

**THE BIBLE SPE**

International Union  
of Bible Students

BY DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN

Scriptures: Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:10-11; 11 Thessalonians 3:12-13

Devotional Reading: Psalm 137:1-7

**Growing by Working**

Lesson for September 5, 1954

"NOW I get me up to work, I pray thee, Lord, I may not shirk. When I lay me down at night, I pray thee, Lord, my work be right."

These lines by an unknown author hung in the bedroom of a man who, during his 85 years showed that his prayer was sincere. He was a Christian; and a Christian will think of his work as done always in the sight of God. A janitor of a church was asked why he kept a certain place behind the pulpit so clean. "Nobody can see it," he was told. "But God sees it," the janitor said. The Bible gives us Dr. Foreman some light on work in general, as God sees it.

**There is No Free Lunch**

The little church at Thessalonica was troubled with "moochers." The people there had got the idea that the end of the world was right around the corner. Jesus would come again soon, in their own lifetime. They did not see the use in working any more; the house they were building (for instance) would not be finished before the end would come; and the crop they were planting would never be harvested before the Judgment Day. So these eager, expectant Christians just quit their jobs in droves... but of course they had to eat. So they became free-loaders, boarding with such members of the parish as did keep their jobs. When their traveling Bishop Paul heard about this, he wrote them a very plain letter; indeed he had said some plain words while he was there getting the church organized, only they seem to have forgotten it. "He that will not work, let him not eat," he said. Help the needy, yes by all means; but don't feed the lazy. There is only one basic rule of economics (as an economist has said) and it is one anybody can understand: There is no free lunch.

**What is Useful Work?**

Now there is no special virtue in work, in itself. A man could work very hard shoveling sand from one pile on the beach to another pile, and back again, all day long. But it would do nobody any good. To be sure, he would be developing his muscles; but he could do that better some other way at some more useful job. The Bible's references to work always bring in the idea that the work is to be useful. Work that performs no service to any one is not for the serious Christian. This is a particularly important point for young Christians deciding on a life's work. We ought to work, of course, we don't want to be objects of charity, we don't want to be carried, we want to do something useful in the world. But what kind of work is useful? Paul told the Thessalonians that they should work with their hands, because they were all hand-workers; but some of the most useful work in the world is not done with the hands. Two points should be borne in mind: first that as a Christian I ought to seek the most useful work I can do, and second that I can be most useful in what I can do best.

**Growing by Working**

Work makes the man. Or at least, work shapes the man. Look at any picture of a high school senior class; they look all about alike, and for that matter look like any other senior class in America. But take a picture of you (not get it) of that same class twenty-five years later, or more, when they have all been at work in various jobs for years. Some may be drifters, ne'er-do-wells, and they look it; misfits because they have never stuck to useful work. The others who have stayed on one job or another, will look different by now, partly because of the kinds of work they have been doing. The housewife, the school teacher, the farmer, the banker, the writer, the soldier, the artist—they do not look alike any more. We grow by working. But there is another question too: Does my work help me to grow as a Christian? No doubt the slave-drivers of ancient Egypt grew by their work—grew more devilish; Moses was growing out in the wilderness of Midian tending sheep. But he was growing more God-like. It is not simply what we do that counts; it is the spirit in which we do it.

(Based on an outline copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., released by Community Press Service.)

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**Challenge To High Endeavor**

By REV. C. HERMAN TRUEBLOOD

TEXT: Exercise thyself unto godliness." 1 Tim. 4:7.

Some one has said, "Aim at the stars, though you may touch only the moon." Certainly no one is going to rise very high if he is perfectly satisfied to remain in a low static position. Paul's injunction to "Exercise unto godliness" was a big CHALLENGE TO HIGH ENDEAVOR. The word, "Exercise," means to "practice and Train for Improvement." It is just as important to exercise ourselves in the arena of spiritual matters, if we expect to obtain victory, as it is to exercise on the athletic field if victory is to be achieved. Paul urges Timothy to set his goal on:

**1. PROPER BEHAVIOUR.** A becoming behaviour becomes every one; this is especially true in regard to a Christian—What we are, and what we do, speak louder than any words of profession that we may make. The great urge is that "Thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself." 1 Tim. 3:15.

**2. STUDIOUS MEDITATION:** "Neglect not the gift that is in thee—Meditate upon these things (the word); give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." Tim. 4:14-15. Out of the day of twenty-four hours, or the week of one hundred and sixty-eight hours, how much time do we give to study of God's word, and spiritual meditation?

**3. HEED THE DOCTRINE.** Don't be afraid of the word, "Doctrine." The world is flooded with all sorts of doctrines. Some of which are as false as Satan. The fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion are as definite, permanent, and as unshakable as God. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. 4:16.

**4. AVOID PERVERSE DISPUTES.** Little is to be gained, and much time can be wasted, by arguing with little puffed-up men, strutting around blabbing their infidelity, and spending their lives sneering at the church of God. "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, from such withdraw thyself." 1 Tim. 6:3.

**5. SEEK GOD'S APPROVAL.** Many rules, standards, and creeds, have been set up by men; many of these are good. But nothing that man has devised can be substituted for God's standard. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15.

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**A Hymn Is Born**  
BY CLINT BONNER

**Christ My Refuge**

**Accident brought about discovery of Christian Science**

Her first husband, Maj. George Glover, died of good cheer, child; thy sins are forgiven... Arise, and take thy bed and go unto thy house... And he arose, and went to his house... In those words, said Mrs. Eddy, "I discovered the science of divine metaphysical healing." For, so great was the surge of power within her that she immediately "got out of bed and walked."

THUS WAS BORN the Christian Science movement, the organization and promotion of which Mary Baker Eddy spent her remaining 48 years... until "the beginning of life" overtook her at the age of 89 in 1910.

In addition to her prolific writings in the cause of Christian Science, this remarkable woman wrote several hymns for the denomination she founded.

The circumstances under which Mrs. Eddy wrote the following hymn are not definitely known. It is probable that she wrote it while sitting on the great red rocks that overlook the ocean near Lynn, Mass., where she often went to meditate.

"YOU HAVE TAKEN your last step," a doctor told 46-year-old Mary Baker after she had slipped on the ice, fallen and injured her spine. Partially paralyzed and unable to move from her bed, the despondent woman asked for a Bible.

Writing of the occasion years later, Mary Baker Eddy said it was divine guidance that caused her to open the Bible at Matthew 23, 2, 7: "And lo, they brought to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed... and Jesus said to the paralytic, Be of good cheer, child; thy sins are forgiven... Arise, and take thy bed and go unto thy house... And he arose, and went to his house."

There sweeps a strain,  
Low, sad, and sweet, whose measures bind  
The power of pain.

And wake a white-winged angel throng  
Of thoughts, illumed  
By faith, and breathed in raptured song,  
With love perfumed.

Then His unveiled, sweet mercies show  
Life's burdens light.  
I kiss the cross, and wake to know  
A world more bright.

And o'er earth's troubled, angry sea  
I see Christ walk,



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