

Speed was necessary to avoid the danger of being observed by some of the king's spies. When the business was in hand; literally, "on the day of the business," referring either to the command of Saul (ch. 19: 1-7), or to some other event well known to David. Remain by the stone Ezel; that is, stone of departure, some natural rocks, or a heap of ruins which might serve for a hiding place. It may have been a mile stone or guide-post. See margin of Bible, "stone that sheweth the way."

Vs. 20-22. I will shoot. Since the bow was such a usual weapon (ch. 18: 4), the spies of Saul, if they were on the watch, would see nothing suspicious in his carrying and using it. The words of Jonathan to the attendant would inform David whether it was safe or not for him to go forward. As the Lord liveth. A solemn form of affirmation. David's safety in this case is as certain as that the Lord lives. The Lord hath sent thee away. Jonathan is prepared to recognize and submit to the Lord's will in banishing David from the court. "God hath another school in which the future king must be trained."

III. An Earnest Appeal, 23.

V. 23. As touching the matter; referring, not to the sign only, but to the substance of the whole interview, including the renewal of the friendship. The Lord be between thee and me; as a Witness and Judge, in case either one should break the covenant. (Compare Gen. 31: 48, 49.)

David then concealed himself, while Jonathan endeavored to apologize to the king for his absence. Finding the king still determined to kill David, Jonathan warned his friend as they had arranged. Then the two, after a tender farewell, parted, never to meet again, save once 1 Sam. 23: 16) in the wilderness of Ziph. (Vs. 24-42.) David's lament over his dead friend, the Song of the Bow, is rarely touching and beautiful, 2 Sam. 1: 17-27; and to David's everlasting honor, Saul had full share with Jonathan in the song. David's was a loyal heart, whose love even Saul's bitter enmity could not quench.

Bible Study, One Verse at a Time.

No. 16.

Psalm 103: 17.

BY MRS. ANNA ROSS.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting" to everlasting upon them that fear Him."

What matters it to the flower of the field if the wind does wither it, if at the same time, that wind is only acting as the servant of God's everlasting mercy, sweeping it up into regions of eternal life and never fading bloom, just as the whirlwind and the chariot of fire swept the prophet up into the presence of the Lord.

"The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." The frail flower of the field, shaken and withered by the breath of the summer breeze, is yet the heir of two eternities of Divine lovingkindness—the eternity of the past, making costly and continuous preparation for it, and the eternity of the future—that in the ages to come.

"The reward of one duty," says a wise man, "is the power to fulfill another." God does not give ease to his saints, but greater tasks. "Labors more abundant," were Paul's reward, year after year, for labors done. If we seek ease, we never can lift high the banner of the cross, and lead souls on to victory.

Our Young People

Sun., Aug. 16.—Topic—Lesson from Paul: How to Use Tact in Dealing With Men.

Tact and Truth.

Tact has a bad name because in many cases it takes insincerity as a comrade. But tact with truth is a thing quite possible, and is well worth striving for. Paul had a manly contempt for falsehood, and was true in word and deed; yet his tact is noticeable in every letter and every speech. In his letter to Philemon, how sincerely and yet persuasively he speaks of Onesimus! We are sure that Philemon did what Paul wished, after reading that letter.

Paul's tact was a bold, not a timid quality. Among the cultivated and corrupt Corinthians, he resolved to preach only the simplest gospel, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." To be "all things to all men" never meant to him to yield one syllable of truth or soften one commandment of righteousness. The more we study Paul's winsome tact, the more we see the rock of conviction that backed it.

A tactful Christian met an infidel in one of our western cities. "You need not argue with me," said the infidel, "I have my own convictions, and they are as good as yours." "I do not want to find points of argument," said the Christian, "for I am sure we have points of agreement, too. Let us find out what they are." In ten minutes the unbeliever, as he supposed himself to be, found himself stating his difficulties honestly and meeting an intelligent sympathy which drew him out irresistibly. Within a few weeks, with his doubts dispelled, he became, also, a follower of Christ. Argument had only alienated him: tact drew him gently away from his errors.

The Word in Season.

There are times when we must speak out of season, if we speak at all. The occasion is not propitious, yet it is our only occasion. In such cases we must do our best, and leave the result with God. Words out of season are often words of power, through divine blessing.

But we should watch for the opportunity of speaking the words in season. There are moments constantly occurring, when we can help our fellows toward God by a fitly spoken word. To study such occasions, and quietly improve them, is to do a true and growing work for Christ. Times of sorrow, times of rest, times of sickness, are often times when the message of the gospel is peculiarly in season, if we are ready to speak it.

Daily Readings.

- Mon., Aug. 17.—"Fervent in spirit." Rom. 12: 11-17
- Tues., " 18.—Filled with the Spirit. Rom. 8: 12-17
- Wed., " 19.—Living for Him. Mark 8: 34-38
- Thurs., " 20.—Suffering, if need be. Col. 1: 24-29
- Fri., " 21.—"Instant in season." 11 Tim. 4: 1-5
- Sat., " 22.—Faithful through all. 11 Tim. 2: 1-5
- Sun., " 23.—Topic—Lessons from Paul: how to make our lives count like his. II Cor. 11: 23-28

He is no seer who can see no good in another.

Making Our Lives Count

Sun., Aug. 23. Topic.—Lessons from Paul: How to Make Our Lives Count Like His. II Tim. 1: 6-8; II Cor. 11: 23-28.

Counting Up.

Our influence is the sum of our whole character. There must be a counting up, year after year, of virtues, of graces, of fruits of the Spirit, before we count for anything worth while in the service of God.

It is not large deeds and acts, but the little daily things, that make up influence. Paul, after his conversion at Damascus, prepared himself for his work in silence and retirement in Arabia. The prophet Samuel, a boy in the temple, was fitted for his coming leadership of the nation by little daily tasks. There is no royal road to spiritual power; obedience and service are its laws.

What we are stands behind what we do say, and counts for most in men's minds. When Paul spoke, all his life of hardship, of self-sacrifice, of loving devotion, spoke also, in tones that no hearer could disregard.

A Life's Value.

Paul's life, with all his education and position, counted for little before he was converted. He would have lived and died unknown in history, an obscure Pharisee in a Roman province, if he had refused to yield his life into Christ's hand. Through his consecration to God, he became one of the great figures of the world, with an influence upon it which still goes on and will go on until the last day.

The value of Paul's life lay in his complete surrender of it to God. He refused no test of pain or shame, he labored on through weariness and infirmity, he faced and met martyrdom unflinchingly. He made himself a channel for God's grace, and it flowed through him in power. He could say, truly, that it was not he that lived, but Christ in him. Every one that came in contact with Paul, thus came into contact with Christ in him.

Thus empty of self, Paul's life grew more valuable from day to day. It became filled with divine and glorious influence. He was able to do great deeds for God, and win the deepest affections of men. Only as we follow in this path of absolute consecration can we add an enduring and immortal value to our lives.

More Work.

"How do I know he is a good worker?" said someone of an earnest Christian. "By the way people are always bringing him more work to do. An inefficient man is never troubled that way." When God lays new duties on us, may we not feel that what we have already done pleases him?

Daily Readings.

- Mon., Aug. 10.—Wisdom from above. Jas. 1: 1-5
- Tues., " 11.—Patience. 11 Cor. 6: 1-4
- Wed., " 12.—Love. 1 Cor. 13: 4-8
- Thurs., " 13.—Unselfishness. Gal. 5: 13, 14
- Fri., " 14.—Suavity. Acts 26: 1-3
- Sat., " 15.—Conscientiousness. Rom. 14: 19-23
- Sun., " 16.—Topic.—Lessons from Paul: how to use tact in dealing with men. I Cor. 9: 19-23