

## The Blessedness of Mourning.

The house of sorrows is a strange place to look for joy. Mourners are the last people the world would call blessed or happy. Men in their quest for happiness would not think of looking for it in the shadows of grief. Yet Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn."

There are many who mourn. Few are the homes in which there is no some grief. Not all sorrows hang craped on the door or wear a badge of grief. There are secret troubles, and tears are shed where no eye sees them fall.

Does Jesus mean that all who mourn are blessed? No, there are sorrows which yield no peaceable fruits of righteousness. There are those who suffer and are not blessed. He means that the state of mourning is one in which divine blessing may be received rather than in a state of tearfulness. The deepest happiness is not that which has never suffered, but that which has passed through the experience of sorrow and has been comforted.

There is a story of a German baron who made a great Aeolian harp by stretching wires from tower to tower of his castle. When the harp was ready he listened for the music. But it was in the calm of summer, and in the still air the wires hung silent. Autumn came with its gentle breezes, and there were faint whispers of song. At length the winter winds swept over the castle, and now the harp answered in majestic music.

Such a harp is the human heart. It does not yield its noblest music in the summer days of joy, but in the winter of trial. The sweetest songs on earth have been sung in sorrow. The richest things in character have been reached through pain. Even of Jesus we read that He was made perfect through suffering. This does not mean that there were evils in His nature which had to be expelled by the heat of trial, that there was dross in the gold of His being which only the fire could remove.

The meaning is that there were elements, even in His sinless humanity, which could be brought to full ripeness only through pain.—Rev. J. R. Miller, in Record of Christian Work.

## True Penitence.

Regret is not penitence. One may come to see the consequences of evil-doing, and when the penalty is inevitable, we regret the course which has led to such an end, yet not experience repentance. No doubt that will be the position of many a sinner in the last day. He will regret the sin which has brought disaster. He will protest that the same course would not be followed again, yet penitence will have no place in his heart.

Fear is not penitence. When an evil life brings one face to face with its consequences, there is likely to be fear of the results. But fear looks only to that which is to come. We have no fear for yesterday; it is passed. We can fear only what is before us. The past can excite fear only by threat of what is still to come. In the presence of God a sinner fears His wrath, yet were it possible to escape that wrath, fear should cease, even though past sins had not been atoned for.

Shame is not penitence. It has reference only to others, to the blighting of reputation, to the loss of character, to forfeiting esteem. One experiences shame only as he thinks of others and their thoughts of him. If there was no other people to know of sin, the sinner might not experience shame. True penitence, while it may include these emotions, has its real experience deep in the heart.

The sinner alone with God learns of the hateful character of his course; he sees that sin has made him unworthy of the station he was intended to occupy; he finds that sin character is debased by wickedness. Comparing himself defiled by sin with what he should be as a child of God, he loathes the debasing conduct which has cheated him out of his birthright, and not because of regret for the results, not to avoid punishment, not because of coveted repu-

tation, but because of the unworthiness of sinful life he turns from it, and with high resolve sets his back upon that course. In such a condition of mind God can help us. He can not smooth over our vain regrets; he can not allay fear of just punishment. Shame will follow sin, but the truly penitent soul can be raised above his old life by the power of God and cleansed from its impurities by the blood of Christ.—Christian Press.

## Giving for Missions.

(Recitation by a Little Girl.)

I s'pose I must give to the heathen  
A part of my money—O dear!  
My Haddah's best dress is so faded,  
Her hat looks old-fashioned and queer.

The strange how that somebody always  
Needs something I wanted myself.  
I think I will hide my dear doll  
Away on the uppermost shelf.

(Recitation by a Little Boy.)

That's just what I thought, little sister,  
Till mama was saying one day  
That children, as well as the big folks,  
Must give just as well as to pray

But if they begu'd ev'ry penny,  
The Lord for their gifts would not care,  
I'll wait for my bicycle longer,  
Can't Haddah her faded dress wear?

(Recitation in Concert.)

Our hearts we will give to the Saviour,  
Our feet all his errands to do,  
Our voices, our hands, and our pennies,  
That others may come to Him too.—Selected.

## Paul's Burden for Souls.

Can it be that St. Paul's burden for souls is exceptional? True is it that in speaking of it he refers to himself alone, as in the seventh chapter he details his personal conflict with sin, and does not generalize. What is peculiar with the apostle, in this portion of his famous letter, is that he includes all believers in the scope of God's mercy, and attributes to them an equal share in the ultimate glory; but when he discusses the despotism and deceitfulness of iniquity and the weighty responsibility for the deliverance of the perishing, he deals exclusively with his own experiences and with his own convictions. Not a few of us, I fear, follow a different rule. We are inclined to discern and denounce depravity in others, and to apologize for it in ourselves; and to insist on our fellow-Christians saving the world, while we appropriate to ourselves the immunities, dignities and comforts of our faith. St. Paul's discrimination evidently reveals a touch of native modesty, while ours is equally expressive of sanctimonious self-conceit. But let us learn once for all that we should be influenced by his example, not by his method of imparting instruction. His feelings should be ours, and we should rather desire to share with him in his horror of unrighteousness and in his sense of responsibility for others, than to be continually congratulating ourselves that no one can maintain a charge against God's elect. Remember that privilege always carries with it the idea of obligation. What a man hath should proportion what a man gives, and the splendid offering of a millionaire Pharisee may be quite outweighed by the two mites of the impoverished widow. The greater the talent, the higher the station, the larger the opportunity, and the richer the grace, more is owed to mankind in the way of consecrated service. And, may I say it, when a man's interest in religion ends in himself, and when it ceases in him no desire to confer it on others, it must be that he has no exalted appreciation of its value, and from what it is to himself concludes that the nations would not be much better off for its possession. The indifference of many to the progress of foreign missions may often be explained by the slight impression Christianity has had on their own character and welfare, which leads them to doubt its advantage to heathen lands.—George C. Lorimer, D.D., in The Watchman.

## Childlikeness and Childishness.

In some respects we are to be like children; in other respects we are not to be like them. The Apostle Paul makes this distinction clear when he says: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men." The Saviour bids us to become like little children.

A childlike quality is trustfulness. No picture can be more beautiful than that of the little child looking up into its mother's eyes, while a smile of perfect trust wreathes its baby lips. Just so should we children of a larger growth trust our Father in heaven. There should be no questioning of His goodness; or His wisdom, but perfect acquiescence in His will.

It is true, too, that in most young children there is an absence of malice. They may become angry, but almost the next minute all is forgotten, and their merry laughter rings through the house. In this respect the little ones may well be held up for our imitation.

However childlike though we should be, we should avoid being childish. This is true in several respects. Children are apt to quibble about little matters. If you are a parent, you find that you most often rebuke your children for their angry disputes over mere trifles. But have older people all grown beyond the stage of childishness in this respect? Are not many neighborhood and church jangles stirred up over mere bagatelles that are not worth the thought of grown men and women? Has the undeveloped man, the man who has not yet "put away childish things," it is easier to wrangle over small matters than over subjects of real worth and depth.

You have often noticed children's proneness to pout, and sometimes you do not know the reason. Are there not grown people in the Church sometimes who do the same? They take offense, nobody knows why, and then go about with a sulky demeanor that mystifies every one they meet, and that proves them to be of a very sullen and peevish disposition.

It is interesting to watch a company of children at play. All goes merrily for a while. Then something occurs that does not please one of them, or his companions do not agree with him in opinion, when he throws down his toys or his bat with a bang, and shouts, "I won't play!" and thus he breaks up the game, or at least greatly mars the pleasure of the group.

Is there ever such childishness displayed in the church by children of larger growth? The query need scarcely be put. In almost every locality there are people who refuse to do anything if they can not have their own way, greatly to the annoyance of the congregation. Like children, however, they usually "cut off their noses to spite their faces," for they, after all, are the greatest sufferers. The Church moves on without them.

The thought can be carried out indefinitely. All that is childlike in juvenile character and conduct should be retained as we grow older; all that is childish should be expelled from our lives.

E. K. B.

More than 200,000 natives of British India are now connected with Christian churches.

It is estimated that 500,000 Chinese, of whom the greater number are women, annually attempt to commit suicide by opium.

"Next in importance to the work the missionary does is the keeping of that work before the Church in the home land."

The Religious Tract Society, whose cardinal principle is fighting unhealthily and irreligious literature by providing something better, celebrated its one hundredth anniversary in London May 5.

Writing from Foochow, a missionary says: Many an excellent address has lost its desired effect when some one in the congregation asked in derision: "Teacher, where did the opium come from?"