

The cause of a bright prayer meeting is the prayerful consideration of it beforehand, and a determination on the part of each one while in the meeting to sing, pray and speak for the glory of Jesus. Then will come to pass a meeting like the one described in prophecy: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord harkened and heard." Then here's to having a good meeting every time one is held.

"On The Rocks." Or, He Didn't Want The Pilot.

Some few years ago, while a terrible storm was raging in the English Channel, a sailing vessel was seen working for St. Sampson's, a harbor on the north of the Island of Guernsey. Just outside the harbor she was seen to cast anchor, evidently intending to wait there until the storm had abated, and doubtless intending to come into port with the morning tide. So far the captain of that ship had shown wisdom, for it would not have been possible for him with his limited knowledge of the surroundings of that harbor to have made the port himself. But inside the harbor was a man intimately acquainted with it, and whose business it was to bring the storm-tossed mariner into port—the pilot.

After waiting some time and seeing no signal he said to the cluster of mariners and others who stood around him: "Surely he never means to stay there and run the risk of losing ship, cargo, crew, and his own life in the bargain? No anchors that he has will stand the strain there will be upon them before this night is out."

Presently the pilot went to the signal station, for it was growing dark, and signalled to the captain of that ship, and sure enough the answer came back:—"DON'T WANT THE PILOT."

But the pilot, a kind hearted Christian man, signalled again, "Very dangerous—wind increasing in violence—come into port." But to all this the same answer:—"DON'T WANT THE PILOT."

"Very good," said the pilot. "One thing is very certain to my mind, whatsoever others may think, you'll never want another pilot in this world, for as sure as there is a God in heaven, this is your last night on earth. Before morning you'll be in eternity."

All night long the storm raged, and with the first gleam of morning light the pilot and others gathered on the shore. Alas! no ship was to be seen, for all that remained was her deck-house, high and dry on the rocks,—the rest, captain, crew and cargo were lost in the raging sea.

Lost in sight of port, lost after being warned, lost when she should have been riding safely at anchor or moored to her berth in the inner harbor.

This captain is but a type of, alas, tens of thousands who yearly, nay daily, surge along on their path to destruction, warned, as children in the home, warned in that God-blessed institution, the Sunday School, warned by God's own ministering servants again and again, warned by God's stern and terrible messenger, death, warned when their own well-beloved, those dearer to them than their own lives, are laid away in the cold grave, warned as they hear the solemn words of the minister,—"Since it hath pleased Almighty God to take from the world the son of this beloved one, we herewith commit its body to the grave, earth to earth, ashes to ashes and dust to dust," warned as they hear of the certainty of the resurrection, and know full well that in spite of all their indifference, assumed or real, to this state also must they come at last.

Well and truly do the Scriptures say: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." This must be so wherever the soul is unprepared for the meeting. But even here it seems there are conditions that would of necessity intensify the terror to the soul of the unconverted one. Read the Word and see, the Lord compares Israel to a well kept vineyard that had been walled about and nourished and well attended, and then asks the question of His backsliding people, "What more could have been done for it than He had done for it?"

So we think the Word in some such sense as this cannot fail to come home to the terrified consciences of those dying unsaved who had been reared in Christian Canada in godly homes, walled in with holy influences from their earliest

days. Having ever before them the inspiring examples of Christ-like lives.

But even where this has not been the case the lack will excuse no man, for God is not without witnesses in any life. The Preacher, Conscience and the Word are ever with us. But like the captain of this ill-fated ship many hold them in slight esteem, and all the while the night-storm and darkness are upon them.

Other ships during that eventful day had made the entrance to the harbor, and the pilot had brought them in. These were lying snugly and safely at ease while the other was dragging her anchors and finally dashed to pieces on the rocks. Christ said to many of the men of His day, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." It was not the Pilot who was unwilling to save for he repeatedly offered his services. But the one in the perilous position who could neither come in himself or would not let those who could bring him in.

So the heavenly Father cries out today as of old time: "All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." And Christ still pleads and calls, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

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Washing The Disciples' Feet.

In the act of washing the disciples' feet our Lord embodies in concrete form the genius of the Christian spirit. His kingship was not conferred by right of birth, or by virtue of a peculiar privilege. He achieved it through service to man. As the apostle says: "He, whose equality with God implied no ambition or usurpation, humbled himself, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name that is high above every name." Our Lord's place in the moral realm rests upon His humble, self-sacrificing service to man. The spirit that gleams through the act described in this narrative, is characteristic of His entire mission and entire relationship to man. His greatness rests upon His service to man. The more clearly we apprehend this truth, and the more closely our conduct and standards of life conform to this spirit, the more nearly do we imitate Christ.

But the act of which we are thinking derives its significance from the fact that it was the Son of God who thus humbled Himself. There is no moral beauty or power in the fact that a slave performs a slave's task, but when one whose nature and station makes the slave's task incongruous to him, stoops out of love to do it, the lowly service is at once transfigured. It was because our Lord was what He was that His service to the disciples is so amazing and impressive. We must never forget that a man can only humble himself so far as he stands upon some height of power or capacity from which he can stoop. He must have something to give up, to which he is entitled, before he can perform a deed of sacrifice. From this point of view we see that Christian humility does not lead a man to neglect his opportunities of advancement, wealth, learning or power. On the contrary, it provides a new and strong motive for leading a man to make the very most of himself, to build himself up in the things for which men are striving, not that he may become proud or self-indulgent or self-sufficient, but in order that he may have the more which he may place at the service of his fellow men.

The evangelist's description of the thought in the mind of Jesus as He stooped to this service throws a vivid light upon the way the Christian temper brings the highest motives into association with the lowliest tasks. John tells us that just then Jesus had a clear vision of His relation to God and of His own authority and power. Jesus knew then that he came from God and went to God, and that the Father had put all things in His power. We should expect that, moved by this consciousness, He would have preached His greatest sermon or performed His most astounding miracle, but no. John tells that moved by this consciousness, "He girded Himself with a towel, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet." The clearest revelation of His nature and destiny

moved Him to the lowliest act of His human life. That is the way great thoughts and great motives act upon the Christian heart. They make the Christian more tender and humble and self-sacrificing. We come near to man just in proportion as we come near to God. It takes a great motive and a great inspiration for the service of man.

Only The Young Needed.

"How old is he?" "About sixty," is the answer. "We don't want him, then. We want a young man," and an able minister is thrown aside without even a trial.

"He is too old. We don't want a man over forty." A strong, able-bodied man, who has applied for a position as sexton, is turned aside, and an inexperienced young man accepted.

"She is getting too old. Turn her off and get a young teacher in her place." The teacher, who has been in charge of the school for forty years, is discharged, and a young girl, with little or no knowledge of the work, is put in her place.

Is it fair that the old should be turned out and the young only accepted? Give the young a place, but let them start at the bottom and go to the top as their elders were obliged to do. They will gain knowledge and experience in this way. The old have made their mistakes and profited by them. They have learned by experience what it is best to do under existing circumstances, and how to deal with human nature.

A minister, who has been in charge of different churches for years, knows more about his business than a young man fresh from college. He knows how to deal with the people. How to comfort the sorrowing, guide the anxious souls to God, and instruct those who would learn. He knows more about the Bible than he did years before. He can better present the truth to the people. He has years of Christian work and experience to help him.

The teacher does not teach forty years without learning something. She sees where she can improve her methods of teaching. She learns how to deal with different pupils. She becomes better and better acquainted with the different studies, and learns how best to teach them. The young teacher has all these things to learn. When she has taught forty years it is to be hoped she will know more than she did when she began.

We live to learn. Even the most stupid cannot help learning something as the years roll by. We learn more by experience than in any other way. Forty years of experience and work teach us more than forty years of study. If this is true, and I think every sensible person will say it is, then why turn the old aside? Why take only the young? Why say he or she is too old? If we are never too old to learn, why should we ever be too old to work, provided we retain our health and strength?

Should not the white-haired minister be better able to preach and take charge of his church than the one who just entered the ministry?

Should not the teacher, who has grown old in the service, be better able to discharge her duties than the one on whose diploma the ink is still fresh?

In most all other callings the old and experienced are sought for, and employed. In critical cases of illness the old doctor is called for. In difficult cases of litigation the old successful lawyer is retained; and when the judicial bench is vacant, the government will place the old competent jurist in the chair, and as he advances in priority he is elevated to supremacy in judicial functions. But when the most important matter concerning mankind is to be dealt with, viz: that of the soul, the man of mature mind and ripeness is passed over because he is old, and the novice is preferred and put in the place the man of riper years should occupy.

Why not give the old a place and reverence them as the Japanese do? Do not force them to retire from business because there is no place for them. Allow them to die in harness.

The truth of a case does not by any means always substantiate the worst construction that can be put on the facts. And yet it is only the part of prudence for a man to reckon on having to meet the very worst construction that can be put on his conduct. The charity that "thinketh no evil," and "rejoiceth not in iniquity" is not too common.