

art to adorn with beaten gold and silver and brass. Was not this Solomon's thought when he exclaimed: "But who is able to build Him a house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Who am I, then, that I should build Him a house, save only to burn sacrifice before Him?" And in the progress of the race, the burnt sacrifice has given place to mercy which becomes strength to the weak, and light to those who sit in darkness. Not architecture and not ritual can alone build a house of the Lord. That is the "house of the Lord," wherever sincere souls gather together to seek the divine illumination that lightens every man that cometh into the world.

It is good to quit our daily work for a season, to lay aside the pen or the needle, or the book or the plough, whatever it may be that fills our hours with pressing duties and makes the days seem all too short for the many activities that clamor for our interest. It is good for us all, could we but know it, to meet in this stillness, to hear the lesson chosen to promote the spiritual life, to contribute, it may be, our thought or our aspiration, as seed thought for the silence, and then "the windows of our souls to throw wide open" to the inshining of the Divine light. If the hour have for us no other good than this, that we hold ourselves still, that we observe the decorum of a place set apart for religious contemplation, it is not in vain that we thus assemble. Then, it may be that it is only as seasons appointed for the "calmly gathered thought" that we ever come face to face with ourselves.

Alas for us, if the life of all the other hours of the week leaves us still so barren, so impoverished; that this short hour becomes a time of restless dissatisfaction. Alas for us if the week just past has not had in it enough of sunny hours enough of loving kindnesses received, enough of noble service given, enough of buoyant, physical life, to start in our souls a psalm of

thanksgiving. How has it been with us, since last we sat together here? The work that was ours to do, have we done it "heartily as unto the Lord?" Our pleasures, have we taken them holily? The stinging words that rose to our lips, were we able to keep them unspoken? The gentle courtesy that beautifies all our relations to each other, have we cherished it? And then, there is the *forward look* to engage our thought. There is the new week opening before us, with all its moments fresh and fair from out the infinite store-house of the hereafter, moments waiting to be stamped with our joy or melancholy, our activity or idleness, our nobleness or meanness. Is it not good that we have this pause at its threshold to think of its possibilities; to make ourselves ready for the interesting, beautiful days that lie just ahead of us; to prepare ourselves for this divine service of these other days?

I know it is the fashion of the world to call this hour of church assemblage the hour of "divine service," but to my mind this is not *service*, but should be the hour of preparation for divine service. To-morrow, at this hour, we shall be engaged in divine service if we are doing with mind and might, what is clearly the duty of the hour.

To human fathers and mothers, it is very sweet to receive the words of love and gratitude, that well up in the hearts of their children; but words are easy to speak and they have but little value for fathers and mothers unless they are deeply rooted in that loyalty to parental guidance that makes the daily life a living testimony of love and gratitude.

Believe me, it is not what we say or sing, in this hour of "praises to the Heavenly King," that moves the heart of our Heavenly Father; it is yesterday's life and to-morrow's that is the test and measure of our loyalty to Divine Guidance, the only way permitted us of service for our Heavenly Father. Learn this now, beloved young people, if the lesson has not al-