

of faith. There is felt want, earnest desire for relief, directness of aim, and perfect assurance that Christ is able and willing to relieve. Everything depends on *persistence*. So it does with you in the salvation of your soul. You may have been thoughtful a thousand times before, and talked about becoming a Christian, and perhaps "rose for prayer," or went to an inquiry meeting; yet you retreated, and thus robbed yourself of the "One thing needful." Look at that sightless beggar, with the heartless crowd trying to keep him from the priceless blessing, and see in it a picture of just what you have to encounter.

Salvation is not "just the easiest thing in the world," as some shallow exhorters affirm. You may have opposition from the circle you associate with. A sneer or a stare may have some terrors for you; fear of ridicule has ruined millions. You have bad habits to overcome, perhaps not least habits, like the bottle, or profanity, or unclean practices, but the habit of *doing what you like*, whether it pleases Christ or not. You have temptations to encounter. Very likely a swarm of *doubts*—in this age when doubts breed like locusts—may be blocking your way. There is the crowd between you and Christ! He is calling you, waiting for you, with eternal life in his outstretched hand. *Will you push through the crowd*, and put your sinful soul into that hand of the Son of God, or not? Your eternity depends on your *yes* or *no*.

What a wonderful day that was in the history of Jericho's blind beggar! In the morning he had been sitting in midnight darkness, hopeless and forlorn. Jesus comes that way. Now is his chance, his only chance. The infinite Love is there ready to pour Himself into that poor insignificant creature's soul, just as the rising tide of the ocean peers itself into a little creek or tiny inlet by the seaside. Bartimeus receives the gracious flood, and it floods his eyes with a burst of sunlight, and floods his soul with the gift of eternal life. The happy man "looks up" and sees the glorious Christ, and all the glorious sky that overhangs him. He does not run home to tell wife or children—even if he had any to tell it to. He follows Jesus in the high-way, shouting praises to his Deliverer, and weaving his little tuft of laurel on the blessed brow soon to be pierced with thorns.

My friend! this new year may bring to you just the same infinite and indescribable joy if you will only *push through the crowd of Jesus*.

## HOW TO PRAY.

An article, found among the unpublished papers of the late Dr. J. A. Alexander, on "Circumlocution in Prayer," closes with the following "practical suggestions to young men who are forming their habits" in respect to prayer. They are equally applicable to all who pray in public:

1. Let your prayer be composed of thanksgiving, praise, confession, and petition, without an argument or exhortation addressed to those who are supposed to be praying with you.

2 Adopt no fixed forms of expression, except such as you obtain from the Scriptures.

3 Express your desires in the briefest, simplest form, without circumlocution.

4. Avoid the use of compound terms in the place of imperfect tense.

5 Hallow God's name by avoiding its unnecessary repetition.

6. Adopt the single devotional phrase of Scripture, but avoid the free use of its figures, and all quaint and doubtful application of its terms to foreign subjects.

7. Pray to God, and not to man.

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTIANS.

The facetious Sydney Smith had two yoke of oxen on his little farm in Yorkshire, to which he gave the name of "Tug" and "Lug," "Haul" and "Crawl." These would be appropriate names for a large class of church members who put no heart into their Christian work. It is mere tug and toil and task to them. They get no spiritual satisfaction, and their labors yield no results.

There is but one way to become a thorough happy and effective Christian. Whether you are a pastor, with large flock and salary, or small; whether you are a Sabbath-school teacher, or a philanthropist pushing an uphill reform, or a parent guarding and guiding the home flock, you will get no good and do no good unless you serve Christ *heartily*.  
*Dr. Cuyler.*

## GOOD NATURE.

It is fatal to obtain the reputation of being an extremely good-natured person, and often more easy good nature leads a person into error, from indiscriminately or weakly yielding to requests without having only considered if it is just to ourselves and to others to grant them. A sense of the due proportion of things is difficult to acquire, but is most important. The truly kind person must be prepared on occasion to say "No," and to say it decidedly; but there are kind of ways of declining to accede to requests we ought not to grant.