

and slow contrasted with the instantaneity of the processes of the grace of God in a heart that truly believes.

This one thing do. Let thine eye be single. Choose the service of God without distracting your mind concerning the insoluble mysteries and doubtful disputations which have no end. Think right on this simple plan. Let the eye be single; let your heart be fixed on God as the object of supreme affection. Prove by experience the truth of the divine promise that obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge. "He that will do God's will shall know of the doctrine."—*Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald.*

Daily Bread

Christ taught us to pray every day for our daily bread. It comes to us so regularly as a reward of our daily labor that we almost forget to pray for it at all, or even to return thanks when we receive it. How many Christians hasten every day to the shop or the field without taking time to breathe one short prayer for God's help in the day's labors? Yet we need His help, and He needs us. Our work is a part of His work, and He is interested in its performance. Of the first thirty years of the life of Christ we know almost nothing but that He was always about His Father's business, and that He worked with Joseph at the carpenter's trade. He spent the greater part of His short life in showing the world that even common labor may be business that God is interested in, and that to work without reference to God, to work for bread for bread's sake alone, or to live by bread alone and not by hearing and constantly obeying the Word of God is to live a life that is less than human.

If we should pray for material bread, much more should we pray for the bread of life. It comes by labor too. There is a certain spiritual satisfaction that comes from right-thinking and right living. The man who strives to do his whole duty to man shall in no wise miss his reward, even though he does not think of God. The man who thinks of God, but thinks of Him as if He were afar off, who obeys but does not pray and does not love, will also receive the reward that is due his small measure of piety; but it is infinitely better to be a son than a servant. The son loves to abide always in his father's house. He loves to be sure of his father's companionship and approval. He loves to pray, as he begins his task: "O Father, grant that all my labors this day may be begun and completed under thy approval and blessing! Grant that of the poor material I bring this day something may find a place in thy eternal house. Grant that for this day's labor I may receive my daily bread, the portion of this world's good that I need; and that I may receive the bread that endureth, the fellowship of God this day."

Gentleness of Spirit

Let the sweetness of Christian character find expression in the house. One of the most pleasing aspects of modern times is the presence of art in lowly homes, giving the touch of grace to every humblest household, necessary thing; delightful manifestations of skill and ornament appearing in the wood, lead, iron, and common crockery of the cottage. But if art thus makes the house into the house beautiful, what will not gentleness, consideration, and politeness do for the household? "The aim of art is to express the sublime in the trivial," said J. F. Millet; if in the home we reveal our sublime faith and righteousness in doing gracefully many little things, the home will be far brighter than it sometimes is. Conscience expressed in civilities and godliness in *gaucherie* are not the happiest demonstrations of the Christian spirit. A house in which there is nothing but reason, conscience, and duty is one of the most forbidding places of a trying world. Having reared our pillars and butteresses, let us carve out a psaltery and make life pleasant for all that are in the house.

Sweetness is equally called for in the business sphere. Christians fairly gracious elsewhere put the softer qualities aside when they enter upon business scenes and relationships, as if only a certain severity of temper suited that department. They do violence to their finer instincts out of a mistaken notion that grace is misplaced in business. Although in heart sincerely kind and generous they feel obliged to keep on hand a ready fund of harsh words and ominous gestures for the offensive and defensive tactics of business, just as some of the

magnificent orchids of Guiana are garrisoned by a swarm of ants, hairy spiders, cockroaches, and centipedes which on occasion troop forth from the depths of the flower. It is a mistake. Nowhere is gentleness more effective than in the shop, the warehouse and the market-place. Silk has a fibre more tenacious than that of steel, and the graciousness of a strong man secures him most commanding influence. Fine behaviour and considerate speech in masters and men are infinitely more effective for all purposes of advantage and peace than explosions of vulgar wrath on the one side or a hostile habit on the other. While you are sure of the hard, firm columns, without which successful business is impossible—precision, punctuality, diligence, economy, and subordination—bring in also the psaltery, and show that the poetry and music of humanity have a place even there, and that they can convert stern duty into delight, and make the inexorable conditions of life a discipline of what in our nature is noblest and best.—REV. W. L. WATKINSON, in "Inspiration in Common Life."

Wonderful Transformations

Of old time Michael Angelo took his copies from the persons in the streets, and wrought them out on the walls and the ceilings of the Vatican, changing a beggar into a giant, and an ordinary woman who bore a basket of flowers on her arm into an angel; and the beggar and flower girl stand there now in their lustrous beauty, speaking to eyes that wander from every side of the green world. The rock slumbered in the mountain, and he reached out his hands and took it, and gathered the stones from the field about him, and built them into that awful pile, which, covering acres on the ground, reaches up its mighty dome toward heaven, constraining the mob of the city to bow their foreheads and to vow great prayers to God. So, my brothers and my sisters, out of the common events of life, out of the passions put by God into your hearts, you may paint on the walls of your life the fairest figures, angels and prophets. Out of the common stones of your daily work you may build yourself a temple which shall shelter your head from all harm, and bring down on you the inspiration of God.—*Theodore Parker.*

Hymns You Ought to Know

THE hymnals that have been published during the past few years contain, in addition to the old standard hymns, a number of modern productions, some of which are very good indeed, although they are very different in style from the old hymnology. Here is one selected from the new Hymn Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

V.—Our Code and Creed.

Christ's life our code, his cross our creed,
Our common, glad confession be;
Our deepest wants, our highest aims,
Find their fulfilment, Lord, in thee.

Dear Son of God, thy blessed will
Our hearts would own, with saints above;
All life is larger for thy law,
All service sweeter for thy love.

Thy life our code!—in letters clear
We read our duty, day by day,
Thy footsteps tracing eagerly,
Who art the Truth, the Life, the Way.

Thy cross our creed!—thy boundless love
A ransomed world at last shall laud,
And crown thee their eternal King,
O Lord of Glory! Lamb of God!

Till then, to thee our souls aspire
In ardent prayer and earnest deed,
With love like thine, confessing, still,
Christ's life our code! his cross our creed!
—Benjamin Copeland.