

firmer and making it just as hard for poor Dennis as I could.

"Money, of course," he answered. "You know what I mean, dear. Suppose we keep a tithe-box. At present we really give nothing worth speaking of."

"Whatever are you thinking of, Dennis," said I, "to talk so soberly of giving, when you know that we have not nearly enough to live on as it is? It is more of a problem every day, with our income, to make both ends meet."

I looked meaningly around the plain little room, with its modest, lonely-looking furniture, and reminded Dennis of the rent which was overdue and the many things we both needed. I even quoted scripture to the effect that if any provide not for his own he is worse than an infidel: and, being fairly started, soon talked both him and myself into a dissatisfied frame of mind. It all ended in Dennis saying, "Oh, well, no doubt as you say, what is impossible is impossible, and that ends it. But I do wish we were able to give something."

A serious illness came to me, and as I needed constant care, Dennis, who was very busy in the office, proposed that we send for a young girl whom we had become interested in as a child, in the orphan's home. I knew she had experience in attending the sick, and rather unwillingly consented. Maggie was a capable, well-trained girl, and had a peculiarly gentle and pleasing voice. I loved to hear it so well that during my convalescence I kept her talking on one pretext or other most of the time. In this spirit I asked her rather languidly one day what she kept in a little pasteboard box I had noticed several times in her hands.

"This is my tithe-box," said Maggie, turning her honest blue eyes full on me. "I was just counting the money over to see how much I have for the missions next Sabbath."

"Why, child," said I, "come here and sit by me; I want to talk to you. Do you mean to tell me that you give a tenth to the Lord?"

The girl was rather surprised at my vehemence, but answered simply, "Why, yes ma'am. I am very sorry it is so little I can give, having only my earnings. Sometimes I think it would be nearer right if I, whose whole is such a trifle, should give one-fifth. There is so much need of money, you know. It is different with rich people; one-tenth of their money is a great deal, and so much good can be accomplished with it."

I winced under Maggie's ingenious argument—such a decided inversion of mine—but she, sweet child, all unconscious of my thoughts, went on to tell me of the good matron at the home, who had taught her, as a child, that she had a Father in heaven ready to be more to her than the father and mother she had lost. "She told us," said Maggie, "that when Jesus left the earth after His resurrection, He put the missionary work He had been doing for three years—and for that matter, all His life, the matron said—in our hands to do for Him; and He said plainly that everyone of us who love Him shall show it by what we do for the work He loved. If we cannot preach or teach, or give up all our time to Him here or over the seas, we can at least give a part of our money to Him. She liked to give a tenth, because that was God's own plan for the people He loved; and so must be the division of one's money which pleases him best. 'It is His right,' said the dear matron one day, 'to have a tenth of our all; and after that, if we spare more, we can call it a gift.' She gave us all a tithe-box, and the very first money I earned, all my own, I put a tenth in it."

"So your matron thought that everyone should give a tenth to the Lord, Maggie?"

"No, ma'am," was the quiet answer. "She did not think of it in that way. But she said that, like the other plans the good Lord has made for our every day living, it is really all to make us good and happy. We are so glad when we once begin to give in that way, and the nine-tenths which we keep are blessed of Him with the one He accepts; so it is lifted above being ordinary money, and does us far more good."

My mind was busy with these sweet words long after Maggie had left me, and the question came, "If she can give out of her pitiful poverty, what is my excuse?" Yes, I saw clearly now. I had been all in the wrong, and a stumbling block to my husband. So in the evening, as we sat cozily by the fire again, both happy in my returning strength, I said to Dennis: "I have learned a lesson which makes my illness a blessing, dear. Shall I tell you of it?" And then I told him of Maggie's ministering to my soul as well as to my body, and I showed him a little box, on which was written "Tithes." Dennis did not speak at first, but a glad look shone in his eyes, and he clasped my hand very tenderly.

"The Lord's hand is in this, Clara," he said at last. "We will pledge a tithe of all God ever gives us over this little box, won't we?"

It would be a half truth to say we never miss that money. It has brought us a blessing. Though we are not rich, and probably never will be, we are content, which is far better, and need to fret about matters no more. "O Dennis," I said the other day, "how well worth heeding that suggestion of yours has proved!"—Selected.

The Young People

EDITOR W. L. ARCHIBALD.

All communications for this department should be sent to Rev. W. L. Archibald, Lawrencetown, N. S., and must be in his hands at least one week before the date of publication.

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday.—The ancient promise of the outpouring of the Spirit. Joel 2: 28-32.

Tuesday.—Our Lord Jesus renews the promise of power from on high. Luke 24: 44-53; Acts 1: 6-11.

Wednesday.—Those who know the true God are appointed to be witnesses of his sole deity. Isaiah 43: 9-13.

Thursday.—Peter and the other apostles bearing witness under the Spirit's influence and power. Acts 2: 1-21.

Friday.—Effect of testimony for Christ when the power of the Holy Spirit rests on the witnesses. Acts 2: 22-42.

Saturday.—The Holy Spirit makes the witnesses brave in the face of danger. Acts 4: 1-22.

Sunday.—The Holy Spirit not only inspires the witness with courage, but also makes him gentle and forgiving. Acts 7: 51-60.

During March the Comments on Prayer Meeting Topic will be furnished by Rev. J. H. McDonald of Fredericton, N. B.

Prayer Meeting Topic, Feb. 22.

The Purpose of Power.

The purpose of power as revealed by the above passage is—

I. Negatively,

1. Not to minister to race prejudice. The question, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" indicated that the disciples still clung to the dream of temporal dominion. They hoped yet to see Jerusalem the centre of worldly power dictating terms to all other nations. In their thought the Jew was a superior being, immeasurably in advance of all others, and he alone was fitted to rule. These disciples forgot that the Jews had proved their unfitness for dominion by rejecting their king and Messiah. They knew not the time of their "visitation." And had God permitted this pride-inflated people to realize their dream it can easily be seen what the consequences would have been. The old story of race prejudice, selfish exclusiveness, national Phariseism and forgetfulness of their mission to the world would have been repeated on a more extended scale. Jesus taught his disciples that the power of God would not be granted for race aggrandizement, and thus by implication that no one race has a right to seek power to lord it over others.

If God has given power, privilege and position to our own race, the Anglo-Saxon, it is certainly not that these things may minister to our race pride, but rather that they may enable us to exalt those lower down in the scale of humanity. Kipling has beautifully emphasized this thought in his hymn, "The recessional."

2. Not to minister to personal ambition. It may well have been that personal interest prompted this question about Israel's restoration. In the minds of these disciples lurked the thought perhaps of the place which they were to occupy. Visions of positions of honor, of the seats on the "right hand" and on the "left hand" in the Kingdom, flitted before their imaginations. Their conception of the Kingdom had not yet been spiritualized. Jesus showed them that the power of God could not be prostituted to such low ends. It had more worthy purposes to fulfil. Many men would be glad to have the power of the Holy Ghost like "Simon the sorcerer," in order to make money or gain position by its use.

Let us beware of seeking God's power for selfish ends.

II. Positively.

1. To exalt Christ. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." The chief work of the Holy Spirit was to honor and magnify Christ. "He shall glorify me," John 16: 14. And just as the Holy Spirit was not to speak of himself but veil himself behind the brightness of Jesus, so the disciple is to use the power given him "to lift up the Son of Man." He must increase, but we must decrease. All the crowns we have worn must be cast down at his feet. Paul understood the true purpose of power when he so ignored self that he could say, "For me to live is Christ." He even gloried in the repression and crucifixion of the "I" in his life, that the power of Christ might abide upon him. The power of Christ and the power of the self are mutually antagonistic. One must eventually displace the other.

2. To serve men. "Ye shall be witnesses" The purpose then of the incoming power was forcible testimony. It may seem strange that Jesus should have expended so much power through his followers, in the form of preaching and witnessing. And yet what force has ever been so effective as preaching the gospel, and

especially that form of preaching known as personal testimony! It has made Christ a reality to millions. It has thrilled multitudes into new love to God. It has revolutionized myriads of lives. Let us not then withhold our testimony to the gospel for God has ordained that it shall be the very power of God unto salvation.

SUGGESTED SONGS

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." "Be Strong in the Lord." "We Praise Thee O God." "More Love to Thee." "I need Thee every Hour."

Keutville, N. S.

C. H. DAY.

Paul's Perplexity.

BY REV. RUPERT OSGOOD MORSE.

As Paul faced the two facts—"My life is Christ," "My death is gain," he hesitated which to choose. Like Hamlet, he soliloquizes over the "to be or not to be." But Paul's motives lift his perplexity to a higher plane. He looks upon the bonds and buffetings, the scourges and the scornings he has endured, and, realizing that death will not only end all these, but bring him into the unveiled presence of his Lord, his desire is toward departure. He does not desire death in itself, but the presence with Christ. This thought replaces the gloom of the grave with living light. Hence Paul's desire for death.

In this desire we see the power of the believer's faith. All that a man hath will he give for his life. Men often spend their all in a vain endeavor to add a few months to a fast-ebbing life. They spend their gold with lavish hand, hoping thus to lengthen their days, so do they dread death. But Paul's eagle-eyed faith lays all sordid motives in the dust, as beholding Christ he avows a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far more better. Had death appeared to him a long sleep, would he have written thus? No, never! Cessation of activity would have been to that electric plant-incarnate the most doleful of thoughts.

Socrates called death, "A removal to another place." Paul says it is to be with Christ. How much grander the Christian outlook! The apostle had a positive conception of the future. How sad became how uncertain the closing words of Socrates' Apology, "Now it is time to depart—I to die, you to live; and which of us is going to the better destiny is known only to the Deity!" How vastly nobler the Christian faith, which desires to depart and be with Christ because it is far better.

Holy desires are good, but holy duties are better. So, considering the needs of those to whom he writes, Paul allows holy desires to fade away, while holy duties take their place. His judgment, therefore is for life. Life has still duties whose clamor call clashes against the closet of his soul. Seeing the need of his spiritual children, he writes, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake." This is proof that for Paul to live was Christ. Christ's life was one of majestic self-sacrifice. The same motive dominates Paul. His living is a necessity which springs from the need of others. His desires shall be crucified that others' needs may be served. Let us learn from his noble judgment that it is more important for us to serve where we are placed than it is to enjoy heaven. Rise to the dignity of these holy duties and rest assured that heaven will not fail you.

And Paul unfolds this necessity. "And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yes, and abide with you all." Paul's "abiding" means the believers' progress and joy in the faith. This was no small gospel triumph. Paul was constant in his protest against an infant church membership. He was not content that converts should always be fed, but never feed. If their joy in the faith does not increase they will remain infants. That progress may be made is Paul's joy in living. And what joy so great for the true servants of Christ as seeing those for whom he has labored growing up in Christ! But how distracting to see so many remain in spiritual infancy when they should be building up others in Christ.

One other motive entered into Paul's judgment. His presence would make the believer's glorying abundant in Christ Jesus. The idea is that they may obtain a richer possession in the gospel and the privileges of the Christian life. Paul would come to them in the fullness of the gospel. He would thus impart to them an increased measure of that wherein they boasted, but he would do it so that the glory of the work would be unto Christ. Thus should all of our joys terminate in Christ. Let "in Christ" be the motto of our lives and then Christ shall be glorified to them as he was in Paul's life.

We can find no higher view of Paul's character than that seen in his perplexity. It is only a superior spirit that would unselfishly hesitate to choose between life and death. If Paul thinks of death, it is of Christ he thinks. If he thinks of life, it is of his work he thinks. But in either case self is wholly forgotten.

Let us learn that he only who is dead to self has learned to live.—Baptist Union.