

WHAT IS GOD.

There can be no perfect definition of God, for, being infinite, he can not be defined. There have been many attempted definitions, but they are all necessarily imperfect. We have only a partial knowledge of him, and even if he were to make a complete revelation of himself, we should not be able, with our finite powers, to grasp the infinite truth. We are to be very reverent when we undertake to tell of God.

It would be very incorrect, however, should we say that we know nothing of God. We do know many great and glorious truths about him. He has seen fit to reveal himself to us in many gracious ways. He has manifested himself to us in Creation, in Providence, in the Holy Scriptures, in Christ and through his Holy Spirit, and we know so much about him and about the duty we owe to him, that if we do not love and obey him we shall be left without excuse and be involved in eternal ruin.

God is the great uncaused first-cause and the uncreated source of all that exists. He is our Creator and our Preserver. The universe is the work of his own hands. He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. The Scriptures do not undertake to prove that God exists or to tell us how he came to exist. In the very first words that are recorded his being is sublimely postulated in the magnificent announcement: "In the beginning God created."

God is a Person. He is not merely a power at work in the heart of things, a tendency, an impulse, the force that is everywhere manifest, in the atoms of the vegetable and animal streams of existence. Nor is he merely the power that works invisibly and impersonally to promote the cause of righteousness according to an unerring law that makes the right to succeed in the long run. People sometimes talk very vaguely, endeavoring to banish God as a person from the universe, and yet under the cover of polite words that veil their atheistic attitude and spirit. God is a person who, with a wise plan and a gracious purpose, an infinitely loving heart and an inflexible will, is ruling the universe, material and spiritual, which he himself created.

God is a Spirit. He is not limited by a body as we are. He is not circumscribed by conditions of time or place. He is everywhere present. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. A thousand years are in his sight as one day, and one day as a thousand years. He is about us, and we can not perceive him with our bodily senses, and we can not elude him though we flee to the uttermost parts of the earth. The darkness and the light are both alike to him. The words of our mouth are known to him before they are uttered, and the inmost thoughts of our hearts lie open before the sight of him with whom we have to do. His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out.

Outside the Holy Scriptures themselves, no more satisfactory or wiser words were ever framed in reference to the Supreme Being than the answer in the Westminster Shorter Catechism to the question: "What is God?" "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." These were the words that came to the lips of George Gillespie, while leading the Assembly as it was bowed in prayer, asking for wisdom to frame a proper answer to this great question. They were accepted as an answer to the prayer and were adopted as an answer to the question, and no one has ever been able to add or take away a word for the improvement of the definition as it was then adopted. These words are worthy of a place in our minds as an aid to us in our

comprehension of him to whom we should render adoring and loving obedience.

This one only living and true God has made himself known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In his infinite, eternal and unchangeable spiritual personality we worship him with reverence and Godly fear, seeking to know and do his holy will. We are sinners by nature and he is holy; we are weak and he is almighty; we are little in all our being and faculties and he is infinite in all his attributes. But he invites us to come to him in repentance and seek his forgiveness; in faith and ask his justifying power; in trustful confidence and accept his gracious and eternal favor. So we come to him in the name of Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray, saying, "Our Father which art in heaven."—Herald and Presbyterian.

THE PATH OF THE PLOW

By Ada Melville Shaw.

A field lay idle as the years went by,
A pleasant field where tall green grasses
grew,
And starry blossoms lifted up their eyes
Or drooped them modestly beneath the
blue.
A brood of humble little life awoke
And perished daily on the field's broad
breast;
Bright troops of laughing children trilled
there,
And birds came daily on their hungry
quest.
The field lay idle when the spring was
young:
To garner its fair weeds no reaper came,
The birds built nests amidst the tangled
brush,
The little children played their merry
game.
Then came the plow: shy, mating birds
took flight,
The blade drove deep where grass and
weed-root lay,
Straight up and down on course appointed
passed,
Checking the children in their careless
play.
The plow, the scattered grain then har-
row teeth
To tear the heavy clod and cleanse the
soil,
That sprouting seed may find rich nurture
there,
And harvest's mead reward the sower's
toil.
Lord, drive thy plow through all my pleas-
ant fields,
Howe'er the pleasantness may flee away;
I would be fruitful, Lord—my heart would
yield
Some good to thee when comes thy har-
vest day.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Heavenly Father, that we may
so faithfully believe in Thee, and so fervently
love one another, always living in
Thy fear, and in the obedience of Thy
holy law and blessed will, that we, being
fruitful in all good works, may lead our
life according to Thy good pleasure in this
transitory world and, after this frail and
short life, obtain the true and immortal
life, where thou livest and reignest, world
without end. Amen.—Selected.

FOR DAILY READING.

M., Sept. 25. Joys of fellowship. 1 John
1: 1-4.
T., Sept. 26. Service and chastening. Heb.
12: 1-11.
W., Sept. 27. Joy of responsibility. Acts
6: 1-7.
T., Sept. 28. Joy of worship. Ps. 122: 1-9.
F., Sept. 29. "Joy in the Holy Ghost." 1
Thess. 1: 1-10.
S., Sept. 30. Joy in Christ. John 14: 27-31.
Sun., Oct. 1. Topic—The Joys of church-
membership. 1 Thess. 5: 8-16; Luke
12: 8.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Some Bible Hints.

One of the chief joys of church-membership is that it gives direction to our Christian activities; we have overseers (1. Thess. 5:12) whose guidance renders our work far more effective.

Another joy of church-membership is that it restricts us, holding us back from many evil courses by direct warning, or by silent power of common opinion (1. Thess. 5:14).

A third joy of church-membership is the comfort and support it gives in times of sorrow and need. All Christians know well how real this is (1. Thess. 5:14).

The chief and sufficient reason for church-membership is that it is Christ's desire for us (Luke 12:8).

Suggestive Thoughts.

If you are not a church-member, yet think you are a Christian, you must prove that you have some way of confessing Christ that is better than church-membership.

A church-member knows what other Christians are doing, and is roused to eager emulation.

Christ sent His disciples out two by two. It is not good for man to be alone in Christian work.

It is a significant fact that it is only men outside the church who say it is as easy to be a Christian outside the church as inside.

A Few Illustrations.

If you do not vote with a party, you have no share in its triumphs.

What if some one should say, "I am as good a Democrat (or Republican) outside the party as in it!"

Those that say, "I am not good enough to join the church," are blind, and often wilfully blind, to the fact that the church is made up of those that join because they are weak, and need Christ. They are virtually saying, "I am not healthy enough to go to the Great Physician."

If a foreigner should profess a high regard for the United States, but refused to become naturalized, you would know that he preferred some other country.

T. Think About.

Am I pleasing Christ or displeasing Him by remaining out of the church?

If in the church, am I doing all I can to draw others in?

Is my church-membership the great joy that it should be to me?

A Cluster of Quotations.

We talk about drawing ministers; what we want is a few more drawing church-members!—Moody.

The moon takes the sun's light, and throws it down upon us. The world receives what light it has from the church, and the church receives it from Jesus Christ.—A. J. Gordon.

Probably most of the difficulties of trying to live the Christian life arise from attempting to half live it.—Drummond.

It is a hard thing for Christ to confess us in the face of our many inconsistencies, but He is faithful to His promise.—A. J. Gordon.

The Faithful Few.

It is a great thing to have in any society a nucleus of faithful workers. That nucleus will make a success of any society.

But it will not make a success of the society if it is content to remain a nucleus, a faithful few. Each Endeavorer must have in mind some less efficient worker, and make it his one aim to transform him into a more efficient worker.

Every committee, every officer, should have two purposes, to do their own work well, and to train others to do that same kind of work. That is, every worker should seek in a measure the help of other workers. This is one of the meanings of our Christian Endeavor brotherhood. Transmute "the faithful few" into the faithful many.