

any one meditating his own destiny. In that light let us ask the question in view of certain evident facts of life.

1. Whither goest thou? for it is a fact *you are going*, whether you will or not. Time is passing.

2. Whither goest thou? for it is a fact, *it is not precisely certain whither you are going*. A man goes whither he chooses. This ineradicable endowment of free will is always an uncertain element in the question of final destiny.

3. Whither goest thou? for it is another fact of life that all this *lapse*

and use of time is making character.

4. Whither goest thou? for it is a further fact of life that *though you are going into death, you are not through death going into non-existence*. Death is a door and not a wall.

5. Whither goest thou? because it is certain that going into that other life *you must go whither your essential character shall make you gravitate*.

How imperious the need of the new character which Jesus gives if we, naturally sinful, would enter the purity of heaven.—W. H.

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

Why They Don't Go to Church.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.—Heb. x: 25.

DURING the recent ministers' conference in this city *The World* interviewed a large number of people on the reasons why they did not go to church. The interviews were taken at random among all grades and classes of society, and some of them are strikingly suggestive of living issues for pulpit treatment:

A young man said: "Well, I'll tell you. If they were to give me permission to talk back to the preacher, I would go. Nowadays the preacher has all the say."

A Washington Market butcher said: "What's the use of wasting my time listening to them chaps, who don't know what they are talking about? They chin about the best methods of relieving the poverty in this big city, but it's fellows like us who give away our spare stuff to those starving wretches who wouldn't be let inside of a church if the sexton saw them. When the ministers learn how to preach sensibly I may take a notion to go to church, but you can bet I won't till then."

A newsdealer said: "How do you expect a man to go to church who starts working at 4 o'clock every morning of his life and sells Sunday papers besides?"

"I can't go into the high-toned churches," said a mechanic. "I am not dressed well enough, and the mission church the rich men provide for us is too much like receiving crumbs from the table of the rich man."

"I go to church, poorly dressed as I am," said a girl in a Tenth avenue factory, "to have the usher stare at me and tell me I shall find a seat in the gallery, and then when I go to a pew up there, to have the people draw away from me because my clothes are not as nice as theirs! No, indeed, I would rather stay at home."

"When I look at the well-fed preacher, with his fine brown-stone house, and hear him drawl-

ing out the text, I ask myself, how much of it does he believe?" said a magazine writer. "Does he care if the poor are starving? If you are meanly dressed, does he kindly receive you when you call at his house? Not at all; he is too busy gabbling with the fashionable ladies that have called, and leaves you to an assistant to transact the business for you."

"How can I go to church?" said a bartender in an uptown saloon. "I am here until all hours on Saturday night, and on Sunday I am busy watching the side-door to see that no copper comes, and handing the stuff over the bar. No, young fellow, I haven't got the time."

"I am as well employed in reading a good book as hearing the same subjects preached over and over," said another.

A hotel employee said: "I work at night, and am too tired to think about going to church."

A French shoeblack said: "When I went to the church I was asked for 10 cents at the door. I had none and got no seat. I have never gone since."

Said another: "I am asked for five cents a head. There are four of us, and I do not always have the money."

A young lawyer: "What first got me out of it was the enormously high prices of pews in churches where there is really good preaching."

A druggist: "Drug stores must be open on Sundays. That is a settled fact."

An actor: "The old dogmas of Christianity are a little worn out, and the faith to remain popular must keep apace with the advancement of science."

A business man: "Ministers, as a rule—that is my experience—are the most impractical men in the community, and yet they will persist in directing their sermons at the business men and bankers of the country, advising them what steps to take in accumulating a fortune and how to deal with their employees. Our minister, so my wife tells me, is particularly gifted in this way. If I were to adopt his ideas and follow his Christian teaching, as he calls it, practically applied, why, I would soon be bankrupt and my five hundred odd workmen would be without a job."

An inventor could not afford to hire a pew.

A street-car conductor had a wife and five children to support, and all he could earn by working seven days was \$15.75 a week. He could not afford to take a day off, even to attend