

and burdens fall, where wavering ones are confirmed, the weak are made strong, sinners are converted, and all are built up into the likeness of Christ. The reasonable ideal to which they persistently return is to make their devotional service a center of power within the influence of which no unconverted can continue unsaved, no Christian can backslide, no needy heart can remain unsatisfied. They cease to think of the League as an attractive place but as a place of opportunity where they may win rich spiritual rewards of service abounding in joy and enthusiasm sweeter and more abundant than they ever drew from any other source.

In this manner one awakened heart may cause a devotional service that is a spiritual desert to become a harvest field of surpassing abundance. In many chapters the Holy Spirit is seeking one who will consent with loving, self-forgetting, indomitable purpose, and unflinching perseverance to become his instrument for the accomplishment of this result. Who will respond? It would bring a marvelous uplift if he should find willing hearts in every slumbering chapter. Is it too much to expect? Is it too much that he should find some ready helpers in your chapter? Is it too much to expect that he should use you?

### Plan For It

Few can take part helpfully in a prayer meeting without planning for it, and those few cannot do it often. Even they could be more helpful with preparation.

Leaders of meetings should have their assignment at least a month in advance, and put into their meetings the prayerful planning of all those four weeks.

Impromptu socials are never successes. A careful programme should be thought out long in advance.

As soon as one union meeting is over, plans for the next should be laid. Indeed, it is best to plan, in the fall, union meetings for all the year.

Extemporaneous giving, in response to urgent appeals, is not the wisest giving. Pledges for all the great objects should be made at the beginning of the year, and paid monthly.

Your daily Bible-reading will not be at its best if it is haphazard. Bible-reading, a verse or a chapter read at random. You should read according to the best system you can learn or devise.

Even your daily prayers are more likely to be the spontaneous outburst of your deepest feelings if they follow some regular course of adoration, thanksgiving, and petition.

### Taking Part Helpfully

Why do you take part in prayer meetings? Let it not be to show off, or from a mere sense of duty, or because others do it. The only fruitful purpose is to help someone.

You will not help anyone by taking part listlessly. Put into the meetings your earnest work.

Put into them your prayers. Ask God to permit you to help some one by what you are going to say.

Put into them your planning. No good results are likely to come without preparation. Be lavish of your time and thought in this great cause.

Put into them your experience. Tell something that has helped you—an incident, a thought, a Bible verse, a snatch of poetry.

Put into them your sympathy. Put yourselves in the place of others, and try to imagine their needs. Then try to find something to say that will meet those needs.

Put into them your vitality. Speak as if you meant it. Speak so as to be heard.

## Hints for Workers

### Hope Through Failure

No man ever gets higher up than he wants to. Therefore impossible ideals are the making of a man. And no man is more to be pitied than he who has realized his ideals. For it has been well said that "a character gets no higher than his ideals," and if a man has none, or if he has set them so low that he has attained to them, then for him there is nothing ahead; growth has stopped; death has set in. There is encouragement here for those who are tempted to discouragement because they have failed to attain; and there is a warning here for those who are tempted to satisfaction in their attainment. Let us set our ideals so high that it is safely impossible to attain them; and then let it spend life freely in doing the impossible.—S. S. Times.

### Experience Needed

No man is fit for the best service until he has passed through the fire of experience. At first he is raw, and thinks he knows it all; then he slightly boils himself down, and doubts his fitness for the position; and finally, he makes up his mind that all his efforts are tentative. When he reaches the last stage he is just beginning to do real and valuable service. The longer he labors, the more he becomes convinced that he needs lots of quinquina, dead loads of grace and indomitable patience and persistence. And he is only ready and prepared to do his best work when the time comes for him to die. Will all his experience perish with his earthly life? No; it will enter the other world with him as part of his immortality. Under those unending spiritual conditions, all that he suffered and endured here will be a part of his education for that nobler and higher life.

### The Most Important Opportunity

The pathway of each one of us is strewn with precious opportunities. These are not all of equal importance, nor is it possible for us to take advantage of every one of them. The problem, then, with us, is one of selection. The art of discerning and seizing at the vital moment those opportunities of greatest importance is the art we need to cultivate. Whether we shall have success or failure depends on our ability right here.

It is a blessed thing to be busy. Idleness is a curse. To wear out is honorable, to rust out is deplorable. But to be so busy about things which are of passing moment to the neglect of opportunities which have an eternal value is a sad mistake. The man who embraces only those opportunities which have material and temporal value, neglecting those which have spiritual and eternal values, is woefully lacking in the sense of proportion.

The right use of our opportunities is like the right use of money, it is easy enough to spend it; the trouble begins when we try to keep a reasonable and safe margin between our income and our expenditures. But in the spending of money there must be a right division, else poverty and distress will soon appear. The man who buys his wife a diamond ring when there is no bread in the cupboard; the man who makes a great feast to his friends when there is no money with which to pay his rent—these are the men who are plunging into

trouble headlong. But to discern the relative importance of things which call for an expenditure of our money—this is wisdom. Now our opportunities constitute in a way our capital, and the relative importance of our opportunities must be rightly apprehended, else we are liable to fail at the critical moment.

### The Personal Touch

The personal touch is the only successful method of Christian work to-day. Philanthropy is the boast and pride of this twentieth century, and the finest fruit and flower of Christian teaching thus far, but the really important element in philanthropy is personality. Our Lord was the first great philanthropist, because he gave himself for men. The philanthropist is the man who in some sense gives himself for others. The power of money and of intellect, of fame and of fortune, in charitable enterprises, is overestimated. All those forces are necessary and useful in their way, but the greatest of all these tools and instrumentalities is love. Samuel Smiles reminds us that "Paul and his disciples spread Christianity over half the Roman world, with little more money than is gained from a fashionable bazar." "We often do more good," says Canon Farrar, "by our sympathy than by our labors." Sympathy is one of the greatest secrets of life, and one of the costliest of accomplishments. Only through repeated self-denial, and perhaps in the bitter school of adversity is won that

"thoughtful love,  
Through constant watching wise,  
A heart at leisure from itself,  
To soothe and sympathize."

The true philanthropist will not be content with doing good by proxy, but will, if he be a truly Christian man growing in grace, not shrink from according the personal touch even to the most repulsive of men. "When I was in the bondage of sin," quaintly wrote St. Francis of Assisi, "it was bitter to me and loathsome to see and look upon persons infected with leprosy, but that blessed Lord brought me among them, and I did mercy with them, and I departing from them, what before seemed bitter and loathsome was turned and changed to me into great sweetness and comfort, both of body and soul." In sharp distinction from this was the course pursued by Goethe, who kept out of the way of suffering, because it pained and uninged him, thus, as Professor Bain says, "taking in the miseries of his fellows, but positively declining 'the occasions when he might be called upon for that purpose.'—New York Observer.

### Keep Close to the Right Kind

Whatever you do in life, make any sacrifice necessary to keep in an ambition-arousing atmosphere, an environment which will stimulate you to self-development. Keep close to people who understand you, who believe in you, who will help you to discover yourself, and encourage you to make the most of yourself. This may make all the difference to you between a grand success and a mediocre existence. Stick to those who are trying to do something, and to something in the world—people of high aims, lofty ambition. Keep close to those who are dead in earnest. Ambition is contagious. You will catch the spirit that dominates in your environment.—Success.