

Department of Christian Endeavor

"For Christ and the Church."

The February Consecration Meeting

BY THE EDITOR.

TOPIC: How to have a good day.

LESSON: Psalm 89, 5-18; 143, 8; 25, 5.

SUGGESTED HYMNS: "Epworth Praises," 99, 110, 117, 133, 140, 147, 152, 154, 155, 169, 216.

These are all appropriate for a Consecration Service.

The 143rd Psalm shows us a glimpse of David's life when circumstances were not at all conducive to personal happiness, or likely to promote either his pleasure or peace. Presumably the psalm describes some of the dark, sad, and trying experiences that befell David when Absalom was in rebellion. In verse 3, persecution and danger are his position. In verse 4, he seems to be discouraged almost to despair. In verse 5, memory awakes and longing begins. Read on, and see how his weary soul goes out in prayer, and gradually comes to look again on the bright side. Consciousness of the Divine loving kindness spreads a sense of peace over his troubled soul, the storm is quieted, and in the calm of his heart's furthest opposition, knowing that God will sustain and deliver.

Herein is a great lesson! Life is not an untroubled sea over whose placid waters we sail in unbroken quiet. Our experience does not run along one smooth and even, level road. But no storm is so raging, no road so rough, that we must needs make shipwreck, or turn aside in despair.

The topic now naturally opens up for our study: How to have a good day! Study verse 8 carefully. Analyze it clause by clause something like this:

"Cause me to hear."—Here is the breathing of a prayer. It presupposes willingness. He wants to listen to God. But other voices may be speaking to him. These he would refuse. That may not be easy. Therefore to say "cause," compel me to listen. Give me an ear open to thy voice, make me able to close it to all others. That's a good way in which to begin the day, is it not?

"Thy loving kindness in the morning."—Here is the one great want of his heart—a personal and daily sense of God's goodness. To hear God speak to us in the early morning, of His mercy, His gracious and manifold kindness. His love—surely there is no better way to ensure for ourselves a good start. And a good start is half the battle. A day well begun will not likely end disastrously to our spiritual being.

"For in thee do I trust."—Fifteen confidence! As the child rises in the morning, unconsciously trusting in the provision of his parents' forethought and ceaseless care, so should we "trust" in our Heavenly Father. Start the day trustingly.

"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk."—How those little words "walk" and "way" appeal to us. Show me how I should conduct myself to-day, that I may walk in thy way. Here is both a prayer and a promise. If God gives the instruction I will follow it. So as hour by hour passes on, and the day increases in length, the spirit of intelligent obedience impels us to be where God wants us and to do His will. So is

life's daily round of duty both simplified and ennobled.

"For I lift up my soul unto thee."—The insufficiency of all but God is the burden of this clause. The emphatic word is "thee." As if the saint said "Without thee I cannot endure." Apart from thee I cannot succeed. Who of us has not proven this statement true? And who of us but has also experienced the sufficiency of God?

Here then is the secret of having a good day. Restate it in your own words as long as you express the essential elements of early morning prayer, constant sense of God's presence, a sustaining trust, hourly guidance in the way of actual walking, and unbroken reliance on the sufficiency of God as loving Father and unfailing guide.

IF I WERE LEADER!

I should announce beforehand that in answer to the roll-call every member would be expected to give some one ingredient in the full recipe for a good day. If this is the result of personal experience, all the better. It ought to be. If they have often failed to have a good day, let them give reasons for the failure.

I should encourage the timid ones to take part by allotting to them some easy task, e.g., that of finding some passage in the book of Psalms in which light on the topic is given. A few minutes search has shown me the following verses, all bearing directly on the topic: Psalm 5: 3; 35, 28; 44, 8; 55, 17; 59, 16; 71, 8; 71, 15; 71, 24; 74, 16; 88, 13; 89, 16; 92, 2; 119, 97; 119, 164; 145, 2. With such a wealth of information and illustration there is surely no need for any one having nothing to say.

I should have some one recite or sing "Just for to-day," and another give the following beautiful lines by Kenneth Gordon:

Begin this day

Upon the mountain-top with God, and there,
In the clear sunlight of His presence, ask
That He would show to thee His own design

For all thy work to-day. This having done,
As hour succeeds to hour and task to task,
See thou make all things by the pattern given;

Remember, too, that all the needful stuff
With which to build, thy God will surely send,
As also strength to labor; and if aught
At times seem difficult, look up to Him,
And He will make it plain. Thus shalt thou be

Working in partnership with Him; and when
The building is complete, thou shalt perceive
How perfect was the plan which He prepared

And helped thee execute. For only thus
Shalt thou the most make of thy sojourn here.

Or follow best thy blessed Lord, who took
No step without His God, nor did a thing
Which first He had not seen the Father do.

Build on God's patterns, then, and thou shalt have
Thy work approved of Him.

To close, I should endeavor to persuade the associates to take the active members' pledge, showing them that the

essential spirit of loyalty in the endeavor to learn and do our Heavenly Father's will is prominent in every good day, and that without it each day must be a failure.

Marguerite's Influence

BY MISS KATHLEEN E. MCKEE, B.A.

"You're the meanest, hatefullest boy I ever saw and I'll never forgive you, so there Roy Harrison."

"Why Marguerite, I didn't mean to do it. I'm so sorry, but accidents will happen you know."

"Sorry! Well you don't look much like it, I'm sure, and anyhow being very sorry won't mend matters. Just think of the time I spent writing that essay and now it's all spoiled. You're the clumsiest article I ever set eyes on and I just hate you, so I do."

With this remark Marguerite Harrison left the room banging the door behind her. Poor Marguerite! She had a very hasty temper, which sometimes got beyond her control, and then she made not only herself miserable but also everyone with whom she came in contact.

She had spent that whole afternoon in writing an essay, which was to be read at the league that night. She had worked hard and after carefully folding and laying the paper on the table, had left the room. When she came back her brother Roy was trying to soak up a stream of ink with a sheet of blotting-paper. One glance was sufficient. Her carefully-written essay was covered with ink.

That was all, but as she lay on her bed with her face buried in the pillows, the angry tears fell faster and faster. How careless he was! He was always doing something to annoy her. Why, only the other day, he had used one of her very best handkerchiefs as a bandage for his dog's sore foot; and just the other day he had cut in the rain all night and now he had spoiled her essay. But never mind, she would get even with him, if she had to live until she was as old as Methuselah. But what could she do? Brothers then she glanced up and a motto, hanging on the wall, met her gaze. It ran thus: "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." It was the Epworth League motto for that week and she had resolved to carry it out, but what a failure she had made. She had told Roy she would never forgive him. What must he think of her—a member of the church and a teacher in the Sunday School. No wonder the blinding of shame spread over her face. Only the other night she had tried to persuade him to join the league but he had said he was just as good as any of the members and didn't profess nearly as much.

All these things came vividly to Marguerite's mind as she lay there. What a mistake she had made! No wonder she had no good influence over him.

At last she rose from her bed, bathed her hot tear-stained face and then knelt down to ask God's forgiveness. Going down the stairs she was about to open the library door when she heard Roy say,

"Yes, Harold, I know Marguerite calls herself a Christian, but she's a mighty poor one and I'd rather be an out-and-out heathen than be like her." She did not hear the doctor's brother reply, but Roy's thoughtless words cut her to the very heart and she was just turning away when Dr. Harold Harrison came out and catching sight of her flushed face exclaimed, "Why Pussy what's the matter?" Then the whole story came out. Somehow or other Harold seemed to know exactly how to help her in all her difficulties. He was her ideal and she was always

"The secret of Joy is to put J—Jesus first, O—others next, Y—yourself last."