



Our Young People

Nov. 20, Expressing Thanks.

Topic.—How to Express our thanks to God. Ps. 138; 1-8.

Some Bible Hints.

The thankful heart must be *all* thankful—not half grateful and the other half grieving over what it has not received (v. 1).

If a man is grateful at home, he will want to show gratitude abroad; home thanksgiving is temple thanksgiving (v. 2).

The climax and test of thanksgiving is a time of trouble. Until we have praised then we have not praised best (v. 7).

Every thanksgiving is hopeful, and looks forward to a greater thanksgiving for which God will give occasion (v. 8).

Suggestive Thoughts.

Why does God, who knows our hearts, wish us to express gratitude? Because we do not know our hearts.

Every prayer, no matter how deep our sorrow, may—and should—begin with thanksgiving.

The shining face of a Christian is the best possible standing advertisement of Christianity.

If a man had done you a great kindness, you would be ashamed not to let other men know about it. How can you be silent then concerning the wonderful kindness of God.

A Few Illustrations.

A grateful life without open praise of God is like an advertisement with the name and address omitted.

The mirror shows its gratitude to the sun by passing the light along to something else. So we "reflect as in a mirror the glory of God."

The best thanksgiving inspires thanksgiving in others, just as the wire proves it is charged with electricity by electrifying whatever it touches.

A Guster of Quotations.

I thank, Thee, Lord, for mine unanswered prayers.
Unanswered save Thy quiet, kindly "Nay."
—Huckel.

Long and dark the nights, dim and short the days,
Mounting weary heights on our weary ways:
Thee, our God, we praise.
—Christina G. Rossetti.

To give God thanks in words—this is not hard.
But incense of the spirit—to distil
From hour to hour the cassia and the nard
Of fragrant life His praises to fulfil?
Alas, inconsistent will!—Bates.
Giving thanks shall be the touch
Of sweet and golden keys:
And such
The melody of His dear peace.
—Dwight Williams.

Monthly Missionary Meetings.

The Endeavorers are justifying the confidence of the churches in appointing monthly missionary meetings. Often they are the best meetings of the month.

Prepare for them by careful and thorough study, making a definite division of the work. Appoint different Endeavorers to look up the geography of the country to be studied, its physical conditions, its political history, recent mission events, your denominational missions there, the biographies of the great missionaries to that country, and so on:

Begin at the first of the year to plan for

all the missionary meetings of the year. Select leaders, speakers, and the principle plans.

Leave Yesterday Behind.

One of the strongest forces for good is the woman who has strength of mind enough to put the past resolutely behind her and take up the future cheerfully.

Women often cannot do it. Their tendency is to cling to the past, even while the memory of it breaks their hearts. They brood over hours that can never come back, and events that can never be altered; and if there is one loophole by which they can find a way to blame themselves or another for what happened, they are certain to hunt that loophole out and take extra pleasure in the added pain. Reproach seems like a balm to their souls.

"Oh, if it had only happened otherwise! If I or some one else had done differently! It might have been! It might have been!" That is the unceasing cry of many a woman's heart. She does not know that things could possibly have been otherwise, but in her anguish she tells herself so.

Poor soul! If some one could only make her see that she is doing the worst possible thing by hugging these regrets to her bosom. Let her remember that if she did the best she could she has no reason to reproach herself. Even if she did make a mistake no power on earth can bring back the past in order that she may rectify it. Tears and sleepless nights of despair cannot undo what has been done. It is gone forever.

But—and here, and here only, is relief from her misery—there is an attitude of mind which can bring the greatest possible good out of even our worst blunders or our saddest misfortune. To those who accept the past, who sincerely deplore their mistakes and resolve not to repeat them, there comes, if they will let it, a consciousness of a power working eternally for good which can make all things, even grievous errors, work to some wise end. It is the only salvation of a heart driven almost to madness by regret and self-reproach.

One occasionally meets a rare woman who has suffered deeply, but whose face is calm and cheerful as the morning, and her character an inspiration and a source of strength to every one who knows her. She has not forgotten her past. Oh, no! Nor has she tossed it aside as a thing of no meaning. What she has done is to school herself to accept the unalterable, to trust confidently that some good will come out of it, and to do the best she can in the present. Thus her saddest mistakes have become a rich experience. Such a woman was George Eliot's "Romola," that noblest of disappointed women.

Leave your yesterday behind, accept today as a rich opportunity for right living, and tomorrow will bring strength and joy of its own.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Daily Readings.

M., Nov. 14. For family blessings 2 Sam. 7:18,19.
T., Nov. 15. For Revivals. Ezra 9:8,9.
W., Nov. 16. For deliverance. Ps. 18:6,17.
T., Nov. 17. For happiness. Ps. 92:4.
F., Nov. 18. For salvation. Ps. 98:1-3.
S., Nov. 19. For a chance to work. 1 Tim. 1:12-17.

think thee; thou hast never reached the absolute depth of any darkness, never come to the step which has no step below it. I have read of the Son of Man that he gave thanks over the symbol of his broken body. What does that prove? That he rejoiced in being sad? No, but that he was not perfectly sad. It tells me that even the Man of Sorrows had not reached the uttermost sorrow. Not for the pain, but for the mitigation of the pain, did the Son of Man give thanks; not that his body was broken, but that it was broken for me. In thine hour of sorrow give thanks like Jesus. Keep thine eye, not on the step above, but on the step below—the step to which thou hast not yet descended. Look not up at the height thou hast lost; look down on the depth thou hast not sounded.

There might have been no ram caught in thy thicket. There might have been no dream dreamt in thy dungeon. There might have been no bush burning in thy desert. Herod might have come without the sages; Bethlehem might have come without the angels; Judas might have come without the Passover; Calvary might have come without the garden.

Thy Father has never allowed the uttermost deep of misery to any human spirit; the cable may creak and strain, but it is anchored within the veil. God never fills the cup of Jesus to the brim; there is always a vacant space reserved for light and air. Is it not written that he has put my tears into his bottle: the quantity of thy griefs is measured; there is a bound which they cannot pass? Thank God for that boundary, oh, my soul—Geo. Matheson.

There is no doubt that whatever trouble comes to us, comes from God on an errand of love. It is not some chance thing breaking into our life, without purpose, without intention: It is a messenger from God, and brings blessings to us. Our trouble is God's gift to us. No matter what it may be—duty, responsibility, struggle, pain, unrequited service, unjust treatment, hard conditions—it is that which God has given to us. No matter through whose fault or sin it may have come to us, when the trouble is ours, we may say it is a gift of God to us. Then being a gift from God, we may be sure that it has in it for us a divine blessing. As it comes to us it may have a stern aspect, may seem unkindly, even cruel, but, folded up in its forbidden form, it carries some treasure of mercy.—J. R. Miller.

My Bible is all the dearer to me, not only because it has pillowed the dying heads of my father and mother, but because it has been the sure guide of a hundred generations of Christians before them. When the boastful innovators offer me a new system of belief (which is really a congeries of unbeliefs) I say to them: "The old is better." Twenty centuries of experience shared by such intellects as Augustine, Luther, Pascal, Calvin, Newton, Chalmers, Edwards, Wesley and Spurgeon are not to be shaken by the assaults of men who often contradict each other while contradicting God's truth.—Dr Cuyler, in "Recollections of a Long Life."

Am I grateful to God with my whole heart, or only half my heart?

Do others know that I am grateful to God?