says, "I dare not meet Christ to-morrow," he would do well to change that life and conduct, and that without delay.

It is important to have correct scriptural views on this important doctrine—Christ's second coming. Methodist young people should remember that there is much error abroad regarding Christ's second coming. Methodism does not teach the *immediate coming of Christ in person* to rule over the world. It teaches that the millennium is a period of the general prevalence of Christianity in the world, and that this millennium shall *precede* the coming of Christ in visible form in his glorified body to judge the living and the dead. Make clear in your minds, young people, the teachings of your church on this doctrine.

1. Methodism believes and teaches that under the power of Christianity the world shall in time reach the Golden Age of love and virtue and knowledge. Then Jesus shall reign in education, science, philosophy, society and government, *not in person*, but in the sense of his exercising directly through his church the most active influence in human affairs. This is the *millennium*. The world is moving on to this happy consummation.

2. Methodism believes and teaches that Christ will come again in visible form in his glorified body to judge the living and the dead. This is the second coming of Christ properly so-called. The millennium must come first, and then the second advent—but *when* we do not know.

3. It is also true that Christ comes to all at death. The good receive reward, and the wicked suffer retribution. As the hour of death is unknown to all, it is the part of wisdom to be prepared for it at all times.

The time of the second coming uncertain. "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you."—v. 1. A gentle hint that all question on that subject were unnecessary, as there was nothing more to be revealed. The curiosity of men sometimes pry into secrets with which men have nothing to do. Some have been fanatical enough to fix the day of the Lord's coming. For a time there has been a local excitement; the day has come and gone; the world has moved on as before, and the people have had exposed themselves to scorn and ridicule. "For that day and hour knoweth no man." The uncertainty is a perpetual stimulant to the people of God to exercise the ennobling virtues of hope, of watchfulness, of fidelity, of humility, of earnest inquiry, of deep reverence.

“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,” says our topic scripture. The thief not only gives no notice of his approach, but takes every possible care to approach unobserved. He does not come in the open designs. The discovery of the mischief he has wrought is made when it is too late. The wise will take every care to avoid surprise and to baffle the would-be robber. See the application! There is nothing more certain than that the Lord *will* come; nothing more uncertain than *when* he will come; and both the one and the other should keep his people in an attitude of prayerful expectation and moral readiness. Faith produces care and alertness. Unbelief hurls the soul into false security.

"And they shall not escape," says the narrative (v. 3). Wicked men never feel more secure than when destruction is near, and never so near destruction as when they feel most secure. The swearer may be seized while the oath is burning on his tongue, the drunkard engulfed in judgment while the cup is trembling on his lips. The destruction of the wicked of their hollow joy, of their ephemeral pleasures—will be sudden, painful and inevitable. Now there is possibility of peace, for mercy reigns; but when the great day comes, long-rejected mercy will no longer be possible, and anguish will be upon every soul of man that doeth evil. (Rev. 2, 8, 9).

Believers should be vigilant on the ground of their conversion, their changed life. "Ye are all the children of the light." (vs. 4, 5). Christians are not in moral darkness, spiritual ignorance and dangerous security for want of knowledge. They are children of the day when the light shines the brightest, when privileges are abundant, when opportunities multiply, and responsibility is correspondingly increased. Having all this, the believer should be vigilant and always ready.

“Let us not sleep, but let us watch and be sober . . .” (vs. 6-8). Here the apostle urges constant watchfulness. Do not be immersed in the deep depths of sin and unconcern, neglecting duty, and never thinking of a moment, but let us be sober and vigilant. Thus, in effect, urges Paul the duty of diligent vigilance. The Christian has to fight the enemy as well as watch against him. He is a soldier, a soldier on sentry. The Christian life is not one of soft, luxurious ease; it is a hard, fierce conflict. But victory is sure. We are prepared, and hence the victory is sure. The armor of God will hope constitute the most complete armor of the soul. There are the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation, protecting the two most vital parts—the head and the heart. With head and heart right in Christ, the whole man is right. Let us be sober and vigilant for the sake of the soul. We are safe, and we are safe. But we cannot afford to be one moment off our guard.

Argus is fabled to have had one hundred eyes, only two of which ever slept at once. Jupiter sent Mercury to slay him, but he could not reach him unawares. At last Mercury took the form of a shepherd, and played such charming music on his Pantheon pipes and told him such interesting stories that the hundred eyes were all closed in sleep, and Mercury cut off his head with a single stroke. The Christian has every facility for watchfulness. If he have not a hundred eyes, he has the equivalent. And if he use to advantage what has been provided for him, the enemy cannot take him unawares. But, sad to say, worldly pleasures and the attractions of sin sometimes put to sleep the believer's

There is no topic which it is more sensible to discuss than death, and there is no topic which is more shunned.

How our tongues would fly if we were to receive a million dollars to-morrow! But soon we are to give up all our goods, and we try to forget that day.

Death ushers us into the presence of Christ, and our feeling regarding death is a measure of our love for Christ.

Death is the closing up of all our earthly accounts, and our readiness for death is a measure of our faithfulness.

No one can watch for Christ's coming who watches very eagerly after worldly wealth or temporal success.

You may not be drunk with wine, but you may be drunk with greed or ambition. "Be sober."

Make a business of getting ready for death as you would make a business of getting ready to go to Europe. Is not death an infinitely more important voyage?—*Wells.*

A solemn topic is this—Christ's coming and the Christian's readiness. Announce a chain exercise a week in advance, conducted in this way: The president will read the thought he has prepared on the topic, and then name his successor, who will read his or her thought prepared beforehand; then number two names a successor to read, and so on until most, if not all, the members have presented *one thought* on the topic.

This is a name of a Bible Game which is at once entertaining and instructive, and that will in a most attractive way make you familiar with valuable information about the history, people, places, and purpose of the scriptures. It is equally interesting to both children and adults. From three to twenty-five persons may play at one time. Price 40 cents. Published by the *Endeavor Herald* Company, Toronto.

Permanent success always implies wise plans and the vigorous prosecution of them; no plan, however intelligently conceived, will work itself. There must be push right behind it and always at it if the highest success is attained. One of the chief attractions of the Home Department is its utter simplicity. No one need say: "It won't work in my school, because I live in the country, and the school is very small." That is one of the best reasons why you need the Home Department. It will augment your numbers and bless your entire community. Try it. —Home Department Quarterly.

If you have ever stood in the place of the one behind the counter, you have learned to dread the shopper who doesn't know what he wants. He is not likely to become a buyer ; his confession that he doesn't know what he wants lays bare the fact that he doesn't want anything very badly. The same thing is true of our prayer. When we go to God with no definite idea of why we have come, we may say over a good many words, but we are not praying. When men came to Christ for help, his usual question was, "What do you want?" Of course, he knew all that was in the heart, but he knew that no man was ready to receive a blessing till he had a clear conception of his own needs.—*Lookout.*