

this shall others know that we are the followers of the Saviour; by this we may judge ourselves whether we have the love of God in us. This is an infallible test: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." And let us not love in word, but in deed and in truth.

*Work for God.* There is something for each to do in the vineyard. Be up, and do it! The night is coming; the Master will soon return; He will require the one, or two, or five talents improved. Sad it would be if He found us unprofitable servants, or if, when He comes, seeking fruit, He should find "nothing but leaves."

"Not many lives, but one have we;  
One, only one;  
How sacred should that one life be."

To the unsaved I would address a word of warning and invitation. Every year you live in rebellion and unbelief you lessen the chances of your salvation. How long will you provoke the justice of God? The thread of your existence may be snapped any moment, and your unsaved soul plunged into endless despair. Turn at once from sin to Christ. Cast your guilt upon Him. Accept the gracious offers of pardon and eternal life made in the Gospel, and you will receive the gift of God. God, who knows my heart, knows that I long for the salvation of all in the congregation. Many an anxious, sorrowful hour I spend, thinking of some to whom the Gospel seems to be only a savour of death unto death; who come and go to the place of the holy, but who remain unsaved, I wish to be clear of the blood of all men, but I wish more to present everyone of you spotless before God, with exceeding joy. But a very few years at most, and the scene will close—the tale will be told. We shall be weighed in the balances. We shall be united or separated for ever. Oh, where shall we spend eternity? where? Unless we are holy here, we cannot spend it with an infinitely Holy God, in a holy heaven. Let us not be deceived—we are each getting ready now for our own places. The holy will be holy still, and the filthy will be filthy still.

We now enter upon the work, the responsibilities, and privileges of a New Year. It is my sincere purpose to live with but one object in view—the glory of God. I ask your sympathies, your prayers, your assistance in the work to which I have consecrated my life.

I need all the help you can give me: withhold it not, and do it as unto the Lord, and not unto men. Very pleasant has been our intercourse hitherto. May this tenth year be still more abundant in spiritual prosperity, and unto the Great Head of the Church, we will ascribe the undivided praise through all eternity.

Shall this life of mine be wasted?  
Shall this vineyard lie untilled?  
Shall true joy pass by untasted,  
And this soul remain unfilled?

Shall the God-given hours be scattered  
Like the leaves upon the plain?  
Shall the blossoms lie unwatered,  
By the drops of heavenly rain?

Shall this heart still spend its treasures  
On the things that fade and die?  
Shall it court the hollow pleasures  
Of bewildering vanity?

Shall these lips of mine be idle?  
Shall I open them in vain?  
Shall I not, with God's own bridle,  
Their frivolities restrain?

Shall these eyes of mine still wander?  
Or, no longer turned afar,  
Fix a firmer gaze and fonder  
On the bright and morning star?

Shall these feet of mine, delaying  
Still in ways of sin be found,  
Braving snares, and madly straying  
On the world's bewitching ground?

No, I was not born to trifle  
Life away in dreams of sin!  
No, I must not, dare not, stifle  
Longings such as these within!

Swiftly moving upward, onward,  
Let my soul in faith be borne,  
Calmy gazing sunward, skyward,  
Let my eye unshrinking turn;

Where the Cross, God's love revealing,  
Sets the fettered spirit free;  
Where it sheds its wondrous healing—  
There, my soul, thy rest shall be!

Then, no longer idly dreaming,  
Shall I fling my years away;  
But, each precious hour redeeming,  
Wait for the eternal day!

THE BEST SERMON.—People are always listening to the "best sermon they ever heard." At an advanced age, still hearing the "best," we might conclude that they started on very poor ones, for this superlative did not, perhaps, express the opinion of some other person equally able to judge. But there are various kinds of sermons. There is the doctrinal one, the biographical, logical, illustrative, and various other styles; and those men speaking of the "best" will mean the best of those several kinds. Then men are in varying conditions for hearing. If they are full of joy, the best one will be glad and enthusiastic. If they are borne down with sorrow, their praises are only for the consoling and sympathetic. Just in so far as the sermon is suited to the hearer, and is blest to his edification by the Holy Spirit, will he find it such as he will greatly praise. The really good hearer will find something helpful in all, and now and then he will be flooded with happy emotion.

GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE.—Never complain of your birth, your employment, your hardships; never fancy that you could do something if you only had a different lot and sphere assigned you. God understands your own plan, and He knows what you want better than you do. The very things you most deprecate as fatal limitations or obstructions are probably what you most want. What you call hindrances, obstacles, discouragements, are probably God's opportunities; and it is nothing new that the patient should dislike medicine, or any proof that they are poisonous. No! a truce to all such patience. Choke that envy which gnaws at your heart because you are not in the same lot with others; bring down your soul, or bring it up, to God's will, and do His work in your lot, your sphere, under your cloak of obscurity, against your temptations, and then you shall find that your condition is never opposed to your good, but consistent with it.