

THE SOWER

A Weekly Department of Religious and Secular Thought Contributed by REV. JAMES A. TURNER, Pastor, M. E. Church, Patton, Pa.

YOU YOURSELF—PLUS.

It seems to be hard for some people to realize why regular attendance at Church is essential to the process of building a Godlike personality—even though they well appreciate the fact that in order to build and maintain a sound, effective and attractive body they must eat wisely and regularly.

A great American teacher, who is also a great Christian thinker and leader—Professor William E. Hocking of Harvard—has written what is called "the principle of alternation" in life. He finds the secret of renewal in mind and strength and the source of energy for carrying on in life to lie in an alternation of mental employments.

And another great American preacher reminds us that: "The two great complimentary activities are WORK and WORSHIP. These are like the two contrasting strokes of a machine. The out stroke may be compared to work; the back stroke corresponds to worship. Forward and back, forward and back, the piston rod of an engine moves. Forward and back, forward and back, a life in sound balance moves. In worship the mind finds rest, poise, renewal; in work the renewed energy finds employment. Every life needs two elements—work and worship.

Jesus is the perfect example of this principle of alternation. The busier he was, the more he worshipped. After a long, demanding day in the midst of crowds, he would withdraw to the hills and spend the night in prayer. Before important actions he would spend much time in prayer. Before Calvary came Gethsemane. The inner fortification of these periods of prayer is beautifully shown in Sidney Lanier's poem. The first stanza begins:

'Out of the woods my Master went
Clean forspent, forspent.'

The second verse describes the effect that the prayer in the garden had upon Jesus:

'Out of the woods my Master went
And He was well content.'

The two extremes to be avoided in living are a life that is all outthrust in action and has no renewal in spirit! and, on the other hand, a life that never spends itself in vigorous activity. The first is like a bow that is always strained and to taunt; the second is like a loose bow that is never drawn tightly for use.

Worship is an unending and indispensable means for real recreating rest for mind and spirit. Just as it is a blessed rest for tired eyes to lift them up from confining work and let them look afar upon new and beautiful landscapes, so it is a renewing experience to lift the mind from confining tasks and let it look out upon the reality of God. That is what Jesus did. That is what multitudes of his disciples have done. That is what we can all do.

This renewing power of worship is well described in the experience of a churchgoer. Every time we go to a worshipping church, there are certain great fundamental, and essential facts of human existence that are brought to us anew. It is characteristic of our minds that they need recurrent impressions continuously to hold a fact.

We may easily become so occupied with our calling and our personal affairs that we forget what life is all about. Each time we truly worship we shall be reminded that we are building for eternity, and the secondary things will retire in their places.

If we have, by disappointment or irritation, lost our hold on our confidence in the good intentions of God, an hour of genuine worship will restore our faith. If we have seen or suffered injustice and wrong so that the whole world appears to be going down, an hour of uplifting worship will renew our hope. If selfishness, envy, or littleness have soured us, we cannot sincerely contemplate the love of God shining in the face of Jesus without coming closer to the renewing of love.

The great result of fellowship with God is the creation of PLUS people—that is, people raised to their highest powers, people who draw upon more than their individual wisdom or their strength, people who are reinforced by the source of all wisdom and all strength, which is God. A seed dropped upon the earth is a seed PLUS. It is a seed plus the infinite resources of sky and earth, which enable it to realize to the full the possibilities which are locked up within it.

It is not unreasonable that to realize the possibilities for personal development which lie in contact with God should demand continued attention and effort. No mastery in any field of endeavor ever comes by accident. Consider an orchestra. We are thrilled by hearing an orchestra render a great piece of music, yet we rarely stop to realize the hours of effort which have gone into that mastery of music. In the New York Philharmonic orchestra, for instance, there are five rehearsals a week, each two and a half hours in length, to prepare for three or four concerts of less than two hours' duration. Although the men average more than twenty years as orchestra players and know both music and their instruments, every work on every program is usually rehearsed at least for once. This careful preparation puzzled an electrician who had worked on Carnegie hall for three decades. He paused for a moment and listened to a rehearsal of Beethoven's fifth symphony. Then he turned to an official of the orchestra and said:

"For thirty years I've listened to

ENJOYING PICNIC LUNCH AT N. Y. WORLD'S FAIR



NEW YORK (Special)—Picnickers are made to feel at home at the New York World's Fair. Pictured here is a happy group enjoying box lunches beneath brilliantly striped umbrellas which shade the picnic areas at the Fair grounds. They find luncheon al fresco a pleasant interlude of rest during their tour of the

hundreds of fascinating exhibits. And they find that the best things at the Fair are free. During the first month of the exposition the average per capita expenditure within the fair was \$1.17 and this included restaurant meals for most of the visitors.

those fellows practicing that sympathy. Don't they know it, yet?

No, they didn't know it, YET! Contrast with that the frequent neglect of cultivation of the spiritual life. People seem to think that religion will take care of itself with hardly any investment of time and care. They bring the scattered fragments of a fatigued mind at the end of the day to a few minutes of mechanical prayer.

So many people give to the church only the tattered remains of attention and energy that have been largely spent elsewhere. When this happens, the church relationship becomes formal and indifferent.

Julia Ward Howe once described a party 'where everyone seemed to have left themselves at home.' That descri-

bes many a church. The body at present, but the self—the alert interest, the investment of sympathy and time and labor—are absent. Put your church on your program as a 'must'—a thing that comes first, that deserves and receives, not remainders, but first, fresh offerings of love, time, and service. If twenty persons in your church would do this, it would be a freshly real and powerful fellowship."

PATTON METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

James A. Turner, Pastor.
Church school at 9 A. M. Preaching at 10 A. M. and 7:30 P. M. Mid-week Bible Class, Wednesday at 7:30.
Gipsy Smith tells a story of a young couple with whom he once stayed

They had an only child to whom they were devoted. One night at supper time a thud was heard on the floor of the room above. No harm, however, was done and the next morning Mr. Smith chaffingly questioned the little fellow about the noise he had heard, who, when asked WHY he tumbled out of bed, replied, "Cos I went to sleep too near where I got in."

Yes, how many people in the Church have gone to sleep on their job of being a Christian and a good church-member just after they got in,—and have fallen out, never come any more, never pray, pay, or life any burdens, never think of anyone but themselves and their selfish interests,—and then blame the preacher, the church and God because things don't go right with

them. They join the Church for the standing it gives them in the community, refuse to pay anything to the church for what they get from it, and then, when they die, expect the preacher to come around and preach their funeral sermon without any further

obligation to themselves.—all the while they criticize the preacher for not having called on them every week of the year. Every church has such people on its roll, and they are always the trouble makers in the church. God have mercy on their miserable souls!

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Michael Angelo.

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OR

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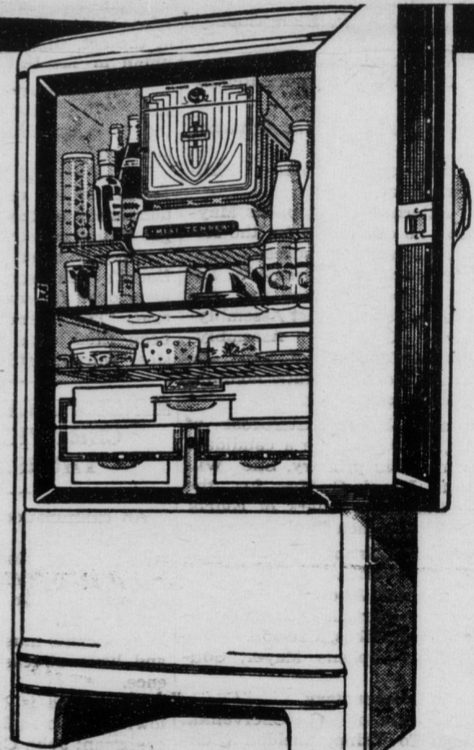
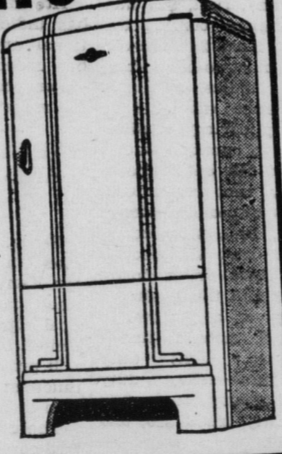
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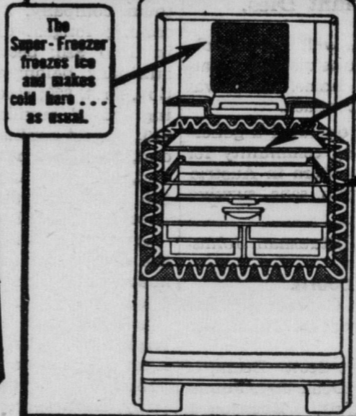
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