

## Devotional Service.

By Rev. T. J. PARK, M.A.

### OCTOBER 21.—"OUR STEWARDSHIP."

Luke 12: 42-48.

#### HOME READINGS.

Mon., Oct. 15. Using our gifts. . . . . Cor. 12: 14-26  
 Tues., Oct. 16. Talents of silver. . . . . Luke 19: 12-24  
 Wed., Oct. 17. Money. . . . . Mark 12: 42-44  
 Thurs., Oct. 18. The gift and the Spirit. . . . .  
 Matt. 6: 1-4; 2 Cor. 8: 12  
 Fri., Oct. 19. Need of all. . . . . Exod. 35: 4-10  
 Sat., Oct. 20. God's promise. . . . .  
 Prov. 19: 17; Matt. 10: 40-42

#### THE DUTY OF THE HOUR.

The obligation upon every believer is to watch and be diligent in service (vs. 37-39). The word "watching" expresses not a mere act, but a state of wakefulness and alertness. What the Saviour enjoins, says Glover, is not curiosity, straining to be the first to see the returning Master, but the wakefulness that overlooks no duty, indulges no indolence. The last thing that would please a master would be the idle curiosity which would make the servants neglect their work to stand outside the door gazing to catch a glimpse of his return. What the Master desires is wakeful work. We watch by being on our guard against every temptation and moral danger, and by being active and diligent in duty and service. And there must be no cessation in our watching. A moment's carelessness, an hour's sinful indolence, might render useless all our former efforts.

#### FAITHFULNESS AND ITS REWARD.

The right place for the servant to be found when the Lord comes is doing as the Lord commands, whether the task be secular or sacred. The servant is regarded as "faithful" because he does his Lord's will, and rightly uses the powers and opportunities entrusted to him. And he is "wise" because he is "faithful." Any one may earn the epithet of "wise" if he is only "faithful" to God and duty. A single-hearted devotion to Christ is the parent of insight into duty, and the best guide to conduct; and whoever seeks to be true to his Lord in the use of his gifts and possessions will not lack prudence to guide him in the practical affairs of life. Such faithfulness and wisdom find their motive and stimulus in that watchfulness and diligence which work as ever under the eye of the rewarding Master and Lord, and as keeping in view his coming; and rendering an account to him.

#### THE FATE OF THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT.

The unfaithful servant is the one who knew what he ought to do and refused to do it—who knew his Lord's will, and did it not—who was aware that his Lord would return unexpectedly, and yet prepared not to have himself so prepared. He was carelessly, wilfully, sinfully negligent, and was deserving of the condemnation of his Master, and the punishment which he inflicted. Many to-day are precisely in this position—they know they ought to serve the Lord, but they do not; they have knowledge of the bible as to their duty to God and man, but they deliberately set it aside; they have earnest and intelligent instruction in divine things, but they do not bring their lives and conduct into harmony with the instruction received. Surely these unfaithful servants "shall be beaten with many stripes." It cannot be otherwise. Knowledge of truth mislaid shall form a scourge that shall whip the guilty soul that has spurned and scorned to do according to the known will of his Lord. May you be spared that fearful fate by taking heed, watching and proving faithful.

#### FLASHLIGHTS.

1. Christ is the rightful king of this world, and to obey him is our reasonable service.
2. The attitude of sinners towards God is: "We will not have this man to rule over us."
3. We must give an account of all that God entrusts to our care—material, mental and spiritual.
4. Faithfulness in lesser things prepares us for the performance and possession of greater things.
5. God rewards according to fidelity, and not according to sphere. Faith, truth, love, self-denial are as worthy in a hotel as in a palace; in a factory as on a throne.
6. The "unfaithful servant" is condemned out of his own mouth. His faultfinding with Christians, his indifference to God's claims, his ridiculing of sacred things, his dishonorable business principles, will rise up to condemn him.
7. Jesus came in his resurrection, in the pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit, in judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem; he comes at each crisis of our lives, at each call for us to enter the higher life, and at the hour of death. He is coming at last to judge the world and to reign over all the earth.

#### POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Always make out your "Order of Service" before coming to the meeting, including hymns, scripture, testimony, papers or addresses, and other exercises. It is not a good plan to do this on "the spur of the moment." Even when you have the order of the service written out, there will be room for spontaneous action. Try this week a comment exercise—all to appropriate verses of scripture which they will repeat with their own comments. Have two papers or addresses arranged for—one on "The faithful servant, and his reward"; the other on "The unfaithful servant and his condemnation."

### OCTOBER 28.—"DO NOT WORRY."

Matt. 6: 25-34.

#### HOME READINGS.

Mon., Oct. 22. The pace that kills. . . . . Mark 4: 19; Luke 10: 40-42  
 Tues., Oct. 23. Peace a life-saver. . . . . Phil. 4: 5-6  
 Wed., Oct. 24. Sources of peace. . . . . John 14: 27  
 Thurs., Oct. 25. What the world gives. . . . . Eccl. 1: 2-11  
 Fri., Oct. 26. Trust brings peace. . . . . 1 Pet. 5: 7; Heb. 12: 5-6  
 Sat., Oct. 27. Reasonableness of content. . . . . Ps. 16

The Christian should not worry. If he does, he shows his lack of confidence in God, and his attempt to cast all his care upon himself. Worry is a habit that grows on one and brings with it ever-increasing unrest and unhappiness. The teaching of Jesus as to this matter is, that we are to seek first the kingdom of God, make its principles the guide of our lives, accept the stimulus which it brings to urge and help us to our best endeavor, and then with confidence in God, be content with the results.

#### WORRY AND FORETHOUGHT.

We should distinguish between worry and forethought. In last week's topic we had the importance of attending to the duties and claims of our stewardship, which certainly involve forethought as to the future but not worry as to future events. We take no anxious thought" (revised version), does not refer to a wise view of what lies before us and wise planning therefor, but it forbids anxious, restless, distrustful solicitude about earthly things.

#### ANXIETY REPROVED.

Anxiety is taken from a word which means "to cause pain, to torture." It is the torture of the mind under undue concern as to future events. Why should a Christian who has committed himself and all he is, and all he has into the care of him the all-

wise one—why should he torture his mind as to things which he cannot know, and could not prevent if he should know?

1. *Anxiety is injurious to ourselves.*—It makes us unhappy; it buries the mind; it clouds the perceptions; it hurries on the weakness of age; it breaks us down; it is inconsistent with the spirit of our blessed religion, and dishonoring to Christ our Saviour.

2. *It prevents success in life.*—How much of the success of life depends upon a contented mind, a hopeful spirit, a confident trust in God? Worry saps these springs and checks their wholesome flow, and robs souls of these helpful and necessary influences.

3. *It is a sin against God.*—It is a sign of distrust. We take the burden that God has promised to bear and place it on our own shoulders. We ignore his Fatherly care and take things in our own hands.

#### THE CURE FOR WORRY.

1. *Remember*, that if Christians, you are the children of God. This relationship to our Heavenly Father implies temporal care and provision and blessing, as well as spiritual. God cares for the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field, and shall he not much more care for you, his children by creation and redemption?

2. *Render an undivided service.*—"No man can serve two masters." If he does, his mind is distracted, his service hypocritical, and his peace destroyed. Centre your mind and service on the one Master, Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. *Seek first the Kingdom of God.*—This was the great theme of our Saviour's teaching—to the young, to his disciples, to the multitude, to the world. And when we seek his kingdom first—first in point of time, first in point of importance, first in point of soul ambition—we shall incorporate its spirit and principles, and the possession and constant growth of this divine kingdom in us will include both our temporal and spiritual welfare. Then we shall dwell on the mountain top, with the mists and gloom of the valley below us, and God's love and providence shall be clear, and worry shall have been dissolved by the beautiful sunlight of the divine favor in which we dwell.

#### FLASHLIGHTS.

1. Why we should not borrow trouble: (a) Because it causes despondency that it fits us for duty. (b) Because it has a tendency to make us overlook present blessing. (c) Because the present is sufficiently taxed with trial. (d) Because it unfits us for misfortune when it actually does come. (e) Because in its essence it is unbelief.—(Talmon.)

2. It is not work that kills men, but worry. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction.

3. Worry is not only foolish but sinful. It puts God out of our life as if he were not; and we substitute our own wisdom and effort unsupported by the promised help of the divine.

4. "I cannot help worrying," many say. "I was made so." It is the business of a follower of Christ in a hundred ways to un-made himself and make himself over with Christ's help.

5. Seek first his Kingdom, that is the cure for worry—fill your minds with thoughts of the Kingdom. The soldier in battle does not worry for fear his tooth is going to ache. He is thinking too much of his Queen and country.

6. You may see the things of the Kingdom; or think you are; but it will not save you from worry unless you seek them first.

7. "All these things shall be added." If we get the Kingdom first we get with it everything else that is worth having. If we seek those other things first we are likely to fail of them and of the Kingdom too.