

## SPIRITUALITY.

(By Mrs. Blanche Johnston, Barrie.)

## No. II.

"Higher, purer, deeper, surer,  
Be my thought, O Christ, of Thee;  
Break the narrow bonds that limit  
All my earth-born, sin-bound spirit  
To the breadth of Thy Divine.  
Not my thought, but Thy creation  
Be the image, purely Thine,  
Deep within my spirit's shrine;  
Make the secret revelation,  
Reproduce Thy life in mine."

The spiritual life is one of prayer. The excuse is often made by the Christian, "We have such little time for prayer." I know this busy, electric age is crowded with work and duty, and there seems but very little opportunity for the old-fashioned, quiet meditation, which made the saints of old so strong and confident. But, perhaps, herein is to be found our mistake, and the cause of spiritual "inertia" and failure. We find that the busier our Saviour's life was, the more time He had to pray, often stealing away from the pressing crowd, which thronged His steps, into the mountain-top alone to pray. Even when He did not have time for food, He found time to pray. "He prayeth best who loveth best."

Prayer is necessary; it is the oil of the lamp, the food of the spiritual palate, the electric current which keeps open the communication with the unseen.

## Prayer Does Many Things For Us.

God gives light in prayer, and reveals His will in times of perplexity.

God gives assurance in prayer; clears away the fogs and fears, the doubts and misgivings.

He gives peace in prayer. Calms the tempestuous billows which sweep over our souls in times of sorrow and darkness. The Lord gives confidence and courage through prayer.

The Lord gives His Holy Spirit in prayer, with its inspiration, joy, and comfort. He does not always give the answer ye seek, but He gives submission through prayer.

Perhaps you will say, "Why does He not answer my prayer and remove the pain?" He may be moulding you in the same figure as He passed through, for "He learned obedience by the things which He had suffered." He will answer your prayer as the mother answers the pleadings of her little child, not always granting what is asked, but always giving what the mother-heart sees is best for its future good.

"Papa, I wish you would ask God to answer my prayer. I have such a little voice, and I am afraid God will not hear me for the singing of the angels. He will hear your big voice."

"Why, my dear, God would stop all the music to answer a little girl's prayer."

I cannot say that God will stop the heavenly choir to hear our petitions, but, however weak we feel our voices to be, and however humble our request, He will heed and answer in His own time for the fulfilling of His best purposes.

It is profitable to pray. All the spiritually great of all ages have been men and women of persistent prayer. It was when Ruth turned aside to rest in the heat of the noonday that the master, Boaz, gave orders that she was to have a better opportunity to glean; and it will be so with us, when we take time to wait upon the Lord, our efforts will be crowned with blessing. Then we shall come from His presence clothed with power and unction for service. If Christ, who was God as well as man, felt that He needed prayer, how much do we need heart-to-heart, day by day, hour by hour, communion with God. He prayed because He was man. Even in Him, humanity at its best—feeble and dependent—was not sufficient for itself, but daily dependent upon God. He bade His disciples, "Come apart."

"Come, come," he saith, "O soul oppressed and weary,  
Come to the shadows of My desert rest;  
Come, walk with Me, far from life's babbling discords,  
And peace shall breathe like music in thy breast."

"Art thou bewildered by contesting voices,  
Sick to thy soul of party, noise, and strife?  
Come, leave it all, and seek that solitude  
Where thou shalt learn of Me a purer life."

## NO. III.

## This Spiritual Life is One of Love and Service.

"Lovest thou Me?" asked the risen Christ that morning at Galilee, when the sun was tipping the crystal hills with the glory of a new day, and the Master came to the help of the weary, discouraged fishermen who had toiled fruitlessly through the darkness of the night.

After the Master had thus identified Himself with all who toil, and shown His sympathy with, and interest in, the great question—now so often a problem, human labor—He listened to the assurance of His repentant disciples, the vacillating, warm-hearted, impulsive Peter, and made reply to the three-fold testimony, "Feed My sheep," "Feed My lambs," a command which embraces all His needy ones; the little children as well as those of maturer years.

## Love Will Make Us Serve.

"What is love, darling?" was asked a bright little girl.

"Love? Why, mamma, love is feeling with a must in it."

Love toward Jesus has a must in it. Christian experience brings obligation; this is inevitable. We cannot get away from our responsibility to serve God. We do not wish to do so, we love to serve.

When Miss Willard was still Dean of Evanston University two ways met in her way—one appeared bright with the promise of a career of exceptional brilliancy in the educational world, the other pointed to a more uncertain path—a path that might have many rough places.

"Strange to say," said Miss Willard, "for the first time it occurred to me that I ought to work for the cause just where I was."

That is it; just where we are our Lord wants our service, and He will open wider doors of usefulness if we serve Him faithfully there.

May we carry a lamp of hope into the earth's dark places, casting its beam upon those who falter, and in His name lift them up to the Saviour of the world.

"Toose, then, who by Christ are freed,  
Heed, oh, heed the world's great need;

To save the lost like Him who saved you,  
Forward speed."

## ASHAMED OF JESUS.

By Ame Vennema, D.D.

Can it be that there are those who are ashamed of Jesus and on that account will not be found in His company, or counted among His followers, or connected with His cause? What is there in Jesus to be ashamed of?

His life? Who besides could say as did He, without fear of well grounded dissent, "Who of you convinceth me of sin?"

Christ's enemies sought diligently for faults and flaws in His character and life, and found none. Pilate, before whom He was tried, said, "I find no fault in this man," and thus branded as false the charges brought against Him by His accusers. Ashamed of Him who was confessedly the cleanest and best that ever trod the face of the earth? Such may well feel ashamed of themselves.

Ashamed of His mysterious nature? Not the least mysterious part of it was its duality. But if the Scriptures be accepted as true, we can not evade the conclusion that He was both God and man. And, considering His singular mission to earth, is it not to be expected that He would be unique, and stand upon a higher plane than those whom He came to save? If He were a mere man, would it not be a heavier tax on faith to believe that He is a Saviour, than to accept the teaching that, in order to qualify Him for His work, Deity and humanity were united in Him,

that thus man may be brought back to God?

Ashamed of His death? That he died on the cross is a historical fact. That He died, not as an evil doer but as an innocent being, is equally well established. He died a martyr to a worthy cause, indeed. But more, He died to bear the sin and shame of those whom He would save. He was a man's substitute. Is that any reason for being ashamed of Him? Does not the principle of suffering and sacrifice for the life and well-being of others run through all human experience? We know it in every other instance. The mother gives her life for the child; the life-saver plunges into the deep to rescue the drowning man; the fireman leaps into danger to carry out those imperilled by the flames; the soldier gives his life for his country. And when, as a result of such heroic act, one bears the scars, he points to them with pride. When he becomes disabled he is pensioned. Why not glory in the cross of Christ, the symbol of His sacrifice and love?

Ashamed of His teachings? Never man spoke as this man. Words of matchless wisdom, of incomparable love, of sweetest sympathy of affection, and fairness to people in every position of life! His words have been the seed-thoughts from which have evolved the highest philosophy, the purest morality, the best legislation and the boldest religion. This Sermon on the Mount stands without an equal in the loftiness of its conception, its practical adaptation to the needs of men, and in simplicity of expression. As a teacher He is without a peer. He has proved Himself to be anointed of God, a prophet of keener insight and higher authority than any before or since. Is there reason to be ashamed of His teachings?

Ashamed of His influence and friendship? A man's friends may be the making or undoing of him. He can not be too careful in their selection. He can make no mistake by accepting the proffer of Christ's friendship. His influence is for good, only, always. He is with those who will receive Him, in sorrow and in joy, in prosperity and adversity, in sickness and health, in life and in death—"the friend that sticketh closer than a brother." He is no respecter of persons. The gold ring on the finger, the diamond stud in the shirt front, the palatial residence on the avenue, the whinnying horses in the stables are no more to Him, who had not on earth where to lay His head, than the plainest, unadorned poverty. He befriends the rich, but the poor no less; the good, but the bad also; in every case to do them good, to make them happy, to give them a hope for both worlds.

What is there in Jesus to be ashamed of? Christ commends Himself to the thoughtful as worthy of their most implicit confidence and their most enthusiastic affection. Join hands with Him!

"Ashamed of Jesus, that dear friend  
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!  
No, when I blush, be this my shame,  
That I no more revere His name."

The pessimist who goes about wishing he had never been born is not the only one who wishes it.—Nixon Waterman.

The sore and aching heart of humanity is drawn to the bruised and broken heart of Jesus. Of all the beings with whom men have worshipped, Jesus alone satisfied the craving for the sympathetic comprehension. "In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

## DAILY READING FOR PRECEDING WEEK.

- Mon.—The King's sceptre (Psa. 45: 3-7).  
Tues.—The King's names (Isa. 8:6-7).  
Wed.—The Kingdom (Luke 17:20, 21).  
Thurs.—The King's glory (John 17: 1, 5; 19: 19).  
Fri.—The King enthroned (Acts 5: 31).  
Sat.—The King victorious (Rev. 19: 11-16).