

that He did thus settle about the keeping of the Sabbath day.

What He said is full of comfort: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." "The Son of man" said this, who could sympathise with men about the Sabbath and about everything else. It was meant, not for a burden, but for a blessing. It was made for man's good, and for his happiness. Man was not made for the Sabbath, as the Pharisees seemed to teach, but the Sabbath for man. When this holy day is used aright—not in needless work, not in worldly pleasure, but as a day of rest and of spiritual improvement, in a trusting and loving spirit—when it is used thus it is a blessing indeed, one of God's most precious gifts. Then we feel the force of our Saviour's words, "The Sabbath was made for man." No Sunday worker, or traveller, or pleasure-seeker, can understand those words.

It appears from St. Luke (vi. 6) that the healing of the man with the withered hand took place on *another* Sabbath day.

The Pharisees had not learnt the lesson which our Lord had taught before. They still thought of the letter only of the commandment, not of the spirit. But did they really care for the Sabbath day at all? Their minds were set on finding something for which they might accuse Jesus. In this state of mind—full of hatred and ill-will—they went to the synagogue! In this state of mind they professed all this zeal for God's holy day!

Our Lord, who knew their thoughts, was grieved and displeased at their hardness of heart. They hated Him, and they felt no pity for the man with the withered hand. Whether he were healed or not, they did not care; their only thought was to accuse Jesus. When He asked them the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" they kept a sullen silence.

Our Lord *did* heal the man; and so He taught a further lesson about the Sabbath. He had taught before that works of *necessity* might be done; now He taught that works of *mercy* might be done. We need not, therefore, think we are doing wrong in doing something on the Lord's day to comfort a sufferer, or to help one in want. It may sometimes be right even to stay away from God's house to nurse a sick person or to relieve one in distress.

How striking was this cure itself! "Stretch forth thine hand!" the Lord said. But the hand was *withered*; how could he stretch it out? The man did not stop to think. He believed, and did as he was told; and at the very moment he received power. What if he had held back, and said, "I cannot"? How would this story have ended then? We should never then have read, "his hand was restored whole as the other."

This is what *we* are to do with regard to our souls—to believe and obey. We are told to repent, turn, and come. But we cannot of ourselves. We have no more power than this man had. Nevertheless, let us do as he did, believe and obey, and power will be given to us also.

F. B.

MAN AND HIS SAVIOUR.



VERY old German author discourses thus tenderly of Christ:—

"My soul is like a hungry and thirsty child, and I need His love and consolations for my refreshment; I am a wandering and lost sheep, and I need Him as a good and faithful Shepherd; my soul is like a frightened dove pursued by the hawk, and I need His wounds for a refuge; I am a feeble vine, and I need His cross to lay hold of and wind myself about; I am a sinner, and I need His righteousness; I am naked and bare, and need His holiness and innocence for a covering; I am in trouble and alarm, and I need His solace; I am ignorant, and I need His teaching; simple and foolish, and I need the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

"In no situation, and at no time, can I do without Him. Do I pray? He must prompt and intercede for me. Am I arraigned by Satan at the Divine tribunal? He must be my Advocate. Am I in affliction? He must be my helper. Am I persecuted by the world? He must defend me. When I am forsaken, He must be my support; when dying, my life; when mouldering in the grave, my resurrection. Well, then, I will rather part with all the world, and all that it contains, than with Thee, my Saviour; and, God be thanked, I know that Thou too art not willing to do without me. Thou art rich, and I am poor; Thou hast righteousness, and I sin; Thou hast oil and wine, and I wounds; Thou hast cordials and refreshments, and I hunger and thirst.

"Use me, then, my Saviour, for whatever purpose and in whatever way Thou mayest require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel; fill it with Thy grace. Here is my sinful and troubled soul; quicken and refresh it with Thy love. Take my heart for Thine abode; my mouth, to spread the glory of Thy name; my love, and all my powers, for the advancement of Thy honour, and the service of Thy believing people. And never suffer the steadfastness and confidence of my faith to abate, that so at all times I may be enabled from the heart to say, 'Jesus wants me, and I Him; and so we suit each other.'

PLEASURES OF CONTENTMENT.

I HAVE a rich neighbour that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money. He is still drudging, saying that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich." And it is true indeed; but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy; for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "That there are as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." God grant that, having a competency, we may be content and thankful!

Izaak Walton.