

Our Young People

A Lesson on a Fundamental Virtue.

Topic for March 25.—"The glory of obedience."—Math. 21: 28-32.

"We will obey the voice of the Lord our God.—Jeremiah."

For Dominion Presbyterian.

The Glory of Obedience.

BY WOODFORD.

I find this doing of the will of God leaves me no time for disputing about His plans.—George MacDonald.

The good Master desires intelligent loving obedience, for on one occasion He said to the Jews which had believed Him "If ye abide in my word then are ye truly my disciples." The glory of such obedience is that by it men shall know the truth, and this truth shall make them free. In the treatment of this topic three careful distinction must be made between mechanical and loving obedience. Such obedience as God in Christ desires is of the heart. Whom we love it is a privilege to obey. The obedience of duty is admirable; loving obedience is glorious.

Topic.—The pity is that sinful ignorance, and consequent unloveliness of character made this one son, and makes so many of his brothers and sisters to say, "I will not," to begin with. Our well-beloved has such a fruitful vineyard (Isaiah 5: 1-7.) for which he has done so much, but its beauty and productiveness are so marred by the wild grapes that grow there, because of the disobedience of those who ought to be workers. If we thought ever so little we should not only not say, "I will not," but from our earliest years we should be so interested in the Father's business that He would one day say to us: "Well done good and faithful servants" and if the obedience be of the heart He will call us now and forever not servants but friends.

Monday.—To whom has the tempter not come, prompting the tempted to say, "soul take thine ease." By how many who gather to study this topic is this portion of God's vineyard so worked, that for all and sundry temptations a corrective, "It is written" is ready in the mind of the one tempted. Assuredly those who neglect the things written and who thus show that they are careless about the Father's business will fail when temptation comes. If there is discipline in the careful study of God's Word, the Spirit of God will make the assimilated Word an effectual means whereby temptations shall be made stepping-stones on which to rise to higher things even to God.

Tuesday.—Except there be obedience there can be no training. What power then outside of ourselves shall we obey?—Some power we must obey. To seek to glorify ourselves instead of Him that is willing to say "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee," and so to be made through the only-begotten kings and priests unto God, is to miss the meaning of life.

Wednesday.—The terms success and service in this connection must be understood as having their highest meaning. There is a cheap success that comes of selfishness; the success that abides only comes as the result of service, that means self-sacrifice. Success and suffering are inseparably linked. If one suffers without succeeding, it is that others, after him, may succeed; if one succeeds without suffering, it is because others, for him, have already suffered.

Thursday.—If the tears are the manifestation of godly sorrow, the sowing that is there done will be unto life; if weeping be the outcome of the sorrow of the world such grief worketh death. The "doubtless" of the Psalm is well brought out in the reading in 1 Peter. The faith that cannot be tried is not faith. Where there is true faith, but only in its beginnings, it can only be developed by wise testing. It is in this way that the non-essential is separated from the essential—the dross from the pure metal. To pray for a faith that will not shrink, is to ask that life may be such that experiences that strain will so come that with the powers God has given to us, we may emerge clear from what is bewildering into the land of far distances, where, loving now Him whom we have not seen, our eyes shall behold the King in His beauty. To be such at the core of our live means rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory; also, now, the salvation of the soul. If all this here, what there? Surely so believing we may unhesitatingly count all else but refuse if we may win Christ, and be found in Him at His appearing. The star of hope must hang high, and shine clearly or we can never say "thought He slay me yet will I trust in Him."

Friday.—Stephen, because he was full of faith (intelligent trust begetting obedience) was a man of power. The man who so trusts God and obeys Him has the mightiest force in the universe on his side. It was President Lincoln who when asked to appoint a day of prayer and fasting that God might be on their side, replied, "Don't bother about that. God is now on the right side; you simply get with Him."

Saturday.—It is by waiting on God that man's strength is renewed, so that in the joys of life he soars, in the duties of life there is no flagging, in the dreary days there is steady plodding and steadfast waiting.

Let us then be up and doing
With a heart for any fate
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

Incentives to Economy.

It is in the power of a vast number of persons, employers of manual or domestic labor to encourage thrift among those whom they employ. For example, a large number of workers rarely think of commencing to save. It has been said by many persons who have accumulated independencies that it was the saving of the first small sum that constituted the difficulty. Every mistress of a household however large or small the number of her servants, can readily obviate this difficulty by presenting even a small sum to be placed in the savings bank, with the intimation that it bears interest as soon as a single dollar has been allowed to accumulate. This, and the occasional gift of a small gratuity, such as a Christmas box, to be added to the amount, will generally inculcate habits of thrift amongst young servants, which once acquired will never be neglected. We have known many examples of this practice being most advantageously followed, and if the habit of thrift were inculcated more steadily in schools and amongst the young we should have less outcry for the desirability of help for one large section of the community at the expense of the other.—Public Ledger.

God's Goodness.

God knows me better than I know myself. He knows my weakness—what I can do and cannot do. So I desire to be led, to follow him, and I am quite sure that he will thus enable me to do a great deal more in ways which seem to me almost a waste in life, advancing his cause, than I could in any other way; I am sure of that. Intellectually I am weak; in scholarship, nothing; in a thousand things a baby. He knows this, and so he has led me and greatly blessed me, who am nobody, to be of some use to my church and fellow-men. How kind, how good, how compassionate art Thou, O God! O my Father, keep me humble! Help me to have respect to my fellowmen to recognize these several gifts as from thee. Deliver me from the diabolical sins of malice, enmity or jealousy, and give me hearty joy in my brother's good, in his work, in his gifts and talents; and may I be truly glad in his superiority to myself if God be glorified. Root out weak vanity, all devilish pride, all that is abhorrent to the mind of Christ. God hear my prayer. Grant me the wondrous joy of humiliation, which is seeing thee as all in all.—Norman Macleod's Diary.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"

Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered;
Their not to make reply,
Their but to do and die,
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Mar. 19.—Lifeneeds discipline. Matt. 4: 1-11
Tues., Mar. 20.—Training through obedience. Heb. 5: 5-9
Wed., Mar. 21.—Success through service. John 12: 23-26
Thurs., Mar. 22.—Suffering often necessary to glory. Ps. 126: 5, 6; 1 Pet. 1: 7-9
Fri., Mar. 23.—Heroism in a near duty. Acts 6: 5-15
Sat., Mar. 24.—Power in steadfastness. Isa. 40: 28-31; John 8: 81-82
Sun., Mar. 25.—Topic: The glory of obedience. Matt. 21: 28-32