

C. E. Prayer-Meeting Notes.

GEO. FOWLER.

Nov. 24. *Praise and purpose.* Ps. cxvi. 1-19. (A Thanksgiving meeting.)

We should be recreant in our duty if we did not make one meeting of the year one in which we could render unto God the thanksgiving of the heart for His bountiful goodness to us. We might well, after considering all the abundant blessings that have been poured out upon us the past year, ask the same question with the Psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" And, having asked it, can we, dare we, living as we are in the Gospel age, answer less than did the Lord's ancient seer, "Oh, Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people."

What is the purpose of setting apart a day for national thanksgiving?

1. It teaches us our dependence upon God. History, sacred and profane, ancient, medieval and modern, emphasizes the grand old truth, that "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." As citizens of this great Canada, it behoves us to endeavor to be and do what God would have us be and do. We must learn that if we would work for the exaltation of our country, we must live and labor for God. To be an enemy of God is to be an enemy of our nation. Our prosperity in the past, our present position and our success for the future has been and will be measured by our loyalty to Him who is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

2. We are brought face to face with our own selfishness and God's great love for man. "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful work unto the children of men." The earth has yielded an abundant harvest, and everywhere there is plenty. If man starves, it is not the fault of the loving Father, but of "man's inhumanity to man."

3. We should learn the lesson of our great responsibility and our obligations to the Lord, who created us, redeemed us and who sustains us. What have we done for Him in the past; what are we doing at the present, and what do we intend to do in the future?

"How rich Thy gifts, Almighty King! From Thee our public blessings spring. The extended trade, the fruitful skies,

The treasures liberty bestows,
Th' eternal joys, the Gospel shows,
All from Thy boundless goodness rise."

Dec. 1—*Is my heart right with God?*
Prov. iv. 20-27.

In the paragraph preceding our scripture lesson, Solomon has warned us against doing evil. His warning, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away," reminds us of Paul's admonition, "Shun the very appearance of evil." Negative instruction or prohibition are not sufficient; we need some positive commands as well. Not only must we avoid doing evil, but we must learn to do good. As it was in the days of the wise king and is now, so it will ever be, doing is essential to the obtaining of God's favor.

The wondrous system devised by the all-wise and loving God for the world's redemption, is intended and is able to save man, the whole man, not only from sin, but from the consequences of sin.

We are to search the scriptures that we might know the truth, which is able to give us liberty in Christ Jesus. Our affections are to be centered in heaven, where our treasures are; and our will, God's will.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

1. Let us be willing for God to search our hearts.—1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

We need the spirit of humility and earnestness of David, when he exclaimed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Our hearts need searching. God alone is able to know man. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart."—Jer. xvii. 9, 10; Rev. ii. 23.

2. If we would have our hearts right with God, we must give heed to His word. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" was a question asked by the Psalmist, who answered it for all times, "By taking heed thereto, according to Thy word."

Christ died to save man. He has highly honored us by giving us the privilege of co-operating with Him in winning men to acknowledge His Lordship.

If our hearts are right in God's sight, we are interested in His work, and are found in prayer-meetings, in the house of God on the first day of the week, and in our dealings with man we keep before us the golden rule. We will love what He loves, and hate what He hates. Christianity is practical; it is a life—a Christ-life. Christ's followers should be characterized by their deeds of goodness and mercy; for a living, active faith in God's obedience to all commands, and not least for their liberality.

Let each one ask himself, "Is my heart right with God?" This question is too serious to be trifled with. May the all-wise and loving God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, search us, strengthen us, and save us for His name's sake.

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