

## WHO KNOWS THE THOUGHTS OF A CHILD?

Who has not seen just this look on some baby face, the questioning, intent, wondering gaze at something it sees for the first time? And who that sees this look, does not long to snatch the child to his breast and love away that serious look and kiss the smile back again? Yet the serious baby face is not always the sad one. It has a charm all its own for which the brightest smile would be no fair exchange.

Who knows the thoughts of a child? But the answer comes quickly, might we not know them better than we do? How many joyless little ones have we made happier because of that homeless babe in Bethlehem? Do we always take care to bring ourselves as much in sympathy with the children around us as we might? That heavenly babe brought down untold blessings to these little ones. Are we, by our carelessness and selfishness, keeping their birthright back from any of them? Are we always mindful of our Saviour's injunction against offending one of these little ones.

Do we often enough pause to think how much the children are to us. How many men and women saddened and prematurely aged by long years of toil have their faces brightened and their hearts lightened by contact with one of them. Looking down into one of these sweet, innocent faces our hearts expand and grow more generous, we are drawn out of ourselves and nearer to God. Thank God for the little ones, and may we, through this year to come, know more and more that if we would grow like to Jesus we must grow in very deed like little children, as pure in heart as they before they become tarnished by contact with the sin of their elders; as absolutely as they trust in us so must we trust in God.

## SIMPLE BUT NOT GENEROUS.

BY F. E. H. RAYMOND.

If the scriptures can guide our living can they not as easily and wisely rule our giving? Why is not the Bible's simple plan of beneficence the best? Charity is to-day the same duty it has ever been.

Certainly, it would do away with yards and yards of "red tape," and years of useless toil. I know one family who follow it, and the system works as admirably with them in this "progressive" century as it did with those other children of God for whom it was originally conceived.

In this home of which I speak, on a closet shelf there is placed a small casket, marked in plain, honest script, "The Lord's Box."

Whatever income this household receives, is always "tithed," and first of all, the Lord has his portion. I wondered how, knowing my friend's circumstances to be far from affluent, this could always be maintained.

"Why," said the house-mother, "we never think it is ours, any more than we should feel a right to our neighbor's purse. Begrudge it? we only wish the tenth was larger. It is grown into a habit. If anything comes to us, the reckoning is almost simultaneous with the receipt. If it is a hundred dollars we never think of it as more than ninety; the other ten we have naught to do with except to spend it wisely."

"There we do often feel perplexed. We are anxious to do with it just what he who owns it would have us, and sometimes, I fear, we make mistakes, but our intention is, in some way or other, to give it directly to the poor."

I was half ashamed at my question, yet I knew her well, and I wanted to test the practical actual fact by every suggestion of a fault in the system. She went on brightly:—

"And now I want to tell you a curious thing. My own purse is, normally, empty; that little 'Box' rarely is. Not long ago I had occasion to use all that was in it, for a purpose we could not doubt would be approved of God. It made us feel wretchedly poor! Not having anything 'on hand' ourselves, was no matter, that condition being chronic; but to have not a penny in the Lord's purse, that was strange and sad! We began to question if we had done right

to call it simple, and, oh, so saving of worry and self-reproach! Simplicity, in faith, in aims, in daily life, how good and restful it is! Why can't more men and women practise it?"—*Christian at Work.*

## IT LASTS.

The peculiarity of Christianity is the strong personal tie of real love and intimacy which will bind men to the end of time to this man who died nineteen hundred years ago. We look back into the waste of antiquity, the mighty names rise there that we might reverence, the great teachers from whom we have learned, and to whom, after a fashion, we are grateful. But what

a gulf there is between us and the best and noblest of them. But here is a dead man who to-day is the object of passionate attachment and a love deeper than life to millions of people, and will be to the end of time. There is nothing in the whole history of the world the least like that strange bond which ties you and me to Christ, and the paradox of the apostle remains a unique fact in the experience of humanity: "Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, ye love." We stretch our hands across the waste, silent centuries, and there, amid the mist of oblivion, thickening round all other figures in the past, we touch the warm, throbbing heart of our friend, who lives forever, and forever is near us. We here, nearly two milleniums after the words fell on the nightly air on the road to Gethsemane, have them coming direct to our hearts. A perpetual bond unites men with Christ to-day; and for us, as truly as in that long past Paschal night, it is true; "Ye are my friends."

There are no limitations in that friendship, no misconstruction in that heart, no alienation possible, no change to be feared. Why should I be solitary if Jesus Christ is my friend? Why should I fear if he walks by my side? Why should anything be burdensome if he lays it upon me and helps me to bear it? What is there in life that cannot be faced and borne—aye, and conquered—if we have him, as we all may have him, for the friend and the home

of our hearts.—*Dr. Maclaren.*

## ITS TRUE FUNCTION.

Our Bible teacher says the following on a very important subject: "The time has fully come when the Sunday school should cease to be thought of simply as a nursery for children. It has a higher function to fulfill, a broader service to render. Its true office is that of the Bible school of the church. Into this Bible school the entire church should be gathered. The idea that children must be instructed in the Bible and adults excused is a preposterous one. How such a heresy ever came to be so deeply rooted is difficult to comprehend."



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"I know some of the societies, of which our town has its quota, consider us niggardly and uncharitable, and am truly sorry for it. But what are we to do? Their objects do not always commend themselves to our judgment as true 'charity,' and so I dare not appropriate the Lord's money to them. Of our own, you see, we have little to spare."

"And when you come into close places yourself, needing money badly, and there happens to be some in the 'Box,' don't you ever feel tempted to borrow, and replace it later?"

The color flashed into my friend's cheek, as she replied, "Never! the Evil One finds plenty of corners to creep in and hide, but he hasn't found that one yet!"

to quite empty it. Well, within twenty-four hours, I received money from an unlooked for source, and when the tenth had been put in its place, we all felt relieved indeed. It would have been a trial, had a need arisen to draw upon that blessed fund, and nothing there."

"It seems a very simple and a very generous plan. I only fear few follow it."

"The more pity, then; but don't mistake. It is not generous, it is only just payment of just debt. When we aim to be generous we give out of our own nintenths. Can't I make you understand that we have never considered this small portion ours? It is God's, from the beginning absolutely; and how could one be liberal with what is another's? But you are right