

In the second place, responsibilities accepted are weights which turn into wings. Undoubtedly the obligations and duties of the married life are burdens which are often grievous to be borne. It is hard to give up our bachelor or our spinster ways and divide our income and our luxuries with another. It is hard to bear children and to rear them, to discipline them and chasten them and agonize over them. It is hard to give up our spare bedroom to some dependent old uncle, or to have the peace of our household disturbed by some querulous old grandfather. It is hard to have to go without books and pictures and automobiles in order to shield some miserable, extravagant and ungrateful relative from the consequence of his own wrongdoing.

But the beauty of it is that responsibilities accepted change their forms, just as responsibilities avoided do. They appear at first as weights and afterward as wings. The disagreeable burden that presses us down beneath its load at last begins to grow buoyant and lifts us up. It carries us instead of our carrying it.

Years pass sometimes before this beatific transformation takes place. We seem likely to be crushed by the weary load. But we have only to be patient and to wait; for the time will surely come when the strength and grace developed by the faithful performance of these tasks will become so great as to make the task itself seem light.

Have you ever observed a mother carrying a sick baby? Is there not a true sense in which the baby is really carrying her? It is the burden, the care, the task, the responsibility of life that alone can furnish inspiration for living. Nothing crushes us so quickly as carelessness. We can support the whole weight of the atmosphere, but not the emptiness of a vacuum.

The solemn experience of the ages has taught us many truths about duty which we ought to burn into our memories with a branding-iron.

"Every duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known."

"To run out of the path of duty is to run into the way of danger."

"The slightest deviation from a known duty will sometimes lead us to the abyss."

"He who is false to the present duty breaks a thread in the loom and will find a flaw in the pattern, when, perhaps, it will be too late to repair it."

"Duty frowns on you when you flee from her, but when you follow her she smiles."

"As birds were made to fly and rivers to run, so the soul was made to follow duty."

"The everyday cares and duties which men call drudgery are the weights and counterpoises of the clock of time, giving its pendulum a true vibration and its hands a regular motion. And when they cease to hang upon its wheels, the pendulum no longer swings, the hands no longer work, the clock stands still."

Nothing, then, can be so pitiful, futile, and tragic as to try to avoid the responsibilities of sex. They are inevitable; they are imposed by heaven and they are divinely arranged for our highest good. It is necessary for us to accept them and to discharge them nobly. It is the solemn obligation of men and women to marry, to rear children, to make their home an asylum for the helpless members of their family circle; to toil, to economize, to sacrifice and, if necessary, to die for others.

Can anything be more irrational than to be afraid to perform the functions of nature—to be afraid to live, to labor, to marry, to bear children, to found a home, to suffer, to die?

## The Philosophy of Missions.

By Dimock Archibald.

Christians who are not devoted to Foreign Missions are fond of saying: "We have plenty of heathen at home." But what if it is true, that those in the churches who are the chief workers for Foreign Missions, are also the chief supporters of Home Missions, while uniformly those who make this plea do but little. Will this plea "We have plenty of heathen at home," excuse them from obeying the marching orders of our General? "Go ye into all the world," etc.

Tis God's law that obedience to any of his commands brings us blessing; while disobedience insures to us a lack of blessing—which is His curse.

Once develop in our churches a sanctified zeal for the salvation of the heathen world, which will show itself in self sacrifice and in systematic, large and continuous giving to that end, and you have a spiritual condition that ensures a continual revival or at least a continuous growth in home churches and in all home interests. It is like developing at immense cost a great water power, or water supply. When it is once developed it is a mighty force for any purpose that the owners may desire it to be used. Does not our own reason teach us, that if the practical sympathies of the church can be awakened to do the larger work of saving two million Talmuds, she will find a pleasant outlet for her surplus spiritual energies in attending to home interests?

The key-note of Dr. A. J. Gordon's preaching for twenty-five years at Clarendon Street Church, Boston, might be said to be—"The great hope of the world's salvation is in Christ's second coming in

Person; but, according to His word, He cannot come until the gospel has been preached to all nations for a witness," therefore let us hasten to send the gospel to the heathen. Under the inspiration of this teaching his church is now regarded as the banner church in America, if not in the world, for the support of Foreign Missions. On one occasion shortly before the Dr.'s death in an emergency of A. B. M. Union a special collection was called for, after one week's notice, over \$3,000 was laid upon the plates. Some would suggest that such a collection was possible because of so many rich men in the membership, but we have been assured by those who knew, that the giving was quite general among the membership of the church. But what about this church's Home Mission record? Is there any church in America with a better record? The different Missions in the slum districts of the city that are conducted by the members of this church are a marvel to all visitors to the city who seek them out. The Power of Christ ever present to save the fallen ones, is a striking feature. Then there is a distinct Mission to the Hebrews. The Chinese school and Mission is very successful. Already over thirty of the Chinese are members of the church. Last but not least, is the Gordon Training School with its over sixty students.

Now in closing this talk to you—my anxious or critical reader, whether you are associated with a strong, wealthy church, or with a weak Mission church, Christ has the same recipe for success for both, viz: "Go ye into all the world," etc., spend time, money and energy in educating yourself into a general knowledge of the mission field of the world. Let your daily prayer be that you may be brought more into sympathy with Christ in his wondrous plans of saving men in every nation, kindred and tongue, and prove to yourself what it is to grow in grace—the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—and your home, Sabbath School and Church duties shall be more joyous and more successful as a result.

## The Interference of Christ.

Luke 5: 4.

By Rev. John R. Davies, D. D.

The sermon is ended. The congregation is scattering. The disciples are making ready to fasten the boat and go ashore, but Christ bids them launch out into the deep, let down their nets for a draught and in such words you will find the interference of Christ. This command of Christ came to the disciples as a great surprise. They had toiled all night. They had taken nothing, and now Christ bids them undertake something which from their point of view as fishermen was simply the going upon a fool's errand. For a moment they falter, then faith comes to the rescue, and Simon says, "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." How often since then has that word "nevertheless" or its equivalent been spoken in the Church! For years mission work had been maintained amongst the Talmuds in Southern India with apparently very little result. After a discussion to abandon the field, it was resolved through the pleadings of one missionary, to try it a little longer. That pleading was the interference of Christ, for afterwards, thousands in that same field were led to the cross, and today that church is one of the largest and most prosperous in all the mission field. Many a minister, discouraged because after years of faithful service he has seen but little fruitage, has decided to seek another field of labor, and while the plans are being perfected, Christ has interfered, showing the fishermen, how, when, and where to let down the net; and in response to the Master's word, scores have been brought into the Church who have found in the Gospel the very power of God unto Salvation.

How many Sabbath-school teachers have become discouraged and decided to give up their class. Frequently has the pious wife become discouraged and decided to strive no longer with a Godless husband. More than once the Christian mother has become discouraged and decided to pray no longer for some wayward child, but Christ has interfered, the word "nevertheless" has been spoken, again the net has been let into the ocean, and every promise that they have ever pleaded at the throne of grace has been more than verified.

This interference of Christ, like everything that Christ does, comes down into the realm of the individual life. Here is Saul of Tarsus hastening to Damascus with letters of authority to arrest believers there, but Christ interferes with his plans and out of Saul, the persecutor, comes Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Here is Bunyan, according to his own testimony, living an impious and profligate life, but Christ interferes, showing him the City of Destruction in which he lived and leading him through the Slough of Despond to the Cross, where he loses his guilty burden, and where begin those blessed experiences which at last issued in the greatest religious classic that the world has ever known.

This is the biography of every child of God. There was a time in his life when he lived after the flesh, walking according to the course of this world, his affections set upon things below, every moment becoming more and more a captive of sin, but

Christ in mercy interfered, and out of that interference there came a consciousness of guilt, a vision of the cross, and the cry of the penitent, "What must I do to be saved?"

But this interference in this Scripture not only resulted in the revelation of Peter's sinfulness, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" it also resulted in the revelation of Peter's usefulness, "Fear not, for thou shalt catch men." Oh, blessed interference which comes with twofold mercy showing us what we are by nature and pointing out what we may be by grace; filling us with shame because of our sinful slavery, but at the same time inspiring the soul with hope by unfolding the probabilities of holy service for God and man. Blessed interference of Christ.—Presbyterian.

## The Sinless Life and the Sinless Man.

The sinlessness of the new life is one thing, the sinlessness of man into whom the new life is born, is quite another thing. Touching this matter, serious mistakes are frequently made. A class of persons interpret into the Apostle's words a meaning which contradicts him, and leads them to declare their sinlessness. They become inflated with spiritual pride, and are loud in exhortations, criticisms, and denunciations and boastfulness. Blindness to one's sins, does not blot them out, nor blind others. Some of the most ungracious and unlovely people one meets belong to this sinless class. An opposite mistake is made by another class who, conscious of their own sins, are filled with despair over themselves, because with all their sincerity, and earnest desires after holiness, they conclude they are still unregenerated. Both mistakes are in believing too much, one in believing more in his favor than he is entitled to, and the other in believing more against himself than he ought.

There is no reason for surprise or alarm if a tree which has been well engrafted, and is bearing new fruit, should find some of the old fruit still growing. It must simply learn to say, this is from the old wood, not cut off, and not a failure of the engrafted life. Neither because one branch or a few branches bear "corrupt fruit" should the tree deny that that its fruit is partly something else than "good fruit." The new life begotten of God comes into the midst of the old life, plants its habits amid the old habits, but if rooted in Christ it will partake of the root and overcome the old life. The new life is a seed sown in a garden already seeded with weeds. There are tares to be found in the wheat field, but they do not prove it to be a field of tares, nor does the wheat prove that there is only wheat growing. Let us not charge up our sins to the new life and let us not credit our sins as being virtues, because there is a new life in us. The enemy lurks long in the caves and remote districts, while the citadel and the main body of Christ's army are under the dominion of the Prince of Peace. Guerrillas may keep up a warfare, long after the government has surrendered. Let me know how to recognize the sin as sin, but let me not charge it up as evidence that there is no new life in me. Let me learn to say with Paul, since "I do the things I would not, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." The sunshine of the new day battles with the clouds which are born of the earth, and of the night. They may obscure the sun for a time, but cannot blot it out. The time is coming when night and shadows will end. The new life is born amid the vices of the past, but it is guiltless of the vices. They are the children of the old night, and will die out in the new day.—Examiner.

## THE SOUL'S DESIRE.

In perishable transcendent gleam,  
What is the burden of thy dream,  
The ruling desire, the holy fire,  
That lifts thee higher ever higher.

A prisoner am I on earth,  
And waiting for a higher birth;  
In shifting darkness, tho I climb,  
Unsatisfied I wait my time  
To grasp the things that now but seem  
With God to unite!  
To be lost in light,

That is the burden of my dream,  
The ruling desire, the holy fire  
That lifts me higher ever higher.

—Arthur D. Wilmot.

Salisbury, N. B.

Some men move through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasure on every side through the air, to every one far and near that can listen.—Henry Ward Beecher.

Great opportunities seldom present themselves, but every moment of every hour of thy conscious life is an opportunity to improve thyself, which for thee is the best and most necessary thing.—Ruskin.