

A helpless right hand was a sore trial. The man was unfitted for most of the active duties of life, and must have been more or less dependent upon the benevolence of others. Much grace would be needed to keep him from murmuring, and preserve a cheerfulness of mind under his affliction. He came to the house of God that he might receive the fulfilment of the promise. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

Our reason why many professed christians are so careless about attendance upon public worship, or content themselves with but one service on Sabbath, is that they have no very great sense of need. They do not consciously appreciate and appropriate the supernatural grace infused into the true worshipper by the operation of the Holy Spirit. To them, the service is intellectual or æsthetic merely ; informing the mind, brightening up the moral sense, or stirring pure and elevated emotions.

It is, or ought to be, all this, but there is also the communication to the Christian, through Word and Sacrament, of spiritual nourishment and life which may not be gauged by its sensible effects upon mind, or emotions, but which fortifies the soul against the trials, or sustains it amid the duties of life. Hence the supreme importance of regular attendance upon the service of the church. No wonder if those who neglect this duty grow carnal and worldly.

3. The scornful silence of the Pharisees and the grieved look of Jesus reminds us of the *hardening effect of obstinate resistance to the Gospel*. This is a thought suggested by the narratives of the other evangelists. There seems to have been a time at the beginning of his ministry when the Pharisees and Scribes were not unfriendly to Christ. They perceived something of the truth of his teaching, but were gradually repelled from him by the force of their own prejudice and pride. If we resist the gracious impressions made upon our hearts we gradually render ourselves insensible to them altogether.

Very few of our young people do not some-

times experience a real stirring of their spiritual natures, a reaching out of their desires to God. But the impression is allowed to vanish, and thoughtless indifference resumes its sway over them. We should warn them of the danger of allowing such moments to pass unimproved. They will come less and less frequently.

Try, by prayer and devout meditation ; by avoidance of everything that would divert the mind and dissipate serious thoughts ; by holding the heart from time close to God and holy influences ; to wrest, with Jacob-like perseverance, the blessing which the soul seeks, of conscious acceptance with God. How many obstinate, embittered Pharisees might have become happy disciples of Jesus if they had only yielded to their just and better feelings.

4. *In trying to obey Christ we get strength.*

Had the man waited until he was conscious of ability to move his arm he would never have been healed. Our duty is to "come," "to repent," "to believe," "to love," "to do." The effort to obey brings with it the ability to exercise the grace or perform the duty.

#### ADDED POINTS.

1. Sabbath walks should be with suitable companions, and conversation becoming the day.

2. We should not lie in wait to detect the faults of others.

3. Those who judge uncharitably are often greater offenders themselves.

4. Christ does not approve of the lie that David told.

5. Christ claims to be greater than the temple, for he was the one worshipped there. It was his Father's house.

6. The Sabbath belongs to Christ. It is the Lord's Day.

7. Jesus knows our thoughts.

8. We should be kind to the dumb creatures.

9. Fill the Sabbath with good deeds and thoughts.

10. The Christian Sabbath commemorates a risen Saviour and completed redemption.

#### LESSON ILLUSTRATIONS.

##### Meanness of Sabbath breaking.

A group of young men were assembled one Sunday in a grove to hear the preacher, when one of them said: "See here John, why didn't ye bring up my rifle when ye come to

preaching?" "Well, Sam, I 'lowed 'twan't right to bring it upon Sabbath. I mought see a varmint on the road and get a shooting, and forget it was Sabbath." "Huh! There's no use being so particular as all that. I think it