

utmost value. By the devotional reading of Scripture I do not mean a use of the sacred volume less intelligent, in its way, than that made by the critical student. But the aim and method are not the same in the two cases. For whilst in the one case the immediate object is to ascertain what is *true* in Criticism or Doctrine, in the other case spiritual truth is applied to the heart and life. God's Word is both food and medicine to the soul. It enlightens, purifies, strengthens, warms, comforts, elevates. There is no purpose of correction or improvement which, as applied by the Heavenly Teacher, it does not accomplish. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." In the believing, sympathetic perusal of Scripture the wearied student will find all his powers refreshed and revived, and the evils which accompany the too exclusive possession of the mind by secular ideas prevented; and if a student of theology he will reap this further benefit, that his professional studies will be immensely forwarded by the clearer insight into the heart of divine truth which the devotional use of the Bible will give: "Pectus facit theologum." May I therefore, exhort my young friends, the students present, never for a single day to omit the reading of the Bible for personal profit; for preventing the spiritual deadness which constant intellectual tension will produce, and for elevating the soul to something higher than the loftiest intellectual effort can reach. "Let the Word of God dwell in you richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Then, too, will you be able to say, "O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day!"

And if Scripture is lovingly employed for devout and practical ends, prayer will ever, and inevitably, be associated with the reading of it. The heart that is filled with the divine Word burns with desire to get nearer to the glorious and blessed One who is therein revealed, and thus prayer becomes a necessity. For prayer is, on our part, the proper response to the voice of God heard in Scripture. He speaks to us in the Bible, we reply in confession, supplication and thanksgiving.

No one may prescribe the exact portion of time which the student (or any person) should dedicate to these allied duties of reading and prayer. But *some* part of our time should be thus appropriated; enough to make it possible to receive the impress of higher things, and to have real fellowship with Heaven. To say that a few moments will suffice would betray ignorance of the conditions under which the human mind acts and is acted upon. But if the heart is right we shall wish rather to lengthen than to shorten the seasons in which we are nearest to God.

So engrossing may study become that the devotee is utterly unconscious of the passing of time. An excellent minister, whom I