

Prayer Meeting Topics.

B. Y. P. U. Topics.

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July 3rd. A Nation's Glory.—Prov. xiv: 34; Ps. xxcix: 13-19.

The greatness of a nation is generally measured by the wealth, the armies, the lands, and the peoples under its flag: but God declares that the greatness consists in the righteousness of its subjects. The people who live under righteous laws, laws that approach the golden rule of justice and love have a goodly heritage. Laws that give freedom to body, mind and soul exalt the nation, for they are in harmony with our Creator's wisdom.

Those who live under good laws, and have noble, true and just law-makers and just administrators, are greatly to be envied. Law that is good but has unjust men to execute it loses half its blessing. The righteousness of a nation that exalteth it can often be found in the royal men who have stood as its Kings and Princes and statesmen. One has said of Mr. Gladstone, "That his greatness consisted largely in the fact that he applied the moral and religious test to all questions."

But a nation does not have its whole being in law and rulers. The subjects of the nation have the greatest power to exalt or to debase it. When each individual recognizes the obligations resting upon him and lives in the light of the best knowledge attainable, then shall that nation lift its head higher than all others. A righteous law, rulers and people touch the ideal that our Heavenly Father has placed before us. Upon such shall his countenance shine. And such shall reflect the glory that belongs to his enduring kingdom.

July 10th. The Parting of the Ways. xl: 26-28; xxx: 15-20.

The people of Israel had come to a new opportunity. About to enter into the land of promise, the prospect of a fine inheritance and the responsibility of ownership and rulership lay broad before them. No doubt the joy of this accession to this large place would be greater than the thought of trust. However, God by the mouth of the leaders calls to mind two choices, good or evil. How fickle were these people the history attests.

Would it not be well for us to stop a moment and consider what opportunity God opens before us, especially in the way of faith and service? Can

we not hear ringing in our ears, "Choose ye." The way of good and life is open to us and the Saviour is alluring us with his smiles of welcome to come in. What a vision of hope and happiness comes to us as we think for a moment of life with the life giver, of good from the source of all good.

The way of life and good plead for our acceptance of it and then for our use of it for others good.

Alas that there should be any other side or any other way; but if there were not there would be no choice.

Will anyone be so unwise as to choose death and evil? Who can deliberately make such woeful choice? The subtle web of sin is woven and the way thereinto is so garnished with the pleasures that appeal to our worse selves that we are drawn in without suspecting the wrong. It is not always so for soon the deliberate choice of the wrong comes because of the power of the temptation. Forget not the picture which our Saviour drew of the broad and narrow ways, and listen to the still small voice that says: "Choose the narrow way and life."

July 17th. Our Patient God.—Psalms lxxviii: 38-41; Romans ii: 4.

This lesson follows close on the one of last week. Here the Psalmist is recounting the waywardness of that chosen people of God and brings forth from it the praise of the wonderful patience of God. Follow some of the words indicating their attitude to God. 'Iniquity,' breathing of all the evils of life and soul. They 'provoked' him and 'grieved' him. In their pride and selfishness they turned from him; 'turned back' and 'tempted' him. Limited the Holy One. After all his mighty acts in their behalf, they limit his love and salvation. All that is gross and unworthy is imputed to them. How different the loving God's attitude to them. Full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, remembered the frailty of their flesh. Surely his goodness should have led them to repentance.

As we apply this assuring truth to our lives does there not come the larger desire to be grateful for the patience of Jesus Christ, and a longing that we may not in the future give him such grave cause to lose patience with us? If we are cast down and troubled there is the sweet promise that he will bear with us and we need not be discouraged. As we look into his forgiving face we shall surely gain hope.

July 24th. The Plaint of Love. Hosea xi: 8; Luke xli: 34-35; xli: 41-44.

"Love never faileth." He who is love can therefore never fail. No more

sad picture can be drawn than that of our Father and Saviour when having exhausted all the devices and arguments of love, mournfully turning away from the objects of solicitude and grieving over them. Love still abides although the object be callous to affection and persistently drives hope from the heart of the loving one.

As our Saviour says, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" he is voicing the anguish of a heart that is keenly cut by unrequited love. His prayers, tears and toils are all spent in vain for the impenitent and unkind, yet there kindles no anger or malice, no spurning or reviling, but the yearning of a deathless love.

What fruitage from such devotion of love? Will not the spirit which invites the master therein glow with increasing fervency and desire to glorify him? The grandeur of Christ's character is proven in this. Our closest intimacy with him shall be acknowledged when our love reaches this point. Too often rebuffs come, but if we conquer them by continuing to love, we shall triumph over all things.

July 31st. True Repentance—Isaiah i: 11-17.

From the loving lips of Jesus fell these words: "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Emphatically the words place repentance in the foreground of all religious requirement. To study what this requirement is, is our task.

The people had made altars, appointed meetings, and offered sacrifices, but these acts did not meet the demand of God and of the soul. They even added to the number of their sins. There was wanting the sincerity of purpose. No show of worship is adequate proof of repentance.

True repentance must give expression to three principles:

(1) Sincere and godly sorrow for sins and wasted life. Do not make this only proof, for tears and anguish of heart are deceptive and may only mean selfpride a little buffeted.

(2) A pure life. Leaving the old things that have corrupted thought and life, and bringing those Christlike traits that become each life.

(3) Learn to do well. Good deeds to the oppressed and needy are ever requirements of the one who asserts desire for God's love and forgiveness. Inculcate this threefold idea of repentance and thus prove by inner experience that it is genuine and pure.