

Our Young People

A Meeting to Emphasize Essentials.

Topic for Feb. 11.—“Seek First the Kingdom of God.”—Matt. 13:44-46.

A Union Meeting with the Juniors.

First.

BY PANSY.

“The first thing I do in the morning will be to have my bicycle fixed.” That is what I heard a young man say as he passed under my window. A moment afterwards a young girl passed, and she was saying, “When I get to grandma’s the very first thing I do will be to write you a long letter.”

This set me thinking about first things, and I looked in my Bible and found this verse: “Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God.” I put that word “first” in capital letters, because I want to emphasize its importance. I know ever so many people who put the kingdom of God second, or third, but it is strange how few there are who seem to have put it first! One has never any trouble in discovering those who do; they are sure to show it in their lives.

I know a boy who has been often urged to come into the Kingdom of Christ; he always says he will think about it, and he undoubtedly means what he says, but the trouble is, he never gives the subject a first place in his thoughts. He goes out from a meeting where he has heard the claims of Christ presented and the young people gather about him and begin to talk about the prime skating, or the splendid wheeling, or the last ball game, or the next history lesson,—it really does not matter so much what,—and he lets himself say to himself: “Some other time I will think about that question of becoming a Christian; I can’t very well just now”; so he puts it off. The world is crowded full of boys and girls and men and women who are willing to enter the service of Christ to-morrow, or next week, or next year, sometime, any time except now.

Isn’t it strange, in the face of that warning word from the Bible, “Now is the accepted time?”

I read of a boy who was supposed to want to secure a certain situation, and started out at a given time to try for it. But on the way he stopped to see a monkey dance, and to hear a street band play, and to see two little dogs fight, and finally reached the place half an hour behind time! It seems to me that many people set out to seek the kingdom of heaven in much such fashion.

But I know people who are really in the kingdom who do not put Christ’s interests first. Unlike the man who was willing to sell all that he had in order to buy the pearl of great price, they are not willing to make one little sacrifice for the honor of the Master.

“I don’t think it exactly the thing for a Christian,” confessed one church-mem-

ber, “but then it is such fun that I really cannot resist the temptation.” Will any one imagine for a moment that such as she have put the kingdom of Christ in its rightful place in their thoughts?

“I know I ought to go to the mid-week prayer meeting,” says one, “in fact, I promised to do so; but my evenings are very much taken up. What with our Social Club and our Browning Society, and various other interests, I really don’t see how I can give a week-day evening to prayer meeting.” Does the world, looking on, believe that such Christians have put the kingdom of God first?

It was said of a certain young prince that he seemed to have always the honor of his father in mind, and would do nothing that might cast a shadow on his name. O for more men and women and boys and girls who will keep ever before them this thought: “I belong to the kingdom of Jesus Christ; no word or act of mine shall reflect dishonor upon my King!”

The late Dr. William M. Taylor used to tell of a certain balance that was once shown him in a Wall Street office, whose combination of sensitiveness with decision was remarkable. The superintendent said that it could be turned by the smallest fraction of a grain, and whenever turned would move right on. He added that they used to have a balance that was sensitive enough, but lacked decision. It would quiver from one side to the other before it settled, so that precious minutes were lost waiting for the balance to decide.

What we need in our Christian Endeavor societies, and in our churches, and in the world everywhere, is Christians that are sensitive to the slightest touch of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and who then, like the balance being turned, will “move right on.”

All such will distinctly show by their lives that they wear as a motto on their hearts the words,—“CHRIST FIRST.—C. E. World.

For Daily Reading.

Mon.,	Feb. 5.—The entrance to the kingdom,	
		Heb. 10: 14-22
Tues.,	Feb. 6.—Jesus the door.	John 10: 9-16
Wed.,	Feb. 7.—Becoming a child.	Matt. 18: 1-13
Thurs.,	Feb. 8.—Teaching the children.	
		Deut. 4: 9, 10; 2 Tim. 3: 14, 15
Fri.,	Feb. 9.—The promise of the church.	
		Isa. 44: 1-8
Sat.,	Feb. 10.—Children in heaven.	Zech. 8: 1-5
Sun.,	Feb. 11.—Topic. Seek first the kingdom of God.	Matt. 13: 44-46 (Union meeting with the Juniors)

The Last Idol Gone.

Dr. Judson, the eminent missionary to Burmah, once examined a Karen woman who was a candidate for baptism. She gave intelligent answers to his questions, but Judson was not quite satisfied. There seemed something lacking. His eye caught the glitter of a necklace of a kind much esteemed by the Karens. “Can you give up your ornaments for Christ?” the missionary asked. Tears filled the woman’s eyes. The struggle would evidently be a severe one. Judson appealed to her own consciousness of pride and vanity, and the woman broke down. She took her necklace off and looked at it admiringly. It was the most precious in her possession. She thought about it for some time, and laid it down on the missionary’s table with the declaration, “I love Christ more than that.”

Worth While.

I pray Thee, Lord, that when it comes to me to say if I will follow Truth and Thee, Or choose instead to win, as better worth My pains, some closing recompense of earth—

Grant me, great Father, from a hard-fought field Forespent and bruised, upon a battered shield, Home to obscure endurance to be borne Rather than live my own mean gains to scorn.

Far better fall with face turned toward the goal, At one with wisdom and my own worn soul, Than ever come to see myself prevail, When to succeed at last is but to fail.

Mean ends to win and therewith be content— Save me from that! Direct Thou the event As suits Thy will; where’er the prizes go, Grant me the struggle, that my soul may grow.

—Edward S. Martin.

Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

How is one to seek the kingdom of God? How early can one begin to seek God’s kingdom? Why is it not natural for us to seek first the kingdom?

How may we seek the kingdom of God wherever we are?

What will show whether we are seeking first God’s kingdom?

How will seeking first God’s kingdom affect our use of our time?

How will seeking first God’s kingdom affect our use of our money?

Show how some one life gave a good illustration of seeking first the kingdom.

What helps in seeking God’s kingdom is to be found in union with others?

What are the rewards of seeking God’s kingdom?

The Kingdom of God.

Remember that there is one thing better than making a living—making a life.—Governor Russell.

The kingdom of God has no place in the geographies. The kingdom of God is in the hearts of men.—Rev. George Hodges, D.D.

The kingdom of God is not come when God’s will is our law; it is come when God’s will is our will.—Anon.

The Way to Look at it.

“What does it cost to serve Christ?” asks a writer. Why look at it that way? If one were appointed postmaster of the city of Philadelphia, would his first thought be, “What is it going to cost me to serve the government?” No, but rather, “How can I deserve and repay such honor, such reward?” That is the way to look at the service of Christ—not on the side of possible loss, but on the side of sure and abundant gain.