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UNIV. OF MICHIGAN

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Northwestern Christian Advocate.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1911.

Vol. LIX.

No. 44.



After the Day's Work.

Northwestern Christian Advocate.

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the Post Office at Chicago, Illinois, under Act of March 3, 1879.

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Editor.

CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 1, 1911.

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Message of Jesus to Men of Wealth.

A DUSTY highway in Perea. A company of travelers walking leisurely along. A moment's commotion, and at the feet of the Master lies prone a youth of gentle breeding and in goodly garb. "Good Teacher," says the youth, "what am I to do in order to inherit eternal life?" "Be godlike in your goodness," says the Master. "And how?" "Keep the commandments." "But which?" "Do not murder, nor defraud, nor commit adultery, nor be a false witness; and honor your parents." "True, but this I have observed always." "Then, to be perfect, rid yourself of your wealth, give to the poor, and become my disciple." Will he do it? Did he do it? God knows. But, at the time, the youth, with downcast face, went away grieved; for he had great possessions. Jesus, too, was grieved, for he loved the youth and coveted him as a disciple.

Turning to the disciples, with the disappointed youth for a text, Jesus reread the lesson on the peril of wealth, than which none was more frequently on his lips. The young man was engaged in the quest of eternal life. It was offered to him. But the price was too high. A lower but present good bulked larger to him than the higher but immaterial good. He did not want his prize enough to sacrifice everything else for it. Such a prize was not to be had for less; and so, for the time, it could not be his.

LIFE is not simply a living. This is perhaps the most obvious lesson of the incident and the discourse. Here was a seeker for the sum of all good. From the material, the worldly point of view, he had pretty much all the good that most people think worth having. He had youth, riches, honor; he wore the white flower of a blameless life; and he cherished noble ideals. And yet he was conscious of something lacking. What could Jesus give him that he did not have and that he could get nowhere else? He thought Jesus had it. And he thought Jesus could give it to him or show him how to get it. Jesus assumes that he himself has it and that he can bestow it. And what is this good? *The utter surrender of one's self to the will of God.*

How sharply Jesus distinguishes this from other forms of good! Is there anything better than doing good? asks, in effect, the young ruler. Yes, says Jesus, there is the doing of God's will. The young ruler wanted to do good, but in his own way. We can all sympathize with him in this aspect of his character. We are all philanthropists after our fashion. But we want to do good when we feel like it, and in the way which most approves itself to us, and at the time most convenient for us. We assume that anything which appears unselfish in, and to, us must commend itself to God, so we do not greatly concern ourselves about God's relation to it. It may be God's will; or, if not, it ought to be. Such is our temper, which in the last analysis is only a species of refined self-will.

OR, is there anything higher than obedience to the moral law? Yes, says Jesus again, there is the doing of God's will. But is not the moral law God's will? Yes, but it is not God himself. It is this way: However we may account for it, nothing is plainer in human experience than that a man may be as perfect in obedience to the moral law as was the young ruler and yet be hard and unsympathetic and Pharisaic. It was of the essence of Pharisaism to be blameless touching the law and wanting in the truly filial spirit.

Or, once more, is there anything better than the sacrificing

of one's wealth for a great enthusiasm? Yes, says Jesus, there is the doing of God's will. Peter was in consternation when he thought that his leaving all was to go unnoticed and unrewarded. "Remember," he says to Jesus, "that we forsook everything and have become your followers" (v. 28). "Yes," answered Jesus, "and your sacrifice, because it was the will of God for you and done by you cheerfully, shall be more than amply rewarded" (vs. 29, 30). But some who will do the same thing for motives of pride or self-seeking (since, paradoxical as it may seem, there is a self-seeking in certain forms and tempers of self-denial) will have no benefit therefrom. Many who, in this regard, may consider themselves first shall be last, and many who are esteemed by men least shall be greatest (v. 31).

In this way, then, does Jesus discriminate and define the higher good. It is not simply in doing good, in being decent or even in being indifferent to material wealth; it is first, last, and always consciously accepting the will of God as the law of life.

THE great enemy to a true piety, in the mind of Jesus, is self-will. And while self-will finds nourishment in many unlikely and apparently impossible places, it has a most congenial soil in the power and sufficiency of riches. It is a matter of common observation that in society, as at present constituted, money can do many things greatly desired and practically impossible to be done without money. As easy though superficial inference is that because money can do many things it can do everything. To the mind of the disciples the kingdom of heaven could not be established, not to say maintained, without riches (vs. 23-26). The Church of to-day is pretty much of the same mind. But Jesus, so far from sharing this feeling, seems, from the prominence given to it in his teaching, to regard it as a power to be dreaded rather than coveted. With the decision of the rich young ruler in his mind, Jesus says to the disciples: "With how hard a struggle will the possessors of riches enter the kingdom of God!" (v. 23) and again, in answer to their amazement: "Children, how hard a

The Story.

AND as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and mother. And he said unto him, Teacher, all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.

AND Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved? Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible; but not with God: for all things are possible with God.

PETER began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.



THE FAMILY.



THE WAKEFUL HOURS.

Sleepless—the dark again
Soft on my breast;
Night and her rest,
Yet helpless to forget!
No pain—but sleepless yet!
O Thou who watchest Israel,
Who slumbers not nor sleeps,
How far Thou art from mortal man
Waking in night's lone deeps!

Sleepless—the fang of fear
Sharp at the heart;
Visions that start
From day's anxiety,
Or hopes that futile be:
O Thou who watchest Israel,
Pity the weak who keeps
So ill Thy watch with Thee,
Who slumbers not nor sleeps!

And when, outworn, we sleep,
Our watch give o'er,
Those hearts we bore
Upon our own, resign
To sleepless care divine—
O Thou who watchest Israel,
Not so our souls requite,
Who faithless hold Thy watch with Thee
Throughout one summer night!

—Martha G. D. Bianchi.

THE MEANING OF LOVE.

REV. J. R. MILLER.

When we think of it, what is the kind of love we usually see in people about us? The description runs, "Love seeketh not its own." Does it never in what we call love? Then it would seem that love is not very common, for there are not many people who never seek their own, that is, put thought of themselves first. Take the matter of choosing friends. Do we think chiefly of what the friend is to be to us? or of what we can be to him? Must we not confess that too often it is the selfish element that is the more marked?

The forming of special personal friendships is different in a way from the common exercise of love to others. This involves a sacred relationship in which the greatest care is required. In choosing for marriage, for example, the obligation of unselfishness is mutual. In close personal friendship the same is true. The love must be on both sides. Yet here, too, the law is the same. Love must not seek its own. President King says: "There are some apparently smooth running households that are smooth running, not because the relations are what they ought to be, but simply because five people in the home have decided that the only way to have peace is to allow the sixth to have his own way. And this sixth person may very likely think of himself as peculiarly devoted to the happiness of the other inmates of the house. But his standpoint is that he knows far better than any of them what is good for them, and they shall have what he thinks is good for them, whether they like it or not."

But this benevolent sixth person is infinitely away from the spirit of love which Christian teaching requires. His is in no sense love that "seeketh not its own." True love does not demand its own way. Its first aim is always, not to be ministered unto, but to minister. We expect to live with our friends and to receive happiness and benefit from them. But if the love is what it should be it will always be without selfishness. Its first desire will always be to make the other happy, to bring comfort, cheer, and pleasure, and to add to the beauty and completeness of the life. George Eliot draws a picture of such a friendship:

"What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest in each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?"

This is a beautiful ideal. It is the outline of a friendship in which each gives to the other the best he has to give. But we should notice that the heart of such a friendship is precisely what St. Paul indicates in his characterization, "Love seeketh not its

own." If either seeks his own, is ruled by selfishness, if self obtrudes in any phase of the fellowship, such a hallowed friendship as this is an impossibility. It is not enough that one of the two shall seek not his own—there must be two hearts beating as one in unselfishness before such a friendship can exist. The slightest trace of selfishness mars the beauty. Your friend may not always be conscious that he is thinking of your good. He may not every hour definitely and purposely set himself the task of doing you good, curing your faults, sweetening and enriching your life; nevertheless, he desires always to be a help to you, and in every thought of you and every prayer for you he is seeking, not yours, but you; not to be helped by you, but to be your helper.

A present-day writer says: "You need friends who, by their finer insight or their hidden faith, idealize you. They take you as they know you, as you are, but behind you, within you, and above you, they see another possible man. They are looking eagerly and waiting patiently for that man to emerge. By their expectation and their faith, they help him out into the world. They are constantly saying what the master of the house said in the parable, 'Friend, go up higher.' You discover yourself anew in their very attitude toward some of your rawness and inexperience. You long to make the reality match with their faith in your capacity. It is deadly, in the long run, not to have that quality in our friends."

"I do enjoy spending the evening with Fannie," one young fellow said to another; "she always makes me feel so satisfied with myself." We like to have people make us feel satisfied with ourselves, but it may not always be the wisest and the most wholesome friendship that affects us in this way. Might it not mean more to us if the influence of our friends upon us were inspiring instead of soothing, should prove awakening and stimulating instead of promotive of self-esteem? "Love seeketh not its own." That is, it seeks to help us, to make life mean more to us, to show us new possibilities of attainment, to start in us new desires and aspirations, to set before us new visions of beauty in character. —From "Learning to Love."

THE AUTUMN WOODS.

How clearly the trees stand out against the clear sky of autumn! They have lost the greater part of their leafage, and the boughs are nearly bare. The few leaves on the beech trees are golden; the chestnut is reddish, and appears dark at a distance; as yet the oak is scarcely touched. Some trees grow in unsheltered places; these have been exposed to the wind, and it is noticeable that on the northwestern sides they are nearly bare of leaves, though the opposite sides of many of the trees have a good covering yet remaining.

There is a spirit in the autumn wind which is absent from the breezes of other seasons. It is strengthening and refreshing in quality, bracing, and exhilarating. The smell of the leaves and the dying herbage is present in it; it spreads an invigorating fragrance around. Everywhere the smell is the same. A countryman might tell by the odor of the wind alone the time of year. An invisible something speaks of autumn.—*The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine.*

A BRAVE SOUL.

All of us have our moments of discouragement, when it seems as though too much had been asked of us and we were not able to bear our load. At such a time the story of someone else who has had a hard battle may be an inspiration. Forty years ago a young woman was left a widow with a family of little children and a heavy burden of debt. Far from being daunted by the prospect before her, she took up her pen and wrote for a living, working early and late and giving to her children a happy home full of sunshine. Two sons she sent through Oxford University—for this was an English home—a nephew she fitted for the civil service in India, two nieces she educated in Germany, an invalid brother she sheltered for years. All this was the result of her own work with her pen, and she relates how frequently she was at her desk until two in the morning. In all her working years she never wholly laid aside her tasks except for one week. She says of herself: "I ought to have been worn out by work and crushed by care half a hundred times by all rules, but I never was so. Good day and ill day, they balanced each other, and I got on through year after year." When at last she laid down her pen, Mrs.