

SUNDAY AT HOME

First Christmas

Hark! through the silent night
Angelic voices swell;
Their joyful songs proclaim that "God
Is born on earth to dwell."

See how the shepherd-band
Speed on with eager feet,
Come to the hallowed cave with hem
The Holy Babe to greet.

But, oh, what sight appears
Within that lowly door—
A manger, stall, and swaddling clothes,
A Child and Mother poor.

In the Year of Our Lord

We date our letters, "In the year of our Lord." There is something very inspiring in this designation. The year are Christ's, not ours. He gives them to us that on each of their pages we may write something worth while, a word or two which shall make the world richer and better, something of which we shall not be ashamed when the books are opened at the end of time. It is not enough that we do not blot the pages with records of gross sins; we should fill them also with the story of noble and beautiful things. Every day should be rich in ministries of good.

Life—A School

Life is God's gymnasium. He takes the measures; we do not know what they are. He puts us in our places and gives us what discipline we need. The ministers call churches means of grace, and prayer means of grace, and the Bible means of grace; and so they are. But, also, your shop is a means of grace, and your kitchen is a means of grace, and your social gathering is a means of grace; your dull and stupid clerk is a means of grace, and your more dull and stupid cook is a means of grace—or disgrace, just as you choose to make them. Let a man go into life believing this, taking life as his school preparing for the life beyond, and what a glorious thing it is to live! Even failures do not discourage such a man, because he says, I have failed once, and now I know what my weak point is, I will correct it next time. Christ supplies our need by teaching us the meaning and significance of life.—Lyman Abbott, D.D.

Living in Christ

Abiding in Christ does not mean that you must always be thinking about Christ. You may be thinking, abiding in its enclosure or beneath its shelter, though you are not always thinking about the house itself. But you always know when you leave it.

A man may not always be thinking of his sweet home circle; but he and they may nevertheless be abiding in each other's love. And he knows instantly when any of them is in danger of passing out of the warm tropic of love into the arctic regions of separation.

So we may not always be sensible of the revealed presence of Jesus; we may be occupied with many things of necessary duty; but, as soon as the heart is disengaged, it will become aware that He has been standing near all the while, and there will be a bright flash of recognition, a repetition of the Psalmist's cry, "Thou art near, O Lord."

Ah, life of bliss, lived under the thought of His presence, as dwellers in Alpine valleys live beneath the solemn splendor of some grand, snow-capped range of mountains!—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

Lend a Hand

Lend a hand to the tempted.
Lend a hand to souls in the shadow.
Lend a hand to the student at school.
Lend a hand to those who are often misjudged.

Lend a hand to the soul crushed with unpeppable loss.
Lend a hand to the poor fighting the wolf from the door.

Lend a hand to those whose lives are narrow and cramped.

Lend a hand to the boy struggling bravely to culture his mind.

Lend a hand to young people whose homes are cold and repelling.

Lend a hand to those whose surroundings are steadily pulling them down.
Lend a hand—an open hand, a warm hand, a strong hand, an uplifting hand, a hand filled with mercy and help.—The Silver Cross.

What to Do With Trouble

There are two kinds of people—some that live on the past, and some that live on the future. You never saw a person living on the past all the time, and always talking about the past, that did not have a good many wrinkles on his brow. Instead of casting all their care on Him that careth for them, they are all the time thinking about their troubles.

They go to a meeting, and when it is over they say: "Wasn't it splendid! I enjoyed it so much. I forgot all my cares and all my troubles." They laid their bundle down under the seat, but the moment the benediction was over they picked it up again. Give your trouble to God. Remember that everything before the believer is glory.—D. L. Moody.

Yoking Our Passions

A man bought a large tract of land in the West in which were mountains and valleys. A stream took its rise among the hills and leaped down through the gorges, till it reached the valley. When the rains fell the stream became a wild torrent, rushing madly on its way, carrying everything before it. Nothing could withstand it. It swept over fields and meadows and left destruction wherever it reached.

What to do with this stream was a problem. It could not be destroyed. The owner built a flume and tamed the wild torrent. It was held within limits and was led quietly down the mountain side. In the valley its terrific force was gathered and made to turn mills and to water fields and gardens. That is what God wants us to do with our appetites and passions—not try to destroy them, but to yoke them in Christ's service and make them serve us and serve others.

Out of Time and Place

Long after the frost had come we heard reports from here and there of people finding full-blown flowers out-of-doors. There were roses in December and lilacs in late November, and in unprotected gardens various other be-

lated blossoms were found by several persons in several different parts of the country.

A few weeks ago a man picked up on the street of an inland town a bird which was almost exhausted. It proved to be a Stormy Petrel, a bird that is found at sea in every part of the world and at great distances from land. It is distinctively a sea-bird, and how or why this lonely wanderer found its way so far inland is a mystery.

Both the flowers and the bird were curiosities, but unfortunate. The Petrel was out of place and the blossoms were out of time, and while their interest was perhaps all the greater for those reasons, they were examples of unseasonable misfits. It is bad to be either out of time or out of place. There is a right time for everything and a right place for everyone at the right time. Some young people form the unfortunate out-of-time habit—or the not-in-time habit—and a few years later they find themselves out of place.

Such was a certain lad who began his business career with much promise of success; but his one fault was a habit, formed in his school days of being a few minutes late in getting to his work. An opportunity for an advance soon came to him, but he lost it because of his reputation for tardiness; and after a while his own position was taken, for the same reason, by another. There was no place for him because he was an out-of-time young man. There are many today who are doing work which is not fitted to them because they have, in some such way, proved unfit for better work. The petrel, lost and weary, was a sad thing to see; but sadder still a man or a woman who is, consciously or not, out-of-place. You admire the rose in December, but you call it a freak. Don't be a freak; don't get out-of-time or out-of-place.

Sleeping Alone

It is very much healthier to sleep alone. The unhealthiness of two persons occupying the same bed very much depends on the physical condition of either or both. If one is diseased, injury to the other is sure to result. The practice is unhealthy because the exhalations from the body of one come in contact with and are absorbed by the skin of the other, and because each one must, of necessity, breathe some of the air which has been breathed by the other, and consequently rendered impure.

Expand the Lungs

God intended all women to be beautiful, as much as he did the roses and morning glories; and what He intended they should become, they would, if they would obey his laws, and cut indulgence and corset strings, and indulge in freedom and fresh air. For a girl to expect to be handsome with the action of her lungs dependent on the restrictive nature of a cent's worth of tape is as absurd as to look for turnips in a snow bank, or a full grown oak in a little flower pot.

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