

## THE LIVE OBJECT OF LIFE.

What did Jesus mean when He said: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God?" Many say merely to so live that they may go to heaven. And hence there is to them nothing more in it than the making of an outward profession of religion, attend divine services—when convenient—pay to the support of the gospel, thank God for the privilege of worshipping Him an hour in His temple, and then the rest of the week go about what they call their secular duties and pleasures. To others it means a little more than this; not only getting themselves into heaven, but to endeavor to get people to join the church. But how narrow this conception. This is building up an institution, whereas true Christianity is seeking a condition of heart; not anything outward, but something inward. "The kingdom of God is within you," said Jesus.

This, indeed, includes the Church, but it is more than the Church. Building up the Church is not always synonymous with building up the "Kingdom of God." Church-anity is often very different from Christianity. Zeal for one's church is not always indicative of the true Christlike spirit in the heart. To be a churchman is one thing. To be a true Christian is often quite a different thing.

What then should be one's real object in life? Is it to work to make men churchmen so much as to make churchmen good men? What is the object of being a churchman at all? Is it not to help him to be a good man? Zeal is wasted if efforts are put forth to build up the Church, when that is made the end. But no zeal is expended wastefully that endeavors to build up the Church so that she may stand for and exercise the power of Christianity in the world. The Church can be a power only as its members go about to establish true Christianity. For what does this mean other than the establishment of the law of Christ in "its application to the shop and the mart, and the mine and the kitchen and the parlor and drawing room and the office and the senate and the forum"—the law of liberty, of grace, of good will, of charity, of love—the establishment of the "Golden Rule" of Our Lord? What other object on earth is there in life comparable to this?—The Rev. A. A. Pfanstiel, in Christian Intelligencer.

## THE HISTORIC CHRIST.

So then we ask what is the evidence? Primarily, without question, the existence of the Church. How in the world are you to suppose the Church came into existence, unless Christ is an historic person? You must have some starting-point for this enormous network of ecclesiastical organizations; you must have a foundation which is adequate to the fact. And the Church's theory of its own foundation is adequate. Indeed, the difficulty really is that the foundation seems more than adequate to the fact; for it seems easy to ask and difficult to answer, why the divine Founder should found an institution so remote in its practice from his own ideals. But at least it is true that the Church's theory is adequate. The Church says that it was founded by an historic Figure whose spiritual pre-eminence is such that we cannot but confess him the revelation of God in human life. That is adequate. And how else are you going to explain the fact of the Church? For, remember, however far short the Church may have fallen at times from its own ideal, it has always represented and stood for an ideal not to be accounted for by the ordinary social environment of the times. Perpetually, of course, the influence of the world has told upon it and dragged it down; but it still remains true that the principle which it has upheld, the principle which breaks out in the moment of the Church's own degradation and revives it over and over again in history, is a principle not to be discovered in, or accounted for by, the ordinary social influences of the time. This is something perfectly intelligible if the whole Church is rooted in a Divine Christ, who is also an historical figure otherwise it is not intelligible at all.—From "The Faith and Modern Thought," by William Temple, Oxford.

## 10 VICTIS.

I sing the hymn of the conquered, who fell in the battle of life,  
The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died overwhelmed in the strife:  
Not the jubilant song of the victors, for whom the resounding acclaim  
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brows wore the chaplet of fame,  
But the hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the broken in heart,  
Who strove and who failed, acting bravely a silent and desperate part;  
Whose youth bore no flower on its branches, whose hopes burned in ashes away,  
From whose hands slipped the prize they had grasped at, who stood at the dying of day  
With the wreck of their life all around them, unpitied, unheeded, alone,  
With death swooping down o'er their failure, and all but their faith overthrown  
While the voice of the world shouts its chorus—its paean for those who have won;  
While the trumpet is sounding triumphant and high to the breeze and the sun  
Glad banners are waving, hands clapping and hurrying feet  
Thronging after the laurel-crowned victors I stand on the field of defeat  
In the shadow with those who are fallen and wounded and dying, and there  
Chant a requiem low, place my hand on their pain-knotted brow, breathe a prayer,  
Hold the hand that is helpless and whisper, "They only the victory win  
Who have fought the good fight and have vanquished the demon that tempts us within,  
Who have held to their faith unswayed by the prize that the world holds on high,  
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist, fight—if need be, or die."  
Speak, history! Who are life's victors? Unroll thy long annals and say,  
Are they those whom the world called the victors, who won the success of a day? The martyrs or Nero? The Spartans who fell at Thermopylae's tryst  
Or the Persians and Xerxes? John the Baptist or Herod? Pilate or Christ?  
—Ex.

## DUTY HIGHER THAN INTERESTS.

Our interests do not determine our duty. Only God's will for us determines our duty. One man may have a deep interest in the needs of the people of Africa, and another man may have an equal concern for the solution of city-slum and factory problems through settlement work, yet God may call the former of these to be a city missionary, and the latter to be a missionary to the Congo; and God's summons must weigh more with them than their natural "interests." What we ought to do may lie in the direction of that which interests us very much indeed, or of that which interests us not at all; but, if we ought to do it, we ought to do it; and in the doing we shall find power, with emancipation from the narrow shackles of personal inclination.—Sunday School Times.

## THE SOUND OF THE BLOOD.

How often have we listened to the "noises of the sea," as we placed the seashell to our ears: A recent writer tells us that this is but the sound of the blood as it circulates through our veins and is echoed in the empty shell. The sound of the blood: What is all this singing of praise that we hear in our churches and at our home altars? What these glad tidings proclaimed from our pulpits from Sabbath to Sabbath? What these evening and morning prayers, these dying confessions of God's dear ones as they wait the endless dawn? They are the voices of the blood that followed the Roman spear and flowed from the pierced brow and the wounded hands and feet. Oh the sound of the blood! It has given the keynote to the world's sweetest music, and has changed the sigh of the soul to an eternal anthem.—United Presbyterian.

## GREAT MISSIONARY NEEDS.\*

BY ROBERT E. SPEER.

The three great missionary needs are money, men and prayer—in the reverse order.

The first need is prayer. Not because God is unwilling. He is not. He is more ready to give what is necessary than we are to ask it or to receive it, or than earthly parents are to give their children what they require. God is eager where we are listless. It is not his will that any should perish, but that all should come unto life. The hindrance to greater missionary progress is not in God. We do not need to pray in order to dispose him favorably to missions. The need of prayer is that God may be enabled to do what, in his providence, it requires the spiritual service of men to accomplish, and what can be accomplished only through the prayers of men and through men of prayer.

"Oh," said Spurgeon, "for some five hundred Elijahs, each one upon his Carmel crying unto God; and we should soon have the clouds bursting with showers . . . Oh, for more prayer—more constant, incessant mention of the mission cause in prayer; and then the blessing will be sure to come."

"The whole power of the Church of Christ lies in prayer," wrote Malan. "The promises of God are unlimited to believing prayer. 'All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.' How thankful I am that Livingstone was found on his knees: Does it not tell us whence came the power for his self-denial, his courage, his endurance? Oh, the mighty power of prayer: How it opens the doors of the heart: How it quickens the energies of the soul: How it revives hope: How it strengthens faith: Only let Christians pray earnestly for the spread of the Lord's kingdom throughout the earth, they will find their purse-strings loosed. The Lord will honor them to answer their own prayer. Only let them pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth laborers into the harvest, in sincerity and truth; they will soon find themselves employed in various ways in his service."

The second need is men. This is the ever present need in the work of saving the world. When God would redeem it, he became man. In Christ his call was for men to hear his commission. "As my Father hath sent me into the world," said Jesus, "even so send I you into the world." It is always men that God wants.

The third need is money. It will come when God has praying men. And praying men cannot be bought with money. The money is essential, but is inevitable when the prayer and the men have been given, and without them it is ineffective. But there is much prayer and there are many men needing testing to prove their reality. If they are genuine, they will find utterance in the gift of that which is necessary to the work of the Church at home and abroad.

Never was there a time before this when the opportunity was so great and the need so appealing. In our own land and in all lands the fields are white. But the laborers, so many, are yet, when measured against the work, so few. In the face of such need Christians should practise what sometimes they sing, "I surrender all," and interpret "all" as covering prayer, and all life, and possessions.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

MON.—Prevailing prayer (Acts 12 5-11).  
TUES.—God's gold (1 Chron. 29 14-16).  
WED.—The call (Isa. 6 8-10; Matt. 9 9).  
THURS.—Helpful prayer (2 Cor. 1 10, 11).  
FRI.—Gifts from the heart (Exod. 25 1-8).  
SAT.—Say not, No: (Jer. 1 1-10).

Calmness is the pose of a great nature, in harmony with itself and its ideals. Calmness is singleness of purpose, absolute confidence and conscious power, ready to be focused in an instant to meet any crisis.—Jordan.

\*Money, Men and Prayers the three great Missionary Needs. (2 Cor. 8 1-9; Matt. 9 35-38).