

struggle to secure this happy consummation.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE CAN DO!

We can make our brains an armory of facts against the saloon.

We can register by our pledges eternal hostility to the sin of liquor-selling.

We can hold regular and strong temperance meetings in our societies.

We can train ourselves to temperance in all particulars.

We can contribute money, prayers, and labor to the support of temperance reform.

POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Have some member prepare a list of passages from the Bible bearing on intemperance. Have them distributed and read by various members on night of meeting. Have some one prepare, "A pen sketch of the drunkard's home," and some one else, "A pen sketch of the Christian's home." Mark the contrast! Appoint one of your most thoughtful members to prepare a five-minute paper on "The saloon, the friend of evil, the enemy of good." Circulate the pledge, and urge all to sign it, even if they have signed it before. Create a determined sentiment against this awful curse.

JUNE 30.—"ABIDING IN CHRIST."

John 15, 1-16.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., June 24. Scripture "whatsoever." Matt. 7: 12; John 2: 1-5, 16, 23, 24
Tues., June 25. Great things in little. Mic. 5: 2; Matt. 13: 31, 32
Wed., June 26. The strength and name. 2 Cor. 12: 10; Col. 3: 27-31
Thu., June 27. In his strength and name. Phil. 1: 27
Fri., June 28. The object of our endeavor. Heb. 6: 13-14
Sat., June 29. Faithfulness rewarded. . . . Heb. 6: 10-13

The vine was a familiar object to the Oriental, and Christ used what was well known to teach a great spiritual truth. He was about to be crucified, and soon afterwards would leave his disciples so far as his bodily presence was concerned. To comfort and strengthen them, he taught that, although absent from them in body, they could still be with him in the true sense; for he would dwell in them with his spiritual presence, and they would dwell in him as the source of their life. The union could be as close as that of the vine and the branch, and great results would flow from the union.

A CLOSER VIEW.

Christ is the source and channel of spiritual life to men, and, as such, he calls himself the true vine. A vine is not only a living stem existing for itself. The branches are part of the vine and in the vine. Through the branches, the vine sends forth its fruit. Both are mutually dependent, although the branches are far more dependent than the vine. Still the one needs the other. And one could not fulfil its rightful mission without the other. What a clear and definite idea this figure gives of the oneness of believers with Christ, of their organic unity with him, and of the centre and source of divine life. Believers become one with Christ, as the branches are one with the vine, as the limbs are one with the body. There is the most vital, intimate, and necessary relationship between the two—a close, uninterrupted, permanent, and blessed union.

HOW IT HAPPENS.

How is this union brought about? It is effected through faith. And what is faith? Faith is the firm belief of the truth of the Gospel, which influences the will and leads to an entire reliance on Christ for salvation. To put it in another way, faith is acting according to your convictions. You are convinced of the truth of the Gospel—now act in

accordance with these convictions. Accept the truth which the Gospel presents and act accordingly. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and bring your whole inner and outer life into harmony with that belief. That is faith, and in response to your faith, the living branch is imparted to you, and you become a branch of the living Vine. And this union is maintained by believers abiding in Christ, and become stronger and more assured in their faith than at first. Believers live in Christ, and continue to abide in him, and the fulness of his life is communicated to them. We are sons of God in him, lights of the world by his him, aided to godliness through him, sanctified by his spirit and at last glorified with his glory.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

1. *Fruitfulness.*—Where true union with Christ exists—when the branch abides in the vine, then there will be clear evidence of the fact. The branches are united to the vine for a purpose—to bear fruit. For this purpose the sap circulates through the whole plant. One life is present in it all. As the branch which is living and draws its life from the living vine, produces the freshness of its summer dress, and its luscious clusters of fruit, so should it be with the branches of the true vine. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Christians evidence the presence of the spiritual life of Christ in them by bearing appropriate fruit. Christ's spiritual life flows into their being, and blossoms into life in the daily life. Prayer will become habitual, love will fill the heart, deeds of mercy and kindness will be done with alacrity. All the gifts, talents, and powers of the soul will be employed in the divine service. The believer will love what Christ loves, hate what Christ hates, do what Christ commands.

2. *Spiritual joy.*—It seems strange that our Saviour should speak of joy—his own joy—when the way of sorrow lay before him. But his deep sorrow led to his joy—joy to the Saviour himself in bringing many sons to glory, joy to his people in the blessedness of redemption. What was the Saviour's joy? It was that of harmony with the will of the Father. This is the true source of Christian joy. It comes through self-surrender to God and submission to his will. There can be no true joy in a man's life till he has learned to say, "Thy will, O God, be done." And this, not as resignation to suffering only, but as the real pathway to life's highest duties and privileges. Many believe that joy and religion are not associates—that where the one is, the other is not. Nothing can be more absurd or false. The unbelief of the materialist might well be joyless, but not belief in the Gospel. But what is joy? Not the excitement arising from material pleasures. That is on the surface merely. Joy is the deep-seated emotion, arising from the possession of the good and performing it—of being good and doing good. "The noisy laughter of the fool" has no affinity with true joy. It is not like a winter pattering down like a hail storm. What is the way to true joy? It is the way to Christ. True joy is from within. The world's joy is dependent on changing external things. When the soul is surrendered to God, and the life is given into and outward is controlled by principles divine, then deep peace and abiding joy at which the world wonders, is the perpetual possession and experience of the good man.

3. *Sincere friendship.*—Friendship is most esteemed among men. Cicero said well, that friendship improves happiness and abates misery by doubling our joy and dividing our grief. It is our pride and

happiness to be able to call any of the truly great and good on earth our friends; and that any of these should call us their friends is esteemed by us a great honor. But how should the friendship of Christ be regarded? "Ye are no earthly potentate, no earthly sage, however great, who calls believers his friends. It is he who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, who says to all true Christians: "Ye are my friends." This friendship between Christ and his followers is a distinguishing feature. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Believers are the friends of Jesus without ceasing to be his servants. And Christ showed his friendship for his people in a most unmistakable way—"He gave his life for us!" How much greater is this than any of the commonly recognized tokens of friendship, such as the sacrificing of time, or money or pleasure. The greatness of Christ's friendship is evinced in that while we were enemies, he died for us. How are we to show his friendship for us? He doeth as he commands us. As he denied himself for us, we should deny ourselves for his sake. Our feeling ought to be: Lord, thy love and friendship are so great to us, that we will do all things, give all things, endure all things for thee. Our hands quick to labor for thee, our lips ready to speak the truth and show forth thy praise, not in the spirit of slaves, but as those whom thou dost call friends, bound to thee by the cords of love.

SPARKS FROM ANOTHER ANVIL.

If we do whatever God wishes, we possess whatever God has.

The only road to a knowledge of God is the pathway of obedience.

Whoever lays his hands in God's hand, takes from it whatever was in God's hand; and in his hand is every good thing. Jacob got the blessing when he ceased to wrestle. God's favor is not won; it is bestowed.

If we believe that God can make no mistake, we must believe in God's right to require from us whatever he wishes.

No habit is so valuable to the Christian as the habit of obedience.

When once we have settled the question, "Is it the command of God?" there should be no further query.

If we are to do whatever God wishes, we must hear whatever God says. Ears are as necessary to the soldier as hands.

Not more of us, but a better quality of us is what the church and the world most needs.

The essence of true loyalty is love, not deeds. Yet deeds are the expression of love, and one cannot exist without the other.

POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

This topic is an answer to the somewhat frequent and unscriptural statement: "I try to do the best I can." The Christian life is not "trying to do the best we can," unless that statement has a careful interpretation. The Christian life is abiding in Christ for life and power, and allowing his life to actuate our entire experience. It is an appropriation of the life of Christ by faith as the central spiritual dynamo of our every activity. The appropriation and application of this spiritual power is our part, and in this we must do our best we can. But even in this, we are not alone—the Holy Spirit helps. See that these great truths are made plain by the study of the topic. Have a paper or address prepared on the subject: "The results of abiding in Christ—fruitfulness, joy, and friendship." The foregoing position for hints. Encourage those who are abiding in Christ to cultivate a still closer relationship; and urge, earnestly those who are not united to Christ as the branch to the vine, to surrender at once to the divine claims.