

obedient unto death; and that death the most humbling, the most replete with agony and shame—the death of the cross.

Strife and vain-glory, with the related passions of envy and jealousy, are abhorrent to God. Once introduced into a church of God, they are destructive elements, and, unless overcome by grace from above, will sooner or later destroy. They are favorite weapons of the evil one. Nothing can better serve the purpose of the enemy of souls, than a Christian with these unchristian passions in his heart. There is only one kind of strife pleasing to God; and that is strife with sin. But all strife that is the opposite to brotherly love is nothing but evil.

A vivid picture of the blissful condition, if selfishness were banished from the church, is given by an eminent writer: "Each denomination of Christians, without sacrificing its distinctive character, would seek to ally itself with all the rest as strongly as a community of interest could bind it. Devotion, no longer terminating in itself, would go to God and plead for the world. Piety, no longer seeking comfort as an end, would find it without seeking; find it in the paths of Christian activity and usefulness, denying itself, and laying itself out for God; and a perseverance which would never rest till the whole family of man should be seated at the banquet of salvation; these would be the prevailing features of the entire Christian community. The tabernacle of God would be with men, and all the ends of the earth would fear him."

Prayer should be offered in the name of Jesus. Some have mistaken the meaning of verse 10, taking it to direct that at the mention of the name of Jesus we should bow. Why should we bow at the mention of that name, rather than at any of the other titles of our Lord? Is there any special honor or sacredness not belonging to the others? And why should we bow at the name of the Son, rather than at that of the Father? The custom of bowing at the name of Jesus in some churches has arisen from a misconception or misinterpretation of this text. The thought of Him rather than His name should lead us to humble ourselves before Him.

The glory of that time when every tongue shall "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," is beyond our feeble comprehension. The darkness that now covers so large a portion of the earth shall have vanished away, and the glorious beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illumine every valley and hill. The profaning and disobedient tongues shall have been silenced, and the rejecting souls sent to their own place. An anthem of praise, grander than all the harmonies of the universe before, will swell and echo throughout the world, then one great sanctuary.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—Christ's Humility and Exaltation. Phil. ii. 1-11.

Second Day—"The Word was made Flesh."—John i. 1-14.

Third Day—Christ doing a Servant's Work.—John xiii. 1-17.

Fourth Day—"I am Meek and Lowly in Heart."—Matt. xi. 16-30.

Fifth Day—"Despised and Rejected of Men."—Isa. liii. 1-12.

Sixth Day—"By the Right Hand of God Exalted."—Acts ii. 22-36.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Dec. 5.—"NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER."—Matt. xx. 20-28.

"He that does good to another does also good to himself, not only in the consequence, but in the very act of doing it: for the conscience of well-doing is an ample reward."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH US.

"The love of Christ constraineth us." No other force so strong as this can be brought to bear upon the heart. Law can lay its commands upon us, and we will obey, because we feel that the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good." But after all the love of Christ will be far more potent.

The love of Christ constraineth us. It is not merely a human love, strong as this often is. It is a divine love, the love of Christ manifested toward us, and so producing love in us toward Him.

We love him, because he first loved us." He manifested this love in His redeeming work. The purpose to redeem man is old as eternity. The promise to redeem is old as the fall. In the fulness of time the Redeemer comes to earth, teaches, blesses, suffers, dies, rises, ascends back into glory. And now man has a Mediator. He is a Friend and Brother, "touch'd with the feeling of our infirmities." He is the omnipotent Saviour "unto the uttermost of all who come unto God by him." He has overcome the sharpness of death, and opened the kingdom of heaven unto all believers.

He manifests His love in His sanctifying and sustaining grace. Every Christian knows that day by day, as his need is this grace is given to him. The world doubts the fact, or sneers at it. But to the Christian it is a most blessed reality. Temptation assails him,

but Christ is by, and he comes off more than a conqueror. The cross that he must bear after the Master seems too heavy to be carried. But Christ has helped to bear the burden, and it has become light. Sorrow settles in dark clouds around him, the blinding storm of grief well nigh overwhelms him; but Christ has said to the storm, "Peace, be still," and has pointed through the clouds to the clear light of eternal joy.

The love of Christ constraineth us. It operates in the way of motive. This love of Christ reigning in the soul, aways it with a silent, unseen power, but a power that is irresistible, to all that is good, and true, and holy. It takes hold on that which is highest in our nature. It appeals to all the purest affections, to gratitude, to trust, to self-abnegation, to entire devotion. It is like the warm sunshine that, beaming upon the tree, stirs all the forces of life within it, till they send their influence to the utmost twigs, and the buds swell, and the leaves burst forth, and the fruits appear, and rounds at last into ripeness, fit for the use of man.

The spirit of ministering is the spirit of love. This love operates too in the way of example. Christ has done so much for us; has done it all so gladly, shall we not follow His example and do what little we can to show that we are grateful for His goodness, that to the extent of our ransomed powers we will enter into His service? His was a free offering—so will our service be. His was a constant, untiring effort to do good—so will ours be. His was a life of self-sacrifice—so will ours be. Thus we can feel the force of His example, and be led by it unto "glory and virtue."

And thus the love of Christ, operating by motive and example, will constrain us, shut us up to His service. The current of our lives will flow in the channels of obedience. There will be many and sad failures, for we are only mortals; but the general tenor of the life will be right. The stream may run in an eddy now and then, or sweep in a sudden curve, almost retracing its course, but still it flows free onward, gathering new volume and strength, and broadens at last into the calm deep sea of eternal perfection. We must tread the Christian path, we must serve our Lord and Master, not under the pressure of any necessity other than love lays upon us, but forced by its sweet power into obedience, and brought by it at last into everlasting glory. Can you say, "The love of Christ constraineth me."

THANKSGIVING FOR COMMON MERCIES.

They should prompt us to Thanksgiving just because they are common. Food, nourishing and diversified; raiment, comfortable and appropriate, even if not always in the latest fashion; shelter, safe and comfortable; all the material necessities of life, not to mention its luxuries; pleasant companionships, tried and trusty friendships, opportunities for study, culture and recreation; business usefulness and success; spiritual advantages of many kinds—these, or most of them, are common to the large majority of men and women, young or old, especially in this land of ours. Is not this fact something for which to thank God?

When we receive great mercies, special tokens of the divine goodness, gratitude is spontaneous, impulsive, outspoken. It is natural. The absence of it causes comment. Yet such favors, although they may suggest the divine care and love more strikingly than our ordinary blessings, are no more real, are hardly more conspicuous proofs thereof. As we look back over childhood and youth it is not the memory of this or that occasional and special gift or other proof of regard which swells afresh within our hearts the tide of reverence and love for our parents. It is the recollection of their unvarying affection, their unflinching care, their scrupulousness in ordering the little, common matters of everyday life for our highest benefit. So it ought to be when we study the dealings of our Heavenly Father with us. While we thank Him heartily for the exceptional favors which He has bestowed, let the ordinary blessings, which have come to seem so much matters of course, yet which are so vital to our welfare, be acknowledged with gratitude no less earnest and frank.

To appreciate them at their true value, reflect what our lives would become without them. Consider the difference between ourselves and others who do not possess them in the same degree, if at all. No unusually vivid imagination is required, nor any prolonged or severe mental effort. It is God's common mercies to us, after all, which constitute what we might call the atmosphere of our lives. Their presence increases our happiness indescribably. Let God be thanked for them, therefore, more devoutly than ever.

A clergyman, visiting a ragged school in London, asked a class of bright, mischievous urchins, all of whom had been gathered from the streets, "How many bad boys does it take to make a good one?" A little fellow immediately replied, "One, sir, if you treat him well." That boy revealed the secret of how to make bad boys good.