

For the Family Circle.

Weeping and Working.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

The smallest verse in the Bible is one of the largest and deepest in its heavenly pathos. *Jesus wept.* What mysterious meanings may have lain behind those tears, no one need try to fathom; but, for one, I prefer to see in them the honest expression of grief for a friend who was dead, and of sympathy for two heart-broken women. Christ's power displayed at that sepulchre overwhelms me; it was the power of a God. But His pity touches me most tenderly; it was the pity of a man. Those moistened eyes are my elder brother's. The sympathy that walked twenty miles to Bethany, that drew Him to those desolate women, that started the tears down His cheeks and choked His voice with emotion—that sympathy links us to Him as the sharer and the bearer of our own sorrows. There is something vicarious in those tears as there is in the precious blood shed on the cross a few days afterwards. His love seems to "insert itself vicariously right into our sorrows," and He takes the burden right into His own heart.

But it was a practical sympathy. Had our Lord come to Bethany and taken the two bereaved sisters into their guest-chamber and had a "good cry" with them, and then gone away and left Lazarus in his grave and them in their grief, it would have been all that our neighbors can do for us when we are in a house of bereavement. But it would not have been like Jesus. He did not come to Bethany simply to weep. He came there to work a marvellous miracle of love. He wept as a man; He worked as the Lord of power and glory. He pitied first and then helped. The same love that moistened His eyes moved His arm to burst open that tomb and bring the dead Lazarus to his feet. A few days afterwards He wept for sinners, and then wrought out salvation for sinners by His own agonies on the cross. Is there no lesson for us in this? What are tears of sympathy worth if we refuse to lift a finger to help the suffering or to relieve distress? And what a mockery it is to weep over the erring and do nothing to save them. Only when we "bear one another's burthens do we fulfil the law of Christ."

There is another connection that weep-

ing has with working. We relieve our own suffering hearts by turning the flood of grief upon some wheel of practical activity. An eminent minister of God who was under a peculiarly bitter trial once said to me, "If I could not study and preach and work to the very utmost, I should go crazy." The mill-stones grinding upon themselves soon wear themselves away to powder. But useful occupation is not only a tonic: it is a sedative to the troubled spirit. Instead of looking in upon our own griefs until we magnify them, we should rather look at the sorrows of others in order to lighten and lessen them.

The poor fisherman, in one of Sir Walter Scott's romances, says to the lady who comes to his cottage after the death of his child—"You rich folk when ye are in trouble may sit wi' yer handkercher to yer een, but we puir bodies maun off to our work agen, even tho' our hearts are thumpin' like a hammer." If the poor fellow had only known it, he was a great deal better off at his honest work than if he had been idly nursing his grief with the "handkercher at his een." Some of the best work ever done for the Master is wrought by His servants when the "hammer" of affliction is not only beating away on the heart, but is breaking down selfishness and unbelief. When sorrow is allowed to settle in the soul, it often turns the soul into a stagnant fen of bitter waters—out of which sprout the rank rushes of self-will, and unbelief, and rebellion against God. If that same sorrow is turned outward into currents of sympathy and beneficence, it becomes a stream of blessings. A baptism of trial is often the best baptism for Christ's service. If tears drive us to toil, then toil will in turn drive away tears, and give us new and sacred satisfactions. When our blessed Saviour wept, it was on the eve of His mightiest works, once in raising the dead, and once in redeeming a dying world. Weeping and working may even blend profitably together: for the chiefest of Christ's apostles tells us that during three busy years of his life he ceased not to warn perishing sinners, night and day, with tears.

"Since THOU on earth hast wept
And sorrowed oft alone,
If I must weep with Thee,
My Lord, Thy will be done!"

Training for God.

Mrs. Booth, an English lady, in addressing a cultivated audience at St. James