

till the soil and earn his daily bread; but many men have added farm to farm and acre to acre till they have worked themselves to death, and worked their wives to death, and worked their children till they were dead, or sick, or discouraged, and ready to curse the farm on which they had toiled as under a task-master, and to go anywhere to escape from such a house of bondage as their home had been.

Many a man wearies his life out "taking care of things" which are of no earthly use to him or his. When a man becomes entangled in this world's gearing, there seems to be no stopping the machine. Thus a farmer takes his money and buys land, and raises corn, and feeds hogs, and makes pork, and sells it to get more money to buy more land for the same purpose; and so he goes on, until, by and by, it becomes a question whether the man owns the hogs, or the hogs own the man. Many a man works like a galley-slave to tend and care for hogs, cattle, horses, mules and donkeys—being the biggest donkey of them all, a beast of burden, a servant of dumb brutes. He thinks he is their owner; in fact, he is their slave.

Let men who have been bought with blood learn to whom they belong; let them sell and give alms, and sunder the fetters that bind them; let them break away from their beggary bondage, and be no longer like the prodigal, feeding swine in a far-off land, but let them arise and go to their father's house, and live no longer as the bond-slaves of a passing and perishing world, but as the children of the King, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ—as *those* who use this world without abusing it.—*Selected*

#### PRAY IN SECRET.

He who realizes day by day that he is himself preparing for eternity, and that he is surrounded by immortal beings who are likewise preparing for an eternity of bliss or woe, and that he is responsible in a measure for them as for himself, will not greatly need a stimulus to prayer. If prayer becomes languid and formal, there is no cause to examine ourselves, whether we are not missing the main object of our lives.

It is written of David, that before he slew the giant in the valley of Elah he had met and slain the lion and the bear upon the lone hills of Judah. So it must be with us. If we are to do successful battle with the giants of worldliness and selfishness, of pride and ambition, of unbelief and skepticism, of lust and appetite, that stalk around us, we must meet and slay them first before God in our closet, in the secret recesses of our hearts. And if we want to have more courage to face the world, and not by our lips only, but by our very presence, bear faithful witness always against its sins, we must learn, through the great reality of secret

prayer, to say with Elijah, fresh from the presence chamber of Jehovah, when he stood before an ungodly king: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand."

We have need to recollect that it is not enough to do the work of Jesus, we must do it also in his spirit; and this can only be done by putting ourselves often in the posture of Mary—sitting quietly, thoughtfully, patiently at the feet of Jesus, looking up into his face, and hearing his word.

Doubtless every one will find, who proves it, that the best preparation for life, for death, for judgment, is through the great reality of secret prayer, to be able to say with one who sleeps in Him: "I know Jesus better than any earthly friend."—*Presbyterian Banner*.

#### UNSEEN PROTECTION.

"A lady was wakened up one morning by a strange noise of pecking at the window, and when she got up she saw a butterfly flying backward and forward inside the window in a great fright, because outside there was a sparrow pecking at the glass, wanting to reach the butterfly. The butterfly did not see the glass, but it saw the sparrow, and evidently expected every moment to be caught. Neither did the sparrow see the glass, though it saw the butterfly, and made sure of catching it. Yet all the while the butterfly, because of that thin, invisible sheet of glass, was actually as safe as if it had been miles away from the sparrow." It is when we forget our Protector that our hearts fail us. Elisha's servant was in great fear when he awoke in the morning and saw the city of Dothan encompassed with horses and chariots and a great host; but when his eyes were opened at the prayer of the prophet his fears vanished, for he beheld the mountains full of horses and chariots of fire. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even forevermore."

"Though now unseen by outward sense,  
Faith sees Him always near;  
A guide, a glory, a defence;  
Then, what have you to fear?"

Whatever your sorrows, O mortal man, take the Bible for your guide, and obey its inspiring precepts, and your sorrow will be turned into joy. Whether you are poor or afflicted by the loss of friends, or have made promises that it is impossible to fulfil, or have been cast out of society by sheer misfortune, look at once to the Saviour. There is no sorrow that he cannot heal. There is no darkness that he cannot dissipate. There is no grief that he cannot allay. There is no death that will not be made triumphant by his presence and his blessing.