

tracks are laid to divert the energies of the young people into other channels; and, while narrowness of sympathy must be carefully avoided, there is need that such a conception of the church's mission and dignity should be inculcated that it should be counted worthy of receiving all that we have and are.



The Christ Life.

THE desire after a fuller life in Christ is one that is everywhere manifest. It is the theme of many conferences and conventions. Books treating of the subject are widely circulated. There has not been a generation, probably, since the one that followed Pentecost, in which more concern has been shown for the possession of the full, victorious, serviceable, Christian life.

There is no great secret about the deepening of the spiritual life. The Holy Spirit has set forth the means for its possession and development with such clearness and definiteness that no one need miss the way. There is no new patent method by which the soul may be brought into right relations with God. The reading of the Word of God, prayer, and obedience to the Divine will—these are the means which quickened and enriched the spiritual life of Moses and David, of Paul and John, and they are as essential for us.

Nothing can take the place of the daily study of the sacred Scriptures. Those who feed upon the truths of Divine revelation are recognized by their spiritual vigor and growth; while failure in this Christian duty unfailingly results in weakness and spiritual emaciation.

Equally necessary to the soul's true life is prayer. Withdrawal from common cares to enjoy communion with God brings one into direct contact with the source of spiritual power. It illuminates the mind, ennoble the desires, clarifies the vision, and girds the loins with strength for service. No one has ever led a holy life who did not lead a prayerful life. The men of power have always been men of prayer.

The third essential qualification for the increase of the spiritual life is ready and loving obedience to the will of Christ. Without this all other means will fail. The pathway of blessedness is always the pathway of obedience. It is through loyal obedience to the call of duty that the life of the soul grows stronger and the heart becomes possessed of the joy of the Lord.



When the Flame Burns Low.

HOW to maintain spiritual life in vigor and efficiency is a question with which every Christian is concerned. Waning zeal and decay of spiritual power are experiences with which most believers are familiar. In a book recently published by Bishop Thoburn, the veter-

eran missionary of India, he gives emphasis to some thoughts that are well deserving of earnest consideration by all who desire to live the consecrated life. He comments with much freshness upon the divine injunction with respect to the fire on the tabernacle altar: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out." The point emphasized by Bishop Thoburn is that every priest must have understood that while God had, in the first place, kindled the sacred flame, it had become his duty to join his brethren in *keeping it alive*. Even in the matter of maintaining the sacred fire, divine omnipotence must not be expected to co-operate with human indolence. And, just as in the olden time God required the priests of the Temple to guard this sacred fire with the most watchful care, so He requires the Christian believer to guard with "jealous care" the flame which is kindled upon the altar of his renewed heart.

The confession is painfully common among Christians that the sacred fire which once descended from heaven upon the altar of the heart has, in a large measure, lost its divine glow. There is a sad contrast in this particular between the modern church and that of Pentecost. Among the members of that illustrious church, it would seem to have been an exceptional thing to find anyone in whose heart the fire did not burn with a steady glow. How much greater would be our power if this were true of the church to-day!

What is the secret of our failure to have the fire of God in our hearts always burning? Probably there are many secrets, but chief among them is the mistake of supposing that the only way to replenish a waning fire is to invoke the descent of more fire upon the dying embers; whereas, what is needed is not more fire, but more fuel. The merest child would understand this if entrusted with the ordinary duty of keeping a fire from going out. What is needed is that we cherish and carefully guard the fire which has been kindled.

The call that needs to be sounded in our ears is that we are not to trust in vanished blessings; not to be satisfied with past experience; not to let the heart become clogged with cares belonging to the past; but to commit ourselves anew to God, and to maintain that consecration which, having once been made, is never to be recalled.

Among the means to be employed in maintaining the Spirit's presence in the heart, a prominent place, must, of course, be given to prayer. The believer who neglects prayer is adopting a very sure method of grieving the Spirit from his heart. The disciple who would walk in the Spirit, and experience unceasingly the glow of the divine fire, must—absolutely must—be much in prayer with God.

The study of God's Word is another indispensable ministry in this matter. The sacred fire, in order to be kept burning, must be continually fed with the fuel of promises and inspiration stored for us, by the Father's hand, in the Scriptures.