

Our Young People

HELPING OUR PASTOR.

Topic for September 3.—What can we do to help our Pastor?—Exodus 17: 1-13.

"BE BUT FAITHFUL, THAT IS ALL."—Arthur Hugh Clough.

(For Dominion Presbyterian.)

Helping Our Pastor.

By Woodford.

Topic.—The relation of mutual dependence and help is suggested in this reading as that which ought to exist between pastor and people. In an army the leader can plan and command; he is supposed to be best versed in the theory and practice of all that pertains to a successful campaign—but each soldier in the camp must perform his part, and down to the private soldier each one is expected to do his duty. It is even thus and ever will be in the Church militant. Who are those who will regard it as their first duty, not to be eager to do valiant deeds singly; not to be wondering forever if some new plan should not be tried, but to do that which is convenient "ye nexte thyng," and that willingly and earnestly. In connection with this reading, the work would be to cheer and support the pastor in his weariness, to say that to him which will hearten him in his prayer, to do that which will enable him to feel that he can indeed pray in his prayers, and give him to feel that he is relying on the promise, "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven." In many such ways may those who would be successors to Aaron and Hur do their part. Some exceedingly helpful ways are suggested in the readings that follow, which, if carried out in any Church, would contribute greatly to the advancement and extension of the Kingdom of God.

Monday.—There is something pathetically grand in Paul's asking for the prayers of these new converts. It is the leader enthusing his forces and giving them to understand that victory and honor for each and all depend upon each one doing his best. All believers can pray that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified—in others as in themselves—and that those whose special work it is to expound and explain this Word may be delivered from irrationalism and to worthy rationalism and from wicked men. In the present unsettled state of matters, theological people can indeed help their pastors by praying for them, and with them—and practising, as is their ability, as they pray.

Tuesday.—"If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say: Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; what does it profit?" Practical sympathy is what is called for in Christianity. That there are pastors struggling against the odds of more than one form of poverty, yet doing excellent work, is proof of the might of the strength which God gives; yet this state of things shows clearly the poor grip Christianity has on those who suffer this to be when often by them it could be prevented.

Wednesday.—Get acquainted with your pastor, esteeming him highly in love, for

the sake of the cause of Christ. This of itself will be a very fruitful means towards being at peace among yourselves. If we had the success of the work at heart much more than is being done would be done along this line. "Which sort of man is most helpful to you personally and individually?" asked one pastor of another. "Is it the man who agrees with all your views, and so helps you with his sympathy and comprehension, or the independent thinker who argues with you and stimulates you to write convincing, stirring sermons?" "If you really want to know," said the older man, with symptoms of a smile at the corners of his mouth, "it isn't either of those men who helps me most. It's the man who may or may not agree with my views, but who cares enough about my sermons to come to church on those Sundays when most people stay at home; he's my best helper."

Thursday.—There is no pastor who is worthy of the name, but who criticises himself and his work more mercilessly and often than could any of his people. He knows defects that others can never detect. If he makes a mistake it is altogether likely he is far more sorry about it and ashamed because of it than anybody else. Aaron and Miriam were jealous of the power of Moses among the people, and craved for popularity for themselves, so regarding themselves before the cause of God. The Christian critic will act as Aaron and Miriam ought to have done, and as Christ clearly instructs. "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone (not in the rude and public way Aaron and Miriam did) if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother."

Friday.—There never is any difficulty in finding Aarons and Hurs among those who pray for, sympathize with, are friends of, withhold criticism from their pastors. Such people recognize work is to be carried out in the way God has appointed. And as Aaron and Hur, having the cause of God at heart, were ready to fall in with the way God had appointed in the battle between the Amalekites and Israel, so will all praying, sympathetic, friendly, kindly people be ready to help him who is set over them in spiritual things. Of God they will be taught and shewn what their peculiar work is, and as laborers together with God they will do all heartily as unto the Lord.

Saturday.—Discussion of the topic might have ended with the reading for Friday, for those who busy themselves in the Lord's work; indeed in any work, can find no time for contention. The expulsive power of a new affection so cleanses their lives that for them to live is Christ—not themselves, not Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas. Only can the work be done without murmurings and disputings when One is Master. When that One is Master, Chief Shepherd, and the pastor is a faithful under-shepherd (and this is Britain—let alone as Christians—we must suppose, according to the honorable British code, which deems a man innocent until he is found guilty), then surely all who, as

sons and daughters of God, would be laborers together with God (and surely this term applies to all who will discuss this topic), will do their part in this day of battle.

Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

Why should one help the pastor?

What are some of the common ways of hindering pastors?

How can we help our pastor in our own homes?

How can we help our pastor in our associations with others?

How can we help our pastor during the church service?

What help can one give the pastor in the prayer meetings?

How may we help our pastor to gain those that do not go to church?

How may we make our pastor's words more effective for winning souls?

How might the pastor be helped by prompt reports of news about the parish?

What that we can say to our pastor would help him most?

How can one help the pastor in the Christian Endeavor meeting?

How can the society help best in the Sunday evening service?

How can the social and flower committees help the pastor most?

For Daily Reading.

Monday, Aug. 28.—By our prayers.—2 Thess. 3:1-5.

Tuesday, Aug. 29.—By our sympathy.—Phil. 4:10-20.

Wednesday, Aug. 30.—By our friendship.—1 Thess. 5:12-18.

Thursday, Aug. 31.—By withholding criticism.—Num. 12:1-16.

Friday, Sept. 1.—By engaging in church work.—1 Cor. 12:4-11.

Saturday, Sept. 2.—By avoiding contention.—Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Cor. 3:1-9.

Sunday, Sept. 3.—Topic. Holding up the pastor's hands. What can we do to help our pastor?—Exod. 17:1-13.

Young Men Should Remember.

That it takes more than muscle to make a man.

That bigness is not greatness.

That it requires pluck to be patient.

That selfishness is the most unmanly thing in the world.

That consideration for mother and sister does more to mark a gentleman than the kind of necktie that he wears.

That piety is not priggishness.

That the only whole man is the holy man, that to follow the crowd is a confession of weakness.

That street corners are a poor college.

That one real friend is worth a score of acquaintances.

That to be afraid of one's noblest self is greatest cowardice.

That it is never too soon to begin the business of making a man out of one's self.

That what is put into the brain to-day will be taken out of it ten years hence.

That the only manliness worth possessing is shown in the life of the Son of man.

We long to hear thy voice,

To see thee face to face;

To share thy crown and glory then,

As now we share thy grace.

—H. Bonar.