

Pastor and People.

"JOY IN GOD."

(Rom. v. ii.)

Those downcast looks some Christians have
Forbidding are, as often seen;
In fortitude they sadly fail,
As saplings bend before the gale—
Depressed in heart, demure in mien.

And do these traits become His saints?
Is this the look that freedmen wear?
Their very joys should scintillate,
Should radiate and permeate,
As light sheds gladness everywhere.

Those "born again" should "joy in God,"
A Father's love should banish care;
Those wrapped in self have little joy,
And waves of fear will peace destroy,
But hope and joy should children wear.

If all our trust is anchored safe,
If sin is purged thro' Jesus' blood,
Then angels bright are not our peers;
That blood atones for human fears—
Our state and mien should then accord.

If Christ is all our righteousness,
Our strength, our hope, our all in all,
The Comforter, our daily guide,
While breasting thro' life's stormy tide—
Then nothing earthly should enthrall.

The Shepherd loves His "little flock,"
He guards, upholds, the weakest saint;
He hears their supplications all—
Knows all the trials that befall—
And strength imparts lest any faint.

The "peace of God"—His "perfect peace"
Dispels the over-anxious thought;
It guards and keeps "the heart and mind,"
These fainting hearts fresh courage find—
When every care to Him is brought.

We're reconciled thro' God's dear Son,
And, thro' Him, "glory in the Lord;"
Without atonement all were lost,
With it—no longer tempest-tossed—
With joy a Father's love record!

Then banish fear, and foster joy!
We'll soon be home, where doubtings cease.
Oh! then rejoice—such incense bring
As tributes sweet to Christ, your King—
The livery wear of joy and peace.

—J. W. Shaw.

REASONS FOR ATTENDING PRAYER MEETING.

1. Because he is a Christian.
2. Because the prayer meeting is a place where prayer is "wont to be made," and every Christian needs the uplift of social and public prayer.
3. Because the prayer meeting will doubtless be thinly attended, and you, if present, will count one.
4. Because few men can get religion enough on Sunday to last all the week.
5. Because Christians should be no more afraid of rain-drops than Union soldiers in the late war were afraid of rebel bullets.
6. Because the prayer meeting is intrinsically of more consequence, in the sight of God, than a whist party, social dance, theatrical performance, popular lecture, or cultured concert.
7. Because the prayer meeting has often proved restful to a weary body and a distracted mind, as well as being a very important means of grace.
8. Because the prayer meeting demands in itself only one hour of time, and every Christian ought to be willing to give one hour in every one hundred and sixty-eight for the glory of God.
9. Because, financially, the prayer meeting is the best possible investment a man can make. It asks no admission fee, and the poorest prayer meeting can do any man some good.
10. Because, in the long run, and other things being equal, the men and women who faithfully attend the prayer meeting, and take part in it, most heartily enjoy religion.
11. Because the prayer meeting affords excellent opportunities for influencing others to walk in the way of life.
12. Because the prayer meeting, when true to itself and to Christ, supplies the best tonic for the Christian life, and affords the purest social enjoyment.
13. Because the prayer meeting is the true spiritual thermometer in every church.
14. Because we are told in God's Word

not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is."

15. Because few Christians would hardly have the face to offer upon any other question of duty two-thirds of the excuses that are now offered for not attending the mid-week prayer meeting.

16. Because Christ has promised that where two or three are gathered together in His name, there He will be to comfort and bless, and all God's people are in great need of getting near to Christ.—*Christian Mirror*.

WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL.

In preaching from the words "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Mr. Moody recently said: "I remember reading that text a short time ago and, though I must have read it hundreds of times before, it flashed on me with unwonted power. There is a wonderful sweep in that statement. Why, it includes all kinds of sinners—drunkards, harlots, adulterers, blasphemers, murderers. Is it true, is it possible, that the time is come when that passage is to be fulfilled?"

"It was a sort of revelation to me and I began to go back into history to find out how and when it was to be fulfilled. And I found that several hundred years before Paul penned that passage the prophet Joel prophesied that this thing should come to pass. 'And it shall come to pass,' says Joel in the 32nd verse of the second chapter, 'that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.' I found also that was the text from which Peter preached in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. My curiosity was further aroused and I began to read the Bible over again from the beginning to find all that bore on this matter, and this is what I found: that since Adam's time there is not one man or woman who called on the name of God in truth and did not find mercy.

"On beginning with Genesis I found to my surprise that Adam did not call on God for mercy. Had he done so things might have turned out differently. I found that Cain never called on God for mercy; and so along down the ages I found over and over again that whenever a man did honestly call on God for mercy he found it. It does not matter how bad the man is or how black his sins, the result is the same. I suppose one of the worst characters we meet in Scripture is Manasseh. He was one of the wickedest kings that Israel had, and his iniquities were such that he was considered one of the vilest wretches on earth. And yet God heard his cry, delivered him from prison and put him back on the throne again. I don't care how vile and black a man's sins are, if he cries for mercy he will find it. God delighteth in mercy. This is the experience all through the Bible. David fell into the darkest kind of sins but he called on the Lord and after he was restored he wrote that beautiful 32nd Psalm."

THE SHORTER CATECHISM.

Dr. Boyd, of Scotland, who used to be well-known in this country by his delightful essays, "The Recreations of a Country Parson," in a sermon recently preached in Edinburgh, took occasion to throw in a reminiscence to the effect that when he was a boy he had to repeat the half of the Shorter Catechism after coming from church on one Sabbath and the other half on the following Sabbath, and it was no trouble, it was so firmly rooted in his memory. He said he had been a doctor of divinity for thirty years, and to this day whenever he was in any difficulty on any question of theological science he reverted to the definitions of the Shorter Catechism, than which he knew no better.

Some years ago Dr. John Hall, of New York, also made a very pleasing testimony—that when as a young man attending church services, if he had heard any state-

ment in the sermon of which he felt uncertain, he was wont to try it by some plummet line of the Shorter Catechism, and that thus while still a youth he could find his home training in that little book "profitable for doctrine."

We recall an old college friend likewise who under his Scotch mother had been made familiar with the catechism in the days of his childhood. Experimentally, we regret to say, he was not a Christian believer, but that form of sound words remained in his memory and could come forth on occasion. He was telling once of his amused interest in a discussion progressing in the community where he lived as to the possible perfection of Christian character in this life. He said that without judging the experience or lives of the particular persons who might claim to be free from sin, he was inclined against the view by reason of the old catechism coming to mind: "No mere man is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed."

Henry Ward Beecher, we suppose, had little use for catechisms and compends of church doctrine, but we remember he once said that in so far as any outward means can aid in keeping the church stable a Calvinistic creed after the manner of the Presbyterian church is best designed to do it.

KNOW THYSELF.

Look within. Keep the internal fires burning. Build the home altars. Add to the time in the closet. Heat and efficiency do not so much depend upon externals and internals. It is well to have combined effort; it is well to have hands and straps cut; but it is of vast importance to have the inward life aglow with personal contact with the unseen and the eternal. Perhaps there is over-much looking at outside measures, and too little attention to the internal fires that feed the outward movement. Build up the home altar. Drill in patient Bible study. Study not only the external movings of holiness, but the life of it in thy soul. Learn, if possible, all that hurts thy soul. Learn, so far as possible, the kind of climate that best suits its life. Seek continually the richer spiritual pasturage which best feeds thy soul's wants. If thou wouldst be of the highest service to external conquest of holiness, look within.—*Highway Almanac*.

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

In his sermon at the opening of the new Congregational Church at Mount View, Stroud Green, Dr. Joseph Parker said:

"The messages delivered here will deal with great subjects, with God, and blood, and sin, and pardon, and holiness, and destiny—themes that cannot be discussed anywhere else. They would be out of place in the lyceum, in the political hall, in the House of Parliament. I speak of this house not in its locality, but in its typical relations. This house must be unique in its messages. Men must hasten to God's house to hear God's Word, which they can hear nowhere else in the same sense, degree and quality. It is when we make the pulpit a little lecturing platform, and thus advertise the nonsense and windy frivolity of the day, that the pulpit loses its power. The pulpit can never lose its power if it be faithful to its vocation, which is to deliver great messages of reconciliation and atonement, and deliver great gospels of love and liberty. Oh, it hurts me, as one would hurt me who bruised me with a heavy boot, when my preacher talks to me about a little white-washing and drain enlargement and parish council business. I came not to my Father's house to hear about these things, which are important in their own place; but I came to my Father's house because I was told that there was bread enough and to spare; and the people that come for your little socialisms and new re-arrangements and recastings of the social programme are the men who will make use of you, and as long as they

can make use of you they will make you as popular as they can, but when you begin to be spiritual, and offer them the flesh and the blood of Christ as the wine and water by which alone life can be guided and sustained, they will turn away.

"My brother ministers, you are not hardly driven for subjects; the cross still stands. You need not look up a paper to see what is the question of the day. The question of the day is, How can a man be forgiven, how can a broken heart be healed, how can the lost be brought home?—that is the question of the day."

TIME.

Time, never in a hurry, moves steadily on. You may turn the hands of your clock forward, but its onward march is not hastened thereby nor its progress advanced by even so much as one moment. You may turn the hands of your clock backward, but in so doing you cannot recall time already past, for time, like words, can never be recalled.

Ever since time was created, minute has begotten minute; and minute in unbroken succession; and the process will go on until the mighty angel, with one foot upon the sea and one foot upon the land, declares "that there shall be time no longer."

Like those microscopic insects, which are born, flourish, reproduce their kind, live out the full measure of their existence, and die, all within a moment of time, so every moment is born, reproduces its kind, and dies. Therefore, to represent time as an old man with scythe and hour-glass seems quite absurd. His is the minute, rather than the hour-glass; and ere he can grasp so mighty an implement as the scythe, is himself cut down by the great Father of time. Time is measured, not by years, nor months, nor days, but by seconds. He is rather an infant of seconds than a man of years.

Time is short-lived and uncertain; eternity, sure and never ending. Man begins to die the moment he begins to live. A curious, but true, epitaph on an ancient tombstone in Hawtham church-yard is this:

Life is short,
And death is sure:
Sin's the wound,
And Christ's the cure.

To waste time is to commit crime. Every moment, then, as it comes should be put to its best use; for ere to-morrow's sun arises from his couch the clock of our time may be stopped, and time be, as for us, no more forever.—*W. Letterman Smith*.

LAW AND GRACE.

The law was given by Moses; grace came by Jesus Christ.

The law appeals to the old nature; grace to the new.

The law speaks to the servants; grace speaks to the sons.

The law chains the wolf in man; grace makes him a new man.

The law says, "Pay;" grace says, "I freely forgive you all."

The law says, "Keep off;" grace says, "Come."

The law shows our weakness; grace gives us strength.

The law tells me I am wrong; grace sets me right.

The law thinks much of self; grace makes everything of Christ.—*Ram's Horn*

A dear old lady whom I imagine knew little of books but who must have had that large, fine sense which from the small things makes deduction of a limitless hope and claim of more, whose daily living had been narrow, and its limits chafing to her spirit, made a lovely poem in little more than a dozen words, when she was first shown the sea. Looking out upon it with reverent, astonished, luminous eyes, drawing a deep breath of heart-ful awe, she folded her hands in a meek rapture, and said slowly, "I thank the dear Lord that at last he has let me see enough of something!" The sea said the same great word to her that came to the ancient prophets when they wrote, in the name of the Lord, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And, "My people shall be satisfied with My goodness;" they shall have enough at last! Ah, if you want really to know poetry, and first language, and interpretations of all signs of earth and heaven, go to the old Holy Bible for them.