

all around them, as the sun sheds its light and heat upon the earth?—who impart happiness to others from their large hearts and generous sympathies; men who seem to live in an atmosphere peculiar to themselves; who give joy and pleasure as freely as the rose sheds its perfume on the breeze? Who give their word of cheer, as the lark gives its song when it mounts the morning sky. Like the fountain kept pure by the flowing of its crystal waters, so their hearts are made richer and happier by the blessings they shed forth. Who will not thank Heaven for such Christian men and women as these, and join us in the prayer that every day may swell their numbers? These are the pools of Bethesda, in which many a poor drooping heart has been revived and strengthened and sent on its way rejoicing. And many a Christian now growing strong and great in the new life can trace his first steps towards God and Heaven to the kind word, or look or smile that fell like a beam of Heaven's love upon his heart. Who has not felt the power for good in this Christ-like spirit of giving? Who has not experienced the secret impulse given by a single word that was like a pivot on which our whole life was turned in a better and holier path? On that single word may hinge the destinies of eternity,

"Full many a shaft at random sent.

Find a mark the huntsman little meant,

And many a word at random spoken

May hurt or heal a heart nigh broken."

How wide and varied then is our sphere of Christian usefulness, dear readers? How many ways of letting the Christ within us be seen and felt for good are within reach of the weakest follower of the Saviour? O, let us remember this! yea let us do what is far better, let us reduce it to daily practice. If God has endowed us with riches and plenty let us recognize the great responsibility that he has given with it. It is not ours to do with it as we like, but to do with it as we ought. And just as the bird has no right or proprietorship in the tree in which it builds its nest and shelters its young, so we have no real ownership in what God lends us. 'Tis God's and must be used, if rightly used, for the furtherance of what is good and true. But if riches be not yours to give, O, give what is often of more value by far than gold or silver—give the warm sympathies of a generous heart—give the true grip of Christ an brotherhood—give your word of kindness—your smile—your look of friendliness. These are yours, given you by the hand that gives nature her power to charm, given by Him who bends the rainbow and hangs it in beauty in the heavens—who gives the lark its song to delight the ear of man, and the flowers their perfume to scent the air we breathe. Shed the blessings, then, of a holy Christian life around you as you go on through time, always keeping before you

as your great pattern and guide the life of him who has given us this assurance that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

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Morning Meditation and Prayer.

While I was staying at Nailsworth it pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, irrespective of human instrumentality, as far as I know, the benefit of which I have not lost, though now more than eighteen years have since passed away. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For I might seek to set the truth before the unconverted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might, in other ways, seek to behave myself as become, a child of God in this world; and yet, not being happy in the Lord, and not being nourished and strengthened in my inner man, day by day, all this might not be attended to in a right spirit. Before this time, my practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as an habitual thing, to give myself to prayer after having dressed myself in the morning. Now I saw, that the most important thing I had to do was, to give myself to the word of God and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed; and that thus, by means of the word of God, whilst meditating on it, my heart might be brought into experimental communion with the Lord. I began, therefore, to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning early in the morning. The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious word, was, to begin to meditate on the word of God, searching, as it were, into every verse, to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the word, not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon; but for the sake of obtaining good for my own soul. The result I have found to be, almost invariably, this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication, so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to *prayer*, but to *meditation*, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession, or intercession or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go on, into prayer for myself or others, as the word may lead to it, but still continually keeping