

That is the only feeling that the Mohammedan has to-day for those who reject his prophet, Mohammed. He prays to Allah for their entire destruction. In beautiful and striking contrast to this is the spirit of the Christian church toward all who reject Jesus Christ. One of the three collects for Good Friday in the Church of England is:

"O merciful God, who has made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd."

It is a most beautiful prayer to God from the church, which has caught the spirit of the Master. Standing, as it does, on that day under the shadow of the cross, it sees the Lord Jesus crucified for the sins of the whole world, and all distinctions and barriers disappear. There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, but all alike are poor sinners for whom Christ hung upon that cross. And, further, it catches those words that fell from His lips in the hour of supremest agony: "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do," and all knees are bowed in prayer to God that He will have mercy on all those who deny Him and insult Him at this day—Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics.

The Mohammedan prayer breathes the spirit of fierce vengeance, so congenial to the heart of the natural man. The Christian collect is filled with a spirit that is not natural, but which has to be learnt first at the foot of the cross. No better comments could be found on the religions of Turk and Christian. One is of man, and betrays the heart of man; the other is of God, and filled with His pure love.

A THOUGHT FOR THE SEASON.—To the average well-fed, well-clothed, busy, practical man of the world to-day, enjoying a comfortable home, and all the conveniences of modern life, one of the strangest and most incomprehensible beings in the world is the monk of the middle ages. Why should any man cut himself off entirely from the delights of the home and the world and live within the four walls of a gloomy building and there starve himself and chastise himself, and wear himself out with fastings and vigils and prayers,

to the greater glory of God? It strikes him simply as a monstrous extension of the Puritanical Sunday. And certainly, on the whole, monasticism is rightly called a perversion of human life—a distortion of the Christian ideal. But underneath the system there lay at least one truth that Jesus taught, and to which the monk tried to be faithful. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The monk tried to save his soul, and was willing to go to any length to accomplish it. Looking at his life he said to himself, "In a little while it will all be over, and then begins the eternity of God. What are the few years here to endless hereafter with God! I will save my soul, though my body suffer for it. What is my body in comparison with my soul?" His Lord had said, "I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him," and he therefore lived in the continual fear of God.

ITS APPLICATION.—What we need to-day is to see life a little more as the monk saw it. It is easy to be liberal, and talk continually of enjoying life, and using the good things that God has given us. All our natural instincts run in that direction. But a much more necessary inquiry perhaps, and much more appropriate to the present occasion, is whether our present ways of living are bringing us any nearer to God. Do eternal interests weigh with us as with the monk of old? and are we ready as he was to sacrifice the body for the soul? The average man or woman has better clothing, better food, better houses, better education, more luxuries, and greater opportunities of rising in the world than ever before. But are we any better satisfied? Are not our material wants greater than ever, and our complaints ever increasing? We want to be richer yet, and rival our neighbors. The more of comfort and luxury we see, the more we want! Business is claiming more and more of a man's life, and the race for money is growing furious. The best efforts and the best days in life seem to be spent in ministering to these bodies. Temporal material wants tend to obscure all others. And yet all the while we are hastening on to that day when the only realities will be God and the soul about to

meet Him. How unutterably silly this makes current views of life! What a soundness it seems to give to the ways of the much-despised monk! In these days of Lent, when we hear much of fasting and abstinence, there might well be a thorough revision of our daily lives. We might discover a meaning in abstinence, and cast aside these allurements of food and dress, and houses and modern comforts, to throw ourselves more unreservedly into that which alone profits—the quest for the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And truly with the example of Jesus, battling for forty days with all powers of hell, forgetting food and lodging and all social comforts that He might overcome the evil one, we ought to learn where to put the emphasis in life—not on eating and drinking and the so-called good things of life, but where the monk tried to put it—on doing the will of God. "But I will forewarn you, whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

IS BAD PREACHING KEEPING YOUNG MEN FROM CHURCH?—In a paper recently published in an American magazine, the writer takes the clergy to task for preaching sermons that always fail to interest young men. The great disproportion between the numbers of men and women at church he traces to this source. Out of thirty special sermons or series of sermons to young men, he says "there was only one in which he found anything to carry away." If this was really true, the church in the United States would, indeed, be in a dreadful condition. That sermon is pretty bad from which there is nothing to carry away, and the preacher almost hopeless who cannot interest a young man. But we are naturally suspicious of sweeping statements, and in this case suspicion is more than justified. It turns out that the fault is rather in those young men of whom the writer acts as the representative and spokesman. They ask what the clergy cannot consistently do. They want the church turned into a lecture hall for the regular weekly treatment of the practical matters of life, where they may be always sure of hearing something new. United prayer and praise and thanksgiving are no longer the purpose and the privilege of churchgoing. They utterly ignore these things. The whole interest is to be centred in the sermon. And this sermon is to be of a certain prescribed character. It must not refer continually to the great