

## CHRISTIANS AND THE SABBATH.

In a conscientious observance of the Sabbath the Christian is a witness for Christ. In a most effective manner he bears testimony to the reality of the Gospel. In his Sabbath-keeping every Christian, to a greater or less extent, is subject to observation. The unconverted by whom he is surrounded are interested observers of his manner of life in this direction. And they form a favorable or unfavorable estimate of his religious character as he is consistent or inconsistent in his discharge of his duty. If they detect a palpable inconsistency between his profession and his life, they conclude that his religion is a pretense, and they are encouraged in their effort to persuade themselves that all religion is a delusion. It is true that their reasoning is altogether illogical and erroneous. But it is with the result of their reasoning, not with the logic of the process, that we have to do. The end of their reasoning is the ruin of the soul. And as far as we have afforded them encouragement in their course of sin and self-destruction, we have been inconsistent with our profession and are to that extent responsible for their ruin.

## GIVING.

Let us measure our duty in giving. What shall be the measuring rod?

1. Your capacity. "She hath done what she could."
2. Your opportunity. "As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men."
3. Your convictions. "That servant that knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."
4. The necessities of others. "If a brother or sister be naked or destitute of daily food, etc."
5. The providence of God. "Let every man lay by him in store, as God has prospered him."
6. Symmetry of character. "Abound in this grace also."
7. Your own happiness. "It is more blessed to give than receive."
8. God's glory. "Honor God with your substance."

Oh that men would accept the testimony of Christ touching the blessedness of giving! He who sacrifices most, loves most; and he who loves most is most blessed. Love and sacrifice are related to each other like seed and fruit; each produces the other.—*Watchman*.

## CONSECRATION.

Consecration is only possible when we give up our will about everything. As soon as we come to the point of giving ourselves to God we are almost certain to become aware of the presence of one thing, if not of more, out of harmony with his will.

And while we feel able to surrender ourselves in all other points, here we exercise reserve. Every room and cupboard in the house, with the exception of this, thrown open to the new occupant. Every limb in the body, but one, submitted to the practiced hand of the Good Physician.

But that small reserve spoils the whole. To give ninety-nine parts and to withhold the hundredth undoes the whole transaction. Jesus will have all or none. And he is wise. Who would live in a fever-stricken house so long as one room was not exposed to disinfectants, air and sun? Who would undertake a case so long as the patient refused to submit one part of his body to examination? Who would become responsible

for a bankrupt so long as one ledger was held back?

The reason that so many fail to attain the blessed life is that there is some one point in which they hold back from God, and concerning which they prefer to have their own way and will rather than his. In this one thing they will not yield their will and accept God's; and this one little thing mars the whole, robs them of peace, and compels them to wander in the desert.—*F. B. Meyer*.

## THE INFLUENCE OF HYMNS.

Do we realize, I wonder, how great is the influence of the treasure we possess in these sweet pilgrim songs, that cheer our earthly way? I wonder how many times a year we pause in life's journey to think how dear to us are the sweet old hymns, familiar from our very babyhood.

One of my earliest and pleasantest recollections is that of sitting upon my father's knee, in the Sunday twilight time, and being delightfully trotted to the words and tune of "Where, O, where are the Hebrew children"—"I love it yet, worn-out and hackneyed as it is! How real they all seemed to me, "Daniel in the lion's den," "Elijah and his wonderful chariot of fire," the "Weeping Mary," and "Martyred Stephen." It was, indeed, the oratorio of my childhood!

Looking backward I see that two hymns have been specially the tonics of my spiritual life, just as invigorating sea-breezes have given tone to my physical being; they are the world-renowned, world-loved hymns, "Jesus lover of my soul," and "Lead, kindly light." The favorite hymn of a certain friend was, "My Jesus as Thou wilt"; so many times, in so many ways his will was crossed that his soul craved the strength that lay in the words of exquisite submission. Our Great Physician knows our hearts, and gives what is best; in a short time this friend developed into one of the noblest characters I have ever known; his earthly work was early finished, the "As Thou wilt" has lead him from earth to the blissful satisfaction of Christ's "Ye shall know."

One time, while away on a visit, something occurred in connection with the subject of hymns, which nonplussed me deeply. It was Sunday evening, the parlour was full of people, most of them entire strangers. Presently some one asked me to sing, I never felt so much like declining, but upon being asked again I sat down at the piano and sang "Jesus lover of my soul," after which, at my suggestion, we all sang three or four familiar hymns. When I returned to the sofa I had left, a gentleman, to whom I had been introduced half an hour before, said in a loud voice: "You don't know how glad I am that you sang that first hymn, I wondered what your choice would be. That hymn was my salvation; you will be surprised when I tell you that once, a number of years ago, I was so miserable and unhappy that I was just on the verge of suicide, when from somewhere I heard a man's voice singing 'Jesus lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly.' I stopped to listen, for words and voice were sweet, and then and there felt that God had sent the singer to save me from my desperate deed."

A hymn to me seems a prayer with wings. What, for instance, could be more uplifting, more consoling than the dear old evening hymns "Glory to Thee, My God, this night," and "Softly now the light of day!" Could any breath of prayer be sweeter? We need to learn more of them, and to keep their rhythmical melodies, endeared by many memories, warm within our hearts.—*Mary G. Woodhall*.