

## HOW TO PRAY.

Daniel could doubtless teach a great many to-day how to pray. He did not get into bed and say his prayers when half asleep, but kneeling before open windows, his face turned toward Jerusalem, he prayed earnestly, devoutly, sincerely, expecting to receive an answer to his petitions. There is too much form in prayer, when words fly up but the thought remains below. Such prayers never to heaven go. The Apostles had been with their Master, had heard him pray, and then very wisely said, "Lord, teach us how to pray." A parrot can say a prayer, but a parrot cannot pray. Many prayers are said, but far less are made. Not a few find time during the day and evening for work and pleasure, but seem to think they are too busy to pray. No man ever makes lasting headway who finds no time for private devotion. He may succeed for a time, but a man might as well cut off the fountain and expect the stream to continue, as to cut off the divine source of power, and expect to continue to be strong.

It is a mockery before God for a man to go through a formal act of saying his prayers when his mind and thought are elsewhere, or when he is doing it simply because he thinks he ought to. The hungry child does not ask for bread simply because he thinks he ought to do so. The sick patient does not take medicine as a mere form. The guilty do not ask for mercy and pardon half asleep, or as they are turning over in bed at night. The hungry ask for bread because they are hungry and want food. The sick take the applied remedies because they want to be made well. The guilty plead for mercy because they want freedom. And, shall any come before God in a less earnest and sincere manner. Will a man mock God? How did the Saviour pray when in Gethsemane? If we are truly in our Gethsemane of devoutness before God, if we, like Daniel, are in earnest, we will be "in the spirit" of prayer, praying for a soul that is in touch with God, praying in the faith of the woman who touching the hem of the garment of the Master received virtue from him, praying with the power of a Daniel, that with windows open toward God in heaven, there will be such a communication between the soul of man and God that there will be received a great blessing. We need more true faith in God, more devoutness and sincerity, more expectation in prayer, for with purity of heart and such praying, there will be such visions of God as will behold the very doors of heaven open, and like John of old, the one thus praying will be able to say, "Immediately I was in the spirit."—Dr. Zimmerman in Lutheran Observer.

## CONSTANT MERCY.

All the year round, every hour of every day, God is richly blessing us; both when we sleep and when we wake, His mercy waits upon us. The sun may leave off shining, but our God will never cease to cheer His children with His love. Like a river His loving-kindness is always flowing, with a fulness inexhaustible as His own nature, which is its source. Like the atmosphere which always surrounds the earth, and is always ready to support the life of man, the benevolence of God surrounds all His creatures in it, as in their element, they live, and move, and have their being. Yet as the sun on summer days appears to gladden us with beams more warm and bright than at other times, and as rivers are at times swollen with the rain, and as the atmosphere itself on occasions is fraught with more fresh, more bracing, or more balmy influences than heretofore, so is it with the mercy of God: it hath its days of overflow, when the Lord magnified His grace and lifethigh high His love before the sons of men.

## OF THOSE WHO WALK ALONE.

Women there are on earth, most sweet and high,  
Who lose their own, and walk bereft and lonely,  
Loving that one lost heart until they die,  
Loving it only.

And so they never see beside them grow  
Children, whose coming is like the  
breath of flowers:  
Consoled by subtler loves the angels  
know  
Through childless hours.  
Good deeds they do: they comfort and  
they bless  
In duties others put off till the mor-  
row;  
Their look is balm, their touch is ten-  
derness  
To all sorrow.

Betimes the world smiles at them, as 't  
were shame,  
This maiden guise, long after youth's  
departed;  
But in God's book they bear another  
name—  
"The faithful-hearted."

Faithful in life, and faithful unto  
death,  
Such souls, in sooth, illumine with  
lustre splendid  
That glimpsed, glad land wherein, the  
vision saith,  
Earth's wrongs are ended.

—Richard Burton in the May Century.

## NATURE AS REVEALING GOD.

By the Rev. N. I. M. Bogert.

We observe certain things in the natural world; they occur regularly without hitch or jar, and we call them "the order of nature," and so dismiss them, little thinking of the necessary power behind them which inaugurated and sustains them.

Take, for example, the continuance of the species of bird called the robin. Think of the difficulties in the case, which, to speak humanly, God must overcome. First, the birds must choose their mates and be associated in a permanent attachment to each other. They must have the skill, somehow, to build their nest. (And if entirely separated from other robins and nest ever since the day that they learned to fly, they will yet build with mud and sticks the familiar robin's nest.) Then they must know to deposit their eggs in the nest, not anywhere. They must, somehow, have the disposition to sit patiently on those eggs the necessary time, never leaving them too long lest they become cold and the unhatched young die. Then they must know how and have the inclination to feed their young. At length they must teach them to fly. All this must take place that a new generation of robins may be secured. The process goes on smoothly year by year.

We use the one word "instinct" as explanatory of the whole process, and are, usually, thus satisfied. But what is instinct? Paley defines it as "a propensity prior to experience and independent of instruction." Thus the word, so far as expressing our knowledge of the process, is only a blanket to cover our ignorance, just as when we call the tendency of matter to unite with other matter "gravitation" with no understanding whatever of the reason for that tendency.

God, somehow, teaches the robins what to do. No difficulty is too great for God. Infinite power, wisdom and goodness here, as in thousands of other ways, manifest their presence. It becomes us to observe, wonder, and adore. "The works of Jehovah are great; sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." We, too, can exclaim with the Psalmist, "O, Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them, all!"

## LESSONS FROM LUKE'S GOSPEL.\*

By Robert E. Speer.

Luke is mentioned only three times in the Bible,—Colossians 4: 14; Philimon 24; 2 Timothy 4: 11. He never mentions himself. He had a great opportunity to exalt himself and to immortalize his name. In the Gospel he might have attached his name to the fame of Jesus, and in the Acts to the fame of Paul. Each of his books begins with an introduction in which he mentions the friend for whom he wrote, and he might easily have put in his own name. But that was not Luke's spirit, and we learn from his modesty the beauty of true Christian self-oblation.

He was a physician, and must have been a great comfort to Paul in his journeys and imprisonments. We see in the Gospel many traces of Luke's medical knowledge,—4:23, 27; 5: 12; 7:2; 6: 19; 8:43-48; 9: 2; 13: 11.

This is the Gospel most clearly related to Paul's preaching. It is natural that there should be resemblances and close relationships between the Gospels and the Epistles, when there was such close friendship and companionship between the men. Indeed, Irenaeus tells us that "Luke, the follower of Paul, set down in a book the gospel which he (Paul) used to preach."

It is interesting also to study, in the Gospel most closely identified with Paul, what is said about the career and character of Peter. Some Bible scholars, not content with what is frankly said by Paul regarding his difference with Peter, re-interpret the whole New Testament on the theory of a lasting dispute between these two men and their parties. Not a trace of this appears in the Gospel of Paul's friend. It shows us Peter's prominence among the twelve, his nearness to the Lord, his bold loving character, and his repentance.

The Gospel of Luke has a number of parables and miracles not found in the other Gospels. It is the Gospel which especially emphasizes prayer.

1. Only from Luke we learn that Christ prayed on these occasions (3: 21; 5: 12-16; 9: 28; 23: 34-46). Compare the parallel passages in the other Gospels.

2. Only here are the three parables (11: 6-8; 13: 1-8, 10-14).

3. 21: 36. Compare Romans 12: 12; 1 Thessalonians 5: 17.

The Gospel has a great breadth to it. 9: 49, 50, 53-55. It praises Samaritans,—10: 30-37; 17: 12-19. Compare this with the statement in John 4: 22. And it has a great tenderness in it. See the word "only" in 7: 11-16; 8: 42; 9: 38. And 7: 36-50; 18: 10-14; 19: 1-40; 24: 7.

It is the great Gospel of joy, 2: 10; 15: 10. And of praise and thanksgiving,—2: 20; 5: 25, 26; 7: 16; 13: 13; 17: 15; 18: 43; 23: 47. Compare Psalm 1: 2, 3. Luke also preserves for us the five great hymns:—

1. Ave Maria, 1: 28-33.
2. The Magnificat, 1: 46-55. It is found as a part of the evening service as early as A.D. 507, in the rule of Caesarius of Arles.
3. Benedictus, 1: 68-79. Used as early as the fourth century in the morning service.
4. Gloria in excelsis, 2: 14. Seems to have been used in the second century.
5. Nunc dimittis, 2: 29-32.

\* Y. P. Topic, Sunday, June 6, 1909.—Life Lessons for Me from the Gospel of Luke. (Luke 6: 20-38).

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

- Mon.—My Father's love (Luke 15: 11-32).  
Tues.—My Saviour's search (Luke 15: 1-7).  
Wed.—Need of compassion (Luke 10: 30-37).  
Thurs.—Which am I? (Luke 18: 9-14).  
Fri.—My pounds (Luke 19: 11-27).  
Sat.—Earnest in prayer (Luke 18: 1-8).