

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

THE KINGDOM FOR THE CHILD-LIKE.

(By Rev. John A. Clark, B.A.)

The mind of Jesus was all the time full of the kingdom of God. He dwelt in it every day. He spoke about it constantly. The tokens of its presence and power were everywhere visible to him. He saw its beauty. He heard its music. He lived in the light of its glory. The shining of the sun, the falling of the rain, the blowing of the wind, the growing of the grain, the beauty of the lilies, all these spoke to him of God and heaven, and he knew he dwelt under the pure and gentle reign of his Father, and in his Father's house. Jesus was always a Child at home.

Children are more like Jesus in this, than their elders. Their minds are open and receptive. They live in a world full of wonder and beauty. They believe that it is good and glorious. They know not what marvel may happen at any moment. They are ready for anything; only, whatever takes place is sure to be delightful, beneficent, beautiful. Children cannot despair. Whatever their sorrows or misfortunes, they are sure some good fairy, some kind person, will come soon and make everything right. Things must be right sooner or later. The child never doubts that. He knows that he lives in a good kingdom: that is the kingdom of God or heaven.

The child, too, has this faith in the essential goodness of life quite irrespective of any thought of merit in himself. It is not because he thinks he is a good child, that the world is good and blessed. If he be a bad child, he is not therefore of the opinion that the whole of life is bad and wretched. His conviction that things are sure to turn out well, is quite detached and separate from any satisfaction or dissatisfaction as to himself. He has not yet learned the foolish fashion of making himself the measure of the universe.

The child, further, is free from any very deep attachment to his possessions. Much as children make of things, their toys and their clothes, they are not altogether bound up in them. You may replace them by others, and the child doesn't mind for long. Toys are sure to be broken and clothes outworn. He soon forgets them in his joy at that which he is given in their stead. There is nothing to which the child has as yet given himself, his heart.

These are some of the ways in which we must become children, in order that we may enter the kingdom of God.

We are to have an unquenchable faith in God and His kingdom, in His absolute goodness, and in His final triumph. Our faith in the kingdom and our reception of it are to be quite independent of anything in us or not in us. The kingdom and its goodness are not because of our goodness. We are to give ourselves to it and its King, that He may make us good. And, finally, we are to keep ourselves free from undue attachment to the things that change and disappear. It will never do to be like the rich young ruler, who could not be separated from his great possessions. That will hinder our reception of the highest blessing, of the kingdom itself and its goodness. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Calgary, Alta.

SHADI'S PRAYER.

A missionary lady had a little Hindu orphan named Shadi living with her. She had taught him about Jesus, and one night, when he was six years old, she said to him:

"Now, pray a little prayer of your own." And what do you think Shadi's prayer was? It was this:

"Dear Jesus, make me like what you were when you were six years old."—Child's Gem.

What we shall find in life will depend more upon what we are seeking than upon the diligence of our search.

CONSIDER THE STRANGER.

A Presbyterian, his home on the farm, if called away from those he loves in his home, his church and his community, if he travels from town to town for weeks, meeting strangers everywhere, will likely ask himself this question, Have I considered the stranger I saw at my church?

If this farmer, as he travels, will keep his eyes open, he will see and feel that he is receiving just about the same treatment from strangers as that he gave to the stranger who was in his church.

Having been led to the Presbyterian Church from the time I could walk, by a mother who did not know of any excuse for not going whenever the bell rang, and the same mother writing a weekly letter reminding a wayward son that on Sunday the Presbyterian Church is still open, that son thinks he must find that church on Sunday wherever he may be.

So to please the mother, if for no other reason, the writer attends preaching and Sunday school in any town where he is on Sunday.

Since January 1st the writer has entered the doors of eleven Presbyterian churches, two Methodist and one Baptist churches. At the three last mentioned, the members noted the presence of a stranger, gave him a warm handshake and an invitation to come again, and to call at their place of business if in town.

Of the eleven churches of my own denomination I must say that in no case did any man or woman of the congregation see a stranger, unless sit were in places where I had acquaintances.

At three of the places the pastor came with a kind word or so that sent me away thinking that after all there are a few kind hearts left in this cold-don't-care-for-the-other-fellow kind of a world.

On Sunday, March 4th, at morning service, I purposely stood inside the door until half the congregation passed; not a soul warmed to the stranger. At night I went to another church. The hymns were the same old familiar stanzas I have sung at the home church. So sweet, so familiar, taking me back in memory, many years. The prayers were strong petitions pleading that we love one another. The sermon was a man to man talk, as it were, a good sermon from a good man—then that same old evening hymn so often sung, benediction, and again I stand at the door, the congregation passing by, not seeing the stranger. I waited to speak to the preacher and to tell him that I enjoyed the sermon.

Back to the hotel to think about my past. Have I been guilty? Yes; but hereafter, if I see—I will see—the stranger in my home church, I will speak to him.

He may be as lonely as I was on last Sunday night. If so, he will appreciate a kind word.

A good friend said to me once, "Your ignorance and impudence will take you through the world." This friend in that sentence inventoried my stock in trade. It's all I have, so if it be impudent to tell my own people (Presbyterians) that you are old in your treatment to visitors to your church, you can credit it to the ignorance of a Farmer.

THE RESSURECTION MIRACLES.

Some Bible Hints.

When Christ said of the dead Lazarus that he "nearly slept, He said that of all our dead (John 11:11).

If we believe in Christ, we have already entered the resurrection life, and death cannot even interrupt it (John 11:25.)

What Christ said to the widow of Nain He says to all mourners: "Weep not, but rather rejoice, for your dear one lives now in endless joy." (Lukas 7:13).

Do not our fears regarding death, for ourselves and our loved ones, still put Christ "to scorn?" (Lukas 8:53.)

Suggestive Thoughts.

It was not merely that Christ told men about their immortality; He was and is their immortality.

Unless we begin to live before death "in the power of an endless life," we never shall live in it.

There is no surer test of the reality of our faith than this: Do we look forward with dread to our death?

The three persons whom Christ raised from the dead were martyrs, restored to this inferior life that we might believe.

A few Illustrations.

Death, as Whittier says, is a covered bridge over the dark river; but it glows, now, with a brilliant light.

Death is like a sleep, leaving the darkness and weariness of earth, and waking where all is light, and strength, and morning.

The architect that built the house can surely rebuild it.

No one can look with seeing eyes upon the resurrection miracles of the spring, and doubt his own resurrection after the winter of death.

To Think About.

Is my thought of death Christ's thought? Is the prospect of death joyful to me? Is Christ my daily life?

A Cluster of Quotations.

In depths which the searcher sounded,
On hills which the high heart clomb,
Have trouble and toil abounded,—
But, friends, we are going home!

—Frances Brown.

Cease your tears, and let it lie;

It was mine, it is not I.

—Sir Edwin Arnold.

I love this world! yet I shall love to go
To meet the friends who wait for me, I know.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Build your nest upon no tree here, for ye see God hath sold the forest to death.
—Samuel Rutherford.

Our Daily Bible.

It is good just to read the Bible daily, in any measure, in any way, at any time, and place.

It is better to read it in large amounts, in a systematic way, at a regular time and place.

It is best of all to study it thoughtfully, prayerfully, and with the best helps attainable.

If you have not yet read the Bible straight through, begin with that; and note, as you read, the books you wish next to study carefully.

Read a book first merely to understand it, verse by verse; again, to grasp its movement and scope; again, to receive its spiritual lessons.

With all your Bible-study, make sure each day, the first thing in the morning, of some soul-feeding sentence on which to live during the day.

DAILY READINGS.

M., Apr. 9. Christ victor. I Cor. 15: 51-58.

T., Apr. 10. He will redeem our bodies. Rom. 8: 19-23.

W., Apr. 11. He will raise our dead. I Thess. 4: 14-18.

T., Apr. 12. Through the Father. John 5: 21-26.

F., Apr. 13. By faith. John 6: 39-44.

S., Apr. 14. The indwelling spirit. Rom. 8: 10-17.

S., Apr. 15. Topic—Christ's life. IV. Lessons from His resurrection miracles. John 11: 1-46; Luke 7: 11-17; 8: 41, 49-53. (Shorter meeting.)