

WHY NOT NOW.

The burden of the gospel call is its imperative present tense. The age is discussing future punishment and future probation, but you dear unconverted soul need none of that speculation. You are **LOST**. Jesus offers you a free salvation. You need not take any concern about what rewards you will get for it. A drowning man does not stop to find if his friend will give him a house and farm, after he lifts him out of his peril. You **ARE IN PERIL**. You see it may be just as well to repent and accept by and by but, then, why not now? The waves may engulf you to-night; death may come in an instant. And when its awful shadow settles down on you, you will not care very much whether this or that speculation triumphs, but you will care a great deal if you go out into that shadow un-saved. No man is safe until he is saved. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts."—*Church Union*.

PRAY IN SECRET.

Five minutes for reflection and self-examination, ten for reading the scriptures, and fifteen for prayer, daily, is about as little as most Christians can live upon. Many, it is true, have no special time or place for secret prayer, and therefore do not live. It can be spared as easily as the ever recurring time for our regular meal, and every consideration, temporal and eternal, demands it. I was once profitably impressed with the importance of uniformity in this duty by that venerated ruling elder, the late John Alexander, of Lexington, Virginia. Soon after leaving his bed, and before he had fully dressed and while others were talking around him, he took his Bible and sat down to enjoy the hidden manna.

The preaching of Larned and the praying of Payson were pre-eminent for that unctious which secret prayer alone can impart and hence the richest prayers I ever enjoyed were by an eminent merchant, in the prime of life and immersed in business. Nothing but faithfulness in private prayer kept his spirit in this frame. This he intimated in reply to a question on the subject.

The question often arises as to whether we shall kneel down in the presence of others, or pray mentally and literally in secret. Some feel that the one savors of ostentation, and some that the opposite indicates a fear of man. It is evident

that neither method is proper, and that the one is best that most effectually sub-serves the great end for which secret prayer was enjoined.

Any Christian who succeeds in wrestling an hour a day, or possibly half an hour from the world, will experience the richness of those promises made in the Apocalypse "to him that overcometh."—*Presbyterian*.

BE CIVIL TO CHILDREN.

There is not care enough taken on the part of many parents and teachers to be civil to children. Children are taught—or have been, or ought to be—to be respectful to their parents and older people; but the converse obligation is not often enough insisted on or practised. There is no reason in this. If there is more in older persons to call forth respect, which may not always be true, there is also with them, or ought to be, more capacity for showing respect, more knowledge, and judgement and practice in courtesy. They are thus looked upon, with propriety, by the children themselves as models in this particular. The pattern is often a poor one. There are teachers in our schools who have yet much to learn in this matter. They will find themselves repaid, they may be sure, in many ways, apart from the public benefit, if they will be civil to their scholars, after the most genuine fashion, and with the most scrupulous care.

"MY SMOKE-HOUSE."

A man who lives in Albany, N. Y., and whose business is that of a clerk said that he had lately built a house that cost him three thousand dollars. His friends expressed their wonder that he could afford to build so fine a dwelling.

'Why,' said he, 'that is my smoke-house.' 'Your smoke-house! What do you mean?' 'Why, I mean that twenty-five years ago I left off smoking, and I have put the money saved from smoking, with interest, into my house. Hence I call it my smoke-house'.

Now, boys, we want you to think of this when you are tempted to take your first cigar. Think how much good might be done with the money you are beginning to end in smoke. What would you think of a man who, to amuse himself, would light a paper twenty-five cents and watch it burn? Is it any more sensible to take for your quarter a roll of dry leaves, light it, and then see it smoke?