

How to Help Your Pastor.

By THEODORE L. CUTLER, D. D.

The relation of a pastor to a parishioner is much like that of wedlock—a relation of mutual obligation, and it ought to be one of mutual affection and helpfulness. If, at the time of his installation, he has made a vow to be faithful to you, the member of his flock, you also have made an equally binding promise to be true to him. Has he not a clear right to your assistance, and just as strong a claim on your support as you can have on him for pulpit instruction and pastoral oversight? Granting that you ought to help your pastor, how can you do it?

There are many ways in which you can strengthen his hands and cheer his heart. First of all, practice the "Golden Rule," toward him; do as you would be done by; put yourself in his place. He can not always strike twelve in his sermons any more than you can always make a shrewd investment, or always finish a piece of work quite up to your promise. You don't like to be unreasonably censured; neither does he; and when you are scolding a good pastor you are discrediting a servant of the Lord, and obstructing his work. Supposing him to be conscientious and doing his best he has a right to your generous appreciation. If you have just ground for criticisms, take them to his study and not to your neighbor's houses. You may really help him by the first method, provided that you go in a frank fraternal spirit. A sensible minister will welcome a sensible criticism.

2. For a more pleasant purpose than for criticisms you may freely visit him, or ask him to your own house—and that is to devise plans for doing good. Partners in business consult together often; you are a spiritual partner with your minister. It is your church as much as it is his; it really belongs to him who owns you both. Just as clearly is it your duty to labor for your Master as it is your pastor's duty. Put your heads and hearts together, and devise plans for usefulness and thus set on foot a feasible plan for quickening church life, aiding the Sabbath school or the Society Christian Endeavor, increasing the prayer-meeting, or reaching the unconverted, then back him up heartily.

3. A minister who is worthy of the name can stand an empty purse better than an empty pew or an empty prayer-meeting. It is a disgrace to a church that failure to pay an honest salary should straiten a pastor's purse; but the spiritual emptiness afflicts his heart the most keenly. Perhaps your pastor is wondering what has become of you on the evenings of devotional meetings. The better man or woman you are the more you are missed: the worse you are the more you need to go. It may be that your pastor is disheartened by the emptiness of your pew on the Sabbath. He has carefully prepared a discourse for your benefit; you have lost it; both he and you suffer from that absence. For one, I am ready to confess that I have never made any converts to the truth in an empty pew, and never have delivered a sermon loud enough to awaken a parishioner who was dozing at home or has strolled off to some other church. If a good reason keeps you at home, try to send a substitute;

invite some friend who seldom hears the gospel to go and occupy your seat, your minister gets a hearer, and the hearer may get what will save his soul. Church members sometimes complain that their minister does not "draw a large congregation; yet they do nothing to draw outsiders to the house of God by a cordial invitation to come. Help your pastor to fill the house.

4. Follow up the invitations, appeals and counsels of the pulpit with your own efforts for the conversion of sinners. The pastor is trying to draw souls to Jesus, pray don't draw the other way. If one of your family or one of your Sabbath school class comes home from the sanctuary thoughtful and tender, then aim to deepen that impression. Draw with your minister, follow up his efforts with your own. But the downward pull of your trifling talk, or your unkind criticisms, or your inconsistent conduct, may be an overmatch for the upward lift of this fatal discourse. Co-operate with Christ's ambassador in the grandest work that man or angel can covet—the work of saving immortal souls: Who doubts that if all our church members preached Christ as faithfully in practice and in personal efforts as our average ministers preach him in the pulpit, the droughts would give place to glorious harvests? "As ye go preach," is a commission to the pew as to the pulpit.

5. A single sagacious and active helper is a rich blessing to a pastor. But several scores of them are still better. If he leans all the time on Aaron and Hur, then, the rest of the flock are apt to grow lazy themselves, and censorious toward the two men who occupy the leading position; and what shall the minister do when Aaron is sick and Hur is absent from home? That is not a healthy church in which all the work, and the giving, and all the praying is done by a few individuals, even if the men are Caleb and the woman are Tabithas. It is the pull of the whole church that brings the large blessing.

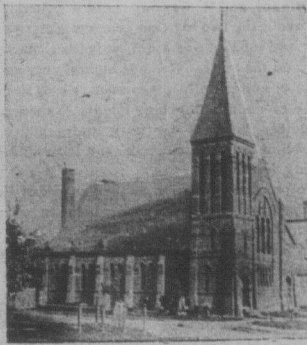
This touches the very core of the question, "How shall I help my pastor?" Pray for him, pray for him, and practice as you pray. Peter's powerful discourse as Pentecost was preceded by a powerful prayer gathering. Saturday evening wrestlings with God in a certain church brought heart moving sermons on the next morning, until a revival shook the whole congregation. What your minister wants is spiritual power. That is God's gift; help him to plead for it. The mightiest minister who ever trod this earth since Christ's ascension was not ashamed to say: "Brethren pray for us."—Christian Intelligencer.

There are two kinds of men in the world: those who sail and those who drift; those who choose the ports to which they will go, and skilfully and boldly shape their course across the seas with the wind or against it, and those who let wind and tides carry them where they will. The men who sail in due time arrive, those who drift often cover greater distances and face far greater perils, but they never make port. The men who sail know where they want to go, and what they want to do; they do not wait on luck or fortune or favorable currents; they depend on themselves and expect no help from circumstances. Success of the real kind is always in the man who wins it, not in condition s.—Hamilton W. Mabie.

Spiritual imagination can be cultivated as poetic imagination can be cultivated. The culture of the imagination is the culture of the ideal. It is the culture of faith and the culture of prayer. If we imagine the love of God, if we pray for the mind of the Master, if in every difficulty we stop to think what he would have done and said, if we keep ever the vision of Christ before us, if we make his teaching and will and life the test and example, we will live the imaginative life not always down among the dust and sordidness of the world, but sometimes among the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and the dear Lord who has taken captive our heart and imagination.—Hugh Black.

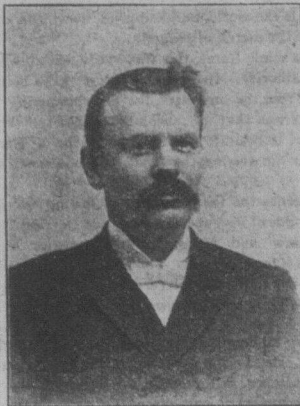
The peace of him that has lived near to God is like the quiet, steady lustre of the lighthouse lamp, starting no one, ever to be found when wanted, casting the same mild ray through the long night across the maddest billows that curl their crests around the rock on which it stands.—F. W. Roberts.

O my Father, if I but felt assured that I should be a little child, then would I never mourn the loss of my first childhood, nor fear of the coming on of my old age.—Norman Macleod.



Baptist Church and Parsonage of Charlottetown, P. E. Island.

We present to the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR this week "cuts" of the Baptist church and new parsonage of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. This church is to be the home or meeting-place of the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces in August, 1905. The church building is a neat, modern brick structure, which was put up some fourteen years ago during the successful pastorate of the Rev. Dr. Gordon, now of the first Baptist church of



PASTOR G. R. WHITE.

Montreal. It has a seating capacity of five hundred with a commodious vestry connected with the church proper by folding doors.

The new parsonage which we present below was finished a little over a month ago at a cost of upwards of three thousands dollars. We quote from the "Charlottetown Guardian" of recent date:

"The Guardian presents above a view of the new parsonage erected recently by the congregation of Prince Street Baptist church. The new residence which is situated at the rear of the church, facing of Fitzroy street is pronounced to be one of the finest and most compact residential church properties in the Maritime Provinces.

It is owing to the untiring efforts of the pastor, Rev. G. R. White, that the congregation is today in possession of such a comfortable parsonage. Mr. White has worked energetically and persistently and his efforts have been ably responded to by the congregation.

The house is 2½ stories high and is neatly and conveniently laid off, the architect being John P. Nicholson.

Entering from the verandah at the front door one goes into a square hall finished in birch and quartered oak, with polished birch floor and newel post and handrail of walnut.

The parlor is 14x16 ft with sliding doors leaning into the dining room 14x15 feet. There is also on this floor a kitchen, a pantry, back hall and scullery complete.

On the second floor is a hall, study, bath room, and three nice sized bedrooms in addition to two more bedrooms and a large store room on the third storey.

The basement has concrete walls with cellar 6½ ft. deep, full size of the building.

The house is heated with a modern hot water system and up-to-date bath fittings—the work being done by Bruce Stewart & Co. which is a guarantee of excellence. There is also a complete electric light system and the entire parsonage shows that the Charlottetown Baptist people believe in taking good care of the pastor and his family.

Rev. Mr. White feels most grateful to his people for their generous response to his call, "to arise and build," for the pleasant and convenient home provided for himself and family. He also wishes to thank a number of generous citizens for help so freely given.

The Baptists of Charlottetown have always tried to be loyal to the Denomination, and we are now looking forward to the pleasure of having the convention meet with us next August. And while we regret much, that owing to our limited number, we have not been able to offer free entertainment to such a large body we will try in all possible ways to atone for this great lack. If our homes were as large as our hearts we would take you all in. We hope there will be a large delegation, and we will do our best in trying to make all happy.

Charlottetown, P. E. I.

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