

people are freed from the slavish observance of the Sabbath according to the rites of the Jews in times of old; but still it is *his day*;—it is the Lord's day, set apart peculiarly for opportunities of worshipping him, and attending to the concerns of our souls;—so that those who needlessly employ it otherwise themselves, or cause others to do so, assuredly break this holy command, and act contrary to his will. And let it ever be remembered that Sabbath-breaking almost invariably stands the first in the dark catalogue of those crimes which lead men to punishment. This should particularly be inculcated in the minds of children. As for this poor watchmaker, your account makes me anxious to know more about him. I intend to call upon him this evening. Suppose you go with me, and we will see if we can help the poor man."

SUNDAY EVENING.

Blessed is the house where those who bear rule seek the Lord. There can be no real peace or comfort in a family unless the parents love the Saviour: then his peace will be with them and their household. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just," Prov. iii. 33.

This was instanced in our poor watchmaker. At eight o'clock we knocked at the door of his room: Jenny came, and asked, "Who is there?" "Friends of your father."

She called him:—he came, and said, "Gentlemen, I do not recollect you; but, if you please, walk in."

"I am a servant of Christ," said I, offering him my hand, "and I trust it is upon this word we are come."

"If this is the case, perhaps you will join our little circle." So saying, he led us into the inner room. We found his wife sitting up in bed; the youngest child lay in a cradle, and the other two children stood by the bedside. Two or three friends sat at the other end of the room, where a Bible lay open upon the table.

"These are our friends, and also friends of our Saviour," said the watchmaker to us. "They call here sometimes on the Lord's day evening, to talk over those things which concern our souls. I was just explaining to the children the parable of the two friends," Luke xi. 5.

"Do not let us interrupt you."

THE PARABLE.

The father then proceeded to explain the love which God bears to his children, and that they might be sure of being heard and answered when they prayed earnestly and with sincerity. "Observe," said he, "this friend came at midnight—an unseasonable hour—but he did not hesitate, for it was his friend to whom he applied. He was not discouraged at being refused; for he knew that his friend could give him what he desired; he knew his kind disposition, his readiness to oblige; and he trusted in his friend's affection for him. He was not mistaken; he obtained all that he asked for. Now, my dear children, is not our God a better friend than any we can have in this world? Would any one of our friends, even the best

we have, lay down his life for us? Would any one offer to bear the punishment of our sins? Yet our Saviour bore this when he was nailed to the cross. Again: Can there be a friend richer or more powerful than he is? Think, for a moment, what are the riches of this world when compared with the treasures of his love. And do not let us forget that our friend is not only thus able to give exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, but he is also ready and willing so to do. He will withhold nothing that is for their good from those who really seek him. He is always ready to hear: times and seasons are alike to him. I say this, my children, knowing that what I say is true. His ears are always open to our prayers: he is always ready to hearken unto us, and to bless us. Remember what he has done for us in times past. My dear children, look to the Saviour. He has said that he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him: apply to your heavenly Father as you would to me. Perhaps I do not attend to you directly; but you are not afraid to ask again, till your desires are attended to. Plead thus with your heavenly Father: he will hear, and he will answer you. Earnestly do I entreat him that you may be led to seek him early," Prov. viii. 17.

A respectable female, one of the party, who was their aunt, added a few words of good advice:—among other things, she told the children always to pray at night, before they got into bed; for when they put it off till they lay down they would be tired, and would only offer up a few careless and sleepy words. "This, my dear children," said she, "is not praying." The two children thanked their aunt and father, and having kissed their mother, retired to their little beds.

"They are not yet aware of their privileges," said I: "one day they will know the advantage of having parents who loved the Saviour. May he bless your endeavours to instruct them."

"Amen!" said the mother. "It is my earnest prayer that my dear Jenny may early know what it is to seek the Lord: then I can leave her without anxiety."

"The blessing of the Lord," said I, "is with you: he will make your strength equal to your day."

"Yes," said the watchmaker, "the Lord is our shepherd: he crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

"My good friend," said I, "have you long held these sentiments? What first led you to this way of thinking?"

"Sir, I will tell you, as briefly as I can, since you wish to know the particulars."

Theological.

THE PARABOLIC TEACHING OF OUR LORD.

CHAPTER I.

THE Evangelist Mark informs us, that when our Lord taught in the presence of his enemies, or those who were prejudiced against his mission and his doctrine, he addressed them in parables, and that "with-

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