

heavenly race. Sin is sin, whosever does it. But weights may be weights to me, and not weights to you. What are these weights? We carry them about with us, and we are to put them away from us. They are the feelings and habits of mind by which we abuse God's great gifts and mercies. We are to put away the dispositions within us which make things temptations. Every blessing, every gladness, every possession internal and external, we may turn into heavy weights that will drag us down to the low spot of unspiritual conduct.

HOW TO RUN.

If we would run, continues Maclaren, we must lay aside these weights. The whole of the Christian's course is a struggle. We carry with us a double nature. If there is ever to be a positive progress in the Christian race, it must be accompanied by the casting away of much that interferes with it. There is no spiritual life without dying; there is no spiritual growth without putting off "the old man with his affections and lusts." How is this laying aside to be performed?

1. By getting so strong that the thing shall not be a weight, though we carry it.
2. By taking the prudent course of putting it utterly aside.

LAYING ASIDE FOR WHAT?

Some people suppose that when they have laid aside a weight, conquered a hindrance, given up some bad habit, that they have done a meritorious thing. We are, no doubt, strengthened by the very act of giving up a bad thing; but then it is of no use at all except in so far as it makes us better fitted for the progress which is to come after it. The racer puts aside his garments, that he may run. We empty our hearts that Christ may fill them. "Looking unto Jesus" is the only means of thorough-going, absolute self-denial. All other love-render than that which is based on love to him and faith in him, but surface work, and drives the subtle disease to the vitals. If you would lay aside every weight, you must look to Christ, and let his love follow into your soul, and then you will be free for service. Then self-denial will not be self-denial. It will be blessing and joy and peace. Whatever you give up for Christ, you get back from Christ, better, more beautiful, more blessed, hallowed to its very core, joyful possession forevermore.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

1. How shall we look to Jesus?

(a) Look unto him as a Saviour. Thus we obtain freedom from sin, and freedom unto service.

(b) Look unto him as Master. He directs the race. He leads as captain. The look should be one of obedience.

(c) Look unto him as Example. Jesus is the model man. To imitate him is freedom and to be like him is perfection.

2. Where shall we look to Jesus?

(a) In common duty. Christ's image can be reflected in a little pool even better than in a great lake.

(b) In times of temptation. Then we need the upward look to strengthen us for victory.

(c) In times of difficulty. Moses in the midst of great perplexity, looked continually to see whether the pillar-cloud had moved.

(d) In the means of grace. What an empty thing worship is without the upward look to God.

3. What sort of looking must it be?

(a) Trustful looking. A man on a height looks up, not down.

(b) Obedient looking. Obedience is the proper spirit of prayer.

(c) Affectionate looking. Looking to Jesus as our dearest friend, with utmost confidence, and eager longing.

FLASHLIGHTS.

Nothing has so many hooks as worldliness, and yet no hook holds unless we want it to.

Running away from the world but fastens its hooks more firmly. We must be in the world, yet not of it.

If we would not be occupied by the world, we must occupy our thoughts with heaven.

It is a good rule never to undertake any earthly business that would dull the reception of a son that enters, or diminish the time we should spend upon them.

The liberty of the Christian is not exemption from duty, but power in duty.

Christian liberty does not permit us to follow our natural inclinations, but gives us inclinations which it will be safe to follow anywhere.

The Christian is set free from self, and therefore he is ransomed from timidity, and fear, and envy, and covetousness.

A man's chains are always within, and never outside. Christ alone can break these hidden chains.

AUGUST 31.—"COMMUNION AND TRANSFORMATION."

Ex. 24, 29-33; Luk. 9, 28, 29.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Aug. 25. Lonely Prayer. Matt. 14, 22-27.
Tues., Aug. 26. Paul's three years. Gal. 1, 11-18.
Wed., Aug. 27. Elijah's retirement. 1 Kings 17, 1-6.
Thurs., Aug. 28. Moses and the bush. Ex. 3, 1-4.
Fri., Aug. 29. Samuel at night. 1 Sam. 3, 1-10.
Sat., Aug. 30. Jonah's prayer. Jonah 2, 1-10.

This marvelous scene, commonly known as the Transfiguration, is one of the most noteworthy to be found in the Scriptures. It stands out by itself as most remarkable in its miraculous display, its important teachings, and its supernatural effects. In this age of much doubt and disbelief in the supernatural, of increasing trust in the material, and decreasing faith in the spiritual, the lessons of this mountain scene, which teach nothing unless they teach belief in the supernatural and divine, are much needed. When men are seeking rest for the soul's demands in business and pleasure, in books and philosophy, they need to be reminded that soul rest, and soul safety, are found in "Jesus only." Back to God we need to be the watchword of Christendom to-day.

OBJECT OF THE TRANSFIGURATION.

There were several purposes in the Transfiguration scene, some of which are as follows:

1. Encouragement to the Disciples. Jesus, before this, had given his disciples glimpses of his sufferings and death, which had startled and shocked the faith and disappointed their hopes. Now, he gives them a view of his coming glory. They now see the crown beyond the Cross. The veil is parted, and they behold the glorious realities on which the future of the Messiah and his work are founded.

2. The faith of the disciples was strengthened. Hitherto, they had seen Jesus only in human form, with the flashes of divinity which shone through his miraculous works and heavenly words. Now they saw his real nature, his inherent and essential divinity blazing out through the serge and sackcloth of his humanity. Henceforth, their faith that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, will remain unshaken, and they can bear witness to what they know and have seen.

3. The disciples would understand the reason of the death on the cross. The subject of their conversation, the death on the Cross, would enable the disciples to see the importance and necessity of Christ's sacrifice and departure. The atonement was the great event of the world's history. This was the real founding of the Kingdom of God, and the beginning of these glorious times which the prophets had foretold.

4. It showed the disciples the real harmony of the old and new dispensations. They would now understand how the Gospel was the fulfillment of Moses and the prophets; how loyalty and faithfulness to Jesus Christ would constitute their whole duty, and the essential unity of the Church for all time.

LESSONS FROM THE SCENE.

1. We are reminded that seclusion is needed for the highest sort of devotion. Jesus and his three disciples had withdrawn to the mountain top for special communion with God. In this busy age the quiet hour of meditation and the secret hour of devotion are greatly needed to prepare the Christian for faithful service.

2. We learn that the devotional spirit sees new glory in Christ and in his Word. When Peter and his companions retired apart with Christ, he was transfigured before them, and Moses and Elijah shared his brightness. This came to the disciples in the hour of devotion. So, when we give ourselves to the devotional study of the Scriptures, new radiance and strong help break forth from its pages for us.

3. We are taught that devotion is not the whole of life. Peter wanted to remain on the summit permanently. But he did not fully understand his duty. There was a world to be redeemed, and how could it be accomplished if Jesus held back on the mountain from the Cross? There was, even at that moment, a poor demoniac in the valley waiting their descent in order that he might be cured. The disciples themselves, having been refreshed and strengthened spiritually by this period of devotion and heavenly vision, were now to go in the strength of this spiritual uplift and power to perform service for others. The heavenly vision is to lead to earthly service. Devotion furnishes support for the performance of the duties and the endurance of the trials of life. And, young people, remember that your great advantages of Bible study, of religious training, of church privileges, of devotional opportunities—all call upon you to render faithful and efficient service for God and humanity. To whom much is given, of whom much shall be required. Your vision of the divine is intended not only for your own spiritual enrichment, but for your increased activity and usefulness in the Lord's work.

SIDE-LIGHTS

Paul saw a bright vision on the Damascus road, and forthwith he began to preach the gospel.

Peter saw the vision on the housetop, and straightway he began to baptize Gentiles.

Moses' rebuke was effective because he had just come down from the mount of vision. You cannot rebuke men on their level.

Christ could not remain on the mountain-top, because men were in need of him in the valley, and he began healing them as soon as he got down.

We think of heavenly visions as if they were always of duty, but often they are of beauty, of privilege, of joy.

We see nothing but what we have eyes for the seeing. Heavenly visions come only to men of heavenly mind.

If you want visions, first make sure that you will obey their commands.

The visionary ideal is the best of labor. The value of work lies in what the worker can see beyond his work.

God sends no vision that has not feet to follow you up, and hands to help you on.

Seeing is a matter of education. How much more an artist can see in an art gallery than a clown! Train yourself for heavenly vision.

The eyes of sailors, accustomed to range over great distances unimpeded, are much sharper than ordinary eyes.