

## APPLICATION

*Them which labour among you*, v. 12. The naturalist was sitting out under a tree in a garden eating a biscuit, when he saw a little ant climbing upon the seat.

**The Naturalist and the Ant** He dropped a crumb, but the ant turned in an opposite direction and did not see it. So he put his finger in the way of the little insect to direct it toward the food, but it misunderstood the kindness, and seemed to lose patience and to say, "Why do you stop me? I am hunting food for my young." The ant took a new path, and once more the kindly finger was placed in front. It seemed to get more excited than ever, and to say, "Oh, you great intelligent creature, why do you stop me? Don't you see I am after food? Do not tease me." But the naturalist kept on directing the way with his finger until he succeeded in bringing the ant to the crumb, and then it seemed to say, "I am so glad you put me in the way of finding this. Here is more food than ever I could have found in a month if left alone." The minister is always trying to direct people to something that is better for them. If they will follow the apostle's advice and learn to know and trust their minister, they will discover that this kindly guide is bringing them to more satisfying food than they could hope to find by other paths they are tempted to follow, and they will be forever grateful.

*Warn them*, v. 14. Some years ago engineers reported of a dam in a certain valley that it was unsafe; but people only wagged their heads and said, "It is a trick of the land sharks to buy our property. Our houses are not for sale." Once more the engineers examined, and once more uttered the same grave caution; but the people again answered, "You need not think to scare us." Spring came, and the engineers said, "The dam is cracked; the water will burst through very soon." The people replied, "We have heard that so often." A fortnight after, the dam burst, a great rush of water came down the valley, and ahead of it a man on horseback shouting, "Fly for your lives." Even then some laughed at him as a madman, until the mighty flood swept them

away, and it took seven weeks, afterwards, to dig thirty-seven hundred bodies out of the debris. The warnings of preachers and teachers may fall at times on deaf or listless ears. Time after time they may repeat their futile admonitions. But the threats of scripture cannot be scoffed at forever. "The wages of sin is death." "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is equally true, blessed be God, that the reward of heeding Him who speaks from heaven, and doing His will is life forever more.

*Pray without ceasing*, v. 17. In that division of the Eastern Alps known as the Tauern Mountains, at the summit of a lofty peak, hang some famous bells.

**Prayer Bells** No human hands ever touches them, and in calm, sunshiny weather they are mute. But when the tempest rises, they swing and peal, till the valleys are filled with their chimes. There is a prayer bell in every human heart. The storms of sorrow and trouble set it a-ringing, though it may be silent in days of peace and gladness. Every peal of the prayer bell is heard in heaven, and brings answers that cause the soul to sing for very joy.

*Prove all things*, v. 21. Two men had to finish a well that for some time had stood incomplete. They knew enough of the deadly "firedamp" that gathers in deep holes in the earth, not to jump into it until they had first tested it for poisonous gases. They therefore procured a bucket, placed a lighted candle in the bottom of it, tied a cord to the handle, and lowered it down the well. The candle went out. "Ah", said one, "there is death in that hole." Then they gathered some pine brush and swished it all out. The next time they tried the lighted candle, it burned brightly clear to the very bottom, and the men said, "The candle burns; she is safe now." It is a wise policy to test the places where we have to go. If we cannot carry the light of Christ's presence with us, these places are not safe for us, the deadly gases of sin are lurking there. But where He goes before us, there we can safely follow.