WHAT CAN I DO TO-DAY.

"What can I do to day? Not praise to win, or glory to attain: Not gold, or ease, or power or love to gain Or pleasure gay; But to impart. Joy to some stricken heart. To send a heaven-born ray Of hope, some sad, despairing Soul to cheer-To lift some weighing doubt, Make truth more clear. Dispel some dwarfing fear, To lull some pain, Bring to the fold again, Some lamb astray ; To brighten life for some one, Now and here, This let me do to day."

DIALOGUES OF THE DAY.

A. R. W. from the Altruist.

(Laurens, in Standard.)

· THE CHURCH SUBSCRIPTION.

This is not the report of a Monday club session, but a momentary and monetary digression. Many people dislike digres-sions, especially along the line of benevolence. They can stand any number of sormons on Christian living, but get tired if ever there is one on Christian giving. Yet there is no actual Christian living

Now that Dr. Ashmore and the Minne sota brethren have stirred up the people so much about this proportionate and systematic giving, our bright young pastor thought it a good time to try to introduce the weekly envelope system and exter-minate the annual deficit system. The latter had been in vogue for some seventy odd years, however, in which the church finances had never come out even, while the pastors had come out as best they could, and often come out to stay out. No sooner did Parson Timothy wring these financial facts out of the unwilling trustees than he declared that the church must have a new plan of pay in the pew or a new preacher in the pulpit. He could not be pastor of a dishonest, non-debt-paying church, and that was the end of it.

But it was only the beginning of it rather. For the people had the good sense to love their young paster so much that they were willing to revolutionize the entire church machinery for him, if he insisted. And in this matter he did insist. He said it was a strange thing if the church of Christ, professing its standard of ethics the purest and highest on earth, holding the revelation and commission of the Father and Saviour of the world, were free at the same time to set a financial example that must make every honest, moral business man blush with shame. He avowed his belief that, to say the very least, honesty in church is as much a requirement as honesty in commerce, and that a professing Christian who gave nothing to the cause of Christ at home and abroad would receive just about the same amount as he gave, and get more than his deserts then. Oh, it would have done your heart good to hear him talk to the church officers about it; that is, if you had not been one of the non-givers or the stingy class, like Deacon Gripdollar, who quoted approvingly the saying of the miscrly member who notified the treasurer that he would surrender his pew at the end of the quarter, as the doctor said he couldn't possibly live the half-year out, and thus save that much.

Well, with tact and grace and grit and hard work, the old prejudices were gotten out and the new system brought in. How we are getting on with it you shall know later. Just now I want to insert here the parson's crowning hit, which disposed of the last objectors and nearly doubled the original subscriptions. It was at the final meeting, when the question of individual ability and responsibility was being con-sidered, and the plea of poverty had been advanced. The young pastor said he would like to read them "An Imaginary Dialogue between Peter and Priscilla Popkins, members of the Immenorial Church of Alwaysbehindtime, U. S.," which, he added, must not be mistaken for US. No one objecting, he read:

SETTLING THE SUBSCRIPTION.

Scene-Supper-table in the Popkins' comfortable home.

Peter-Well, Priscilla, I suppose we'll have to do something about that new-fangled subscription. The church treasurer's been after me again, and says next Sunday's the first. He says everybody will have to do something nice, or the church can't carry on its work under this voluntary plan. I declare I don't see why churches have to have so much money.

PRISCILLA—They don't have to, Peter It's a wicked extravagance. The minister's the best-off maz in the church, or would be, if he'd save his money, like other prudent people, and not always be helping everybody. I do bolieve he gave more dollars last year in what he calls, benevolence than, we did pennies. I wish I had as much money as his wife has, I know that; and if she doesn't use it wisely, it isn't my fault. They could get along on less salary and make less show. That's a lovely bonnet she's got, though, and I've set my heart on having one just like it.

Peter-Buying bonnets won't pay this subscription, as I see. How much shall we make it? I feel pretty poor this year. I suppose we'll have to keep the half-pew.

PRISCILLA-Yes, though there are only two of us, and they might let us rent out a sitting, if they weren't trying to get all a body's got.

Peter-(contemplatively)-Well, let us see. If we give ten cents a week each, that's \$10.40—forty cents more than the pew-price. I think it's small business to put in those two extra weeks, instead of making it even change, and I said so. But the treasurer—he always has some excuse ready for being small-said the pastor has to live those two weeks the same as the other fifty; that he can't get through 'em on an air diet. I didn't have a good answer ready, and had to take the laugh. So we'll call it twenty cents a week. But not a cent extra if they run behind, I can tell 'em that in advanco!

PRISCILLA—Twenty cents a week is a good deal. Peter. But we must have that seat, or else Mrs. Flamingout would take it, and I'd never sit back of her, if I left the church first.

So Peter-whose income is \$25 a weekfills out his blanks for ten cents each weekly, with an air of virtuous resignation, as though he were giving one-half of all he earned. Then he starts for his overcoat.

PRISCILLA—Where are you going, Peter? I think you might stay at home with me

Peter-O, I want to go down-town for an hour or two. Tompkins is going to meet me, and-

PRISCILLA—Yes, I saw the notice of the great polo game. That's always the way, when it isn't lodge night, or the company drill. Well, if you go there, you've got to do something for my pleasure, too. Stop in at Smack's and bring me a box of—you know the kind I like.
Peter—All right, my dear.

And, glad of so easy terms, off sets Peter, the philanthropic Popkins. But stay first he must light his cigar, price three for a quarter. Then, on meeting, he must offer a second to Tompkins. His admission to the polo game is thirty-five cents. The box of chocolate for Priscilla costs him forty cents. He smokes another cigar on the way home. And his evening has cost him a round dollar—or five times the total of his family subscription to the church for a whole week.

While Peter's militia company never costs him less than \$15 a year, his lodge \$10 more, his cigars \$100, his wife's candy \$25, and their amusements far more than \$100, a total of \$250 at very low estimate spent in the field of luxury if not extravagance-their joint giving to the church of Christ reaches the generous sum of \$10.40, plus a quarter for each of the four great educational

ed during the year!

How many of the Popkins family are there in our churches? What is the outcome of being rich toward self and poor toward God? When will men and women give as much money to Christ's church and cause as they spend in purely personal pleasure and gratification ?

The answer to this last question will help decide the date of the millennium. Brother, sister, how about your church subscription ?

HERE ENDS THE DIALOGUE.

BEGINNING FAMILY WORSHIP.

A young man of fashion, wealth and education, and high social position, at a mid-day prayer-meeting felt in himself the hope that maketh not ashamed, and realized a Saviour very precious to his soul. He believed that God, for Christ's sake, had for-given his sins, and determined that he would never be ashamed of Christ. He would acknowledge and honor Him everywhere.

The opportunity, the time and place, soon came. He was returning to his home in the evening. "Now," said he, "I must honor and obey God in my family. I must

set up family worship."
"Oh. no," said the tempter, "not yet. Don't be in a hurry. Take time. Gct a little stronger, and then you can go on better.'

"I must begin to-night. I do not know what my wife and sister will say: but it is a duty and I am resolved to do it, and trust God for the rest. I must pray in my family.

"Not to-night," said the tempter; "you don't know how to pray. You have never prayed much. You are not acquainted with the language of prayer. Wait and learn how first."

"No, no; I must pray to-night, I will pray to-night. Get thee behind me,

He passed into his dwelling, and into his library, and there, before God, his Heavenly Father, and in the name of the Lord Jesus, he poured out his heart, and asked for strength and grace from on high to assist him in his duty.
When he met his wife that evening, she

saw at once that a great change had taken place in him, but said nothing. At length he asked her :

"Would you have any objections to our having family worship?

After a moment's surprise and hesita tion, she said, with true politoness:

'Certainly not, if it is your pleasure.' "Bring me a Bible then, please, and draw up under the gas-light, and let us

read and pray."

He read a chapter, and then kneeled down, but his wife and sister sat upright in their seats, and he felt that he was alone on his knees. He lifted up his eyes to God, and cried out in the bitterness of his soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and gathering strength, he went on in his prayer, pouring out his most earnest cries and supplications that God would have mercy on his beloved wife and sister. So carnest, so importunate, was that prayer that God would show his converting power and grace on the spot, that the heart of his wife was melted and overcome, and she slipped from her seat upon her knees beside him, and putting her arms around his neck, ere she was aware she burst out into one agonizing cry to the Lord Jesus for mercy on her soul; and then the sister knelt down by his other side, and, she, too put her arms around him, and burst into a flood of tears.

He continued to pray; ne devoted himself and those with him to God. 'He confessed and bewailed his and their manner of life hitherto; he pleaded the promise of God to all those that seek him, and with unspeakable joy he made mention of the amazing grace of God in the pardon of his sins, and he besought that they all might find and obtain together peace and forgiveness through a crucified Saviour.

The submission was complete; the surender was fully made; repentance and aith sprang up together in the hearts of all three, and as they rose from their knees, it was to acknowledge each to the other what new determinations and resolutions and consecration they each had made during the progress of that first prayer in the family in that parlor, of all they were, and all they would be, or should be to

Since that first prayer in the parlor God has been daily acknowledged in the same place by the same circle.—Presbyterian

Advocate.

Question Corner.-No. 17.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS. 49. Who was the first drunkard?
50. Who was the first total abstainer?

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