

## Christian Life and Work.

The Christian who lives for himself alone deserves to die. He lacks one indispensable sign of a healthy religious vitality. His will be a shrivelled life at the best. And the Church that lives for herself alone deserves, also, to die, and will, sooner or later, disappear from the ecclesiastical earth, and be buried in the cemetery of extinct denominations.—*Dr. James Kerr.*

The best way of doing that part of our Christian work that lies beyond ourselves, is to do it through our own Church Schemes. Common honesty demands this; for the Church, of which we are a part, has assumed obligations, and we as members are responsible for carrying out these obligations, and we cannot honestly leave this duty to others, while we give our money elsewhere.

### TRACTS, AND HOW TO USE THEM.

THERE are five classes of people who can use tracts to advantage.

(1.) First, ministers. Some ministers make constant use of tracts in their pastoral work. They open the way for conversation, and oftentimes they are better than words, for sometimes a soul in exercise will quarrel with the one talking to him, but you cannot quarrel with a tract. It never gets out of patience, never answers back, and it sticks to what it has said.

Into many places where a Christian could not enter, a tract may gain entrance and speak a word for Christ. Busy housewives appreciate such a leaflet as "Helps for Worried Week-Day Life." Hearts that are breaking are comforted by "The Solitary Way," and boys and girls think more of a minister who occasionally puts into their hands some helpful tract adapted to their condition.

Other pastors use tracts to supplement their preaching. For instance, if the sermon is on prayer or conversion, a leaflet on the same theme is given to each person as he passes out of church. The tract recalls the sermon, and deepens the impression made. A judicious use of the right kind of tracts may be made a mighty factor in promoting a revival.

Have a tract committee in your church whose business is to look up the best things that are printed, and supply them to your people at a low price, and in a short time you will have half your church preaching the gospel in this quiet way.

(2.) Another class of people who ought to use tracts is housekeepers. Have them on the parlor table, so that callers may read them while waiting. There is time enough for a person to get converted while a lady is finishing her toilet, and time enough to backslide, too, before some people get down to the parlor. Place them in your guest chamber so that your friends will have something to turn their thoughts toward the Blessed One. White Cross tracts will do your boys and girls no harm, and even Bridget may absorb a good deal of the gospel through an innocent little leaflet. Give them to the butcher and market man, always accompanied with a kind word and a prayer, and God will not fail to bless them.

(3.) The third is business men. I know of some who use them constantly, passing them out as they pay their bills, or enclosing them in packages.

Ticket agents give them out with tickets. One agent says that twenty persons wrote to him that they had been converted by the tracts he had given them.

I remember a business man who said to me, "I am a timid man and cannot speak in meeting, but if you will buy some good literature, I will pay for it, and enclose it with our packages of goods." He dealt largely with fishing vessels, and thus he "cast his bread upon the waters."

Recently I read of a drummer who stopped in St. Louis and called on a merchant to sell him some diamonds. The merchant said, "I do not need any more diamonds." "Never mind," said the drummer, "I am going to show you my goods, if you have no objections." He opened his case, and exhibited his wares so attractively that in a short time he sold the man a bill of goods in spite of himself.

Then closing up his samples, he said, "Now I have something to show you better than all these. Here is something very choice; it is the pearl of great price. And pulling out a little pocket Bible, he said, "Are you a Christian, my friend?" And then for a few moments, he talked Jesus Christ to him in the same earnest way he had talked of diamonds before.

Mix religion with your business, friends. Let the two go hand in hand. I believe in doing as did the blacksmith in southern Vermont, who after he was converted was asked to shoe a horse on Sunday. "No sir!" said he. "I'm a Christian now, and I do not work on Sunday." The man met him with an oath, but he replied, "Hold on friend! you can't swear in this place. I want you to understand that this is a gospel shop."

So should we maintain a Christian atmosphere in every place which we control, and not allowing anything to be said or done there which would displease our Master.

(4.) The fourth class consists of teachers in our high schools and academies. God has laid upon you a great responsibility. As a companion of youth, you have an influence second to none in the community.

Granted that the special work for which you are employed is to educate the mind; still, is it not your duty also to lead them into the realms of spiritual knowledge, and above all, to introduce them to the Great Teacher, who said, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." We all know that young people do not like to have religion thrust upon them continually, but they do, without exception, admire a manly Christian character, and they appreciate a loving interest in their welfare, an occasional earnest word upon the subject.

Those who cannot talk freely with their pupils, can at least put into their hands the wise words of others, and who can estimate the good that would be done by occasionally giving to each pupil a choice leaflet on some vital subject. Old-fashioned tracts will not do for boys. They need something which sets forth in a terse and manly way, the attractions of the Christian life, and the dangers which beset the pathway of youth.

(5.) The last class which I wish to speak to, embraces all who were not included in the other four classes. Tract work which I speak of is one which everybody can engage in. This is everybody's mission. Here is something which all can do, old and young, rich and poor. It is a business that does not require much time or capital, but it does require tact and prayerfulness, and an earnest desire to be used of God. Timid people can in this way, "hold forth the word of life." Always make yourself familiar with what you distribute, in order that you may bestow them wisely, and remember that if you trust Him, the Holy Spirit will guide you in every detail of the work.—*Rev. H. W. Pope, in Alliance Journal.*