

EPIDEMIC MEDITATIONS.

The Missions at Olathe and Montrose Missionary District of Western Colorado, were closed over a month on account of the influenza epidemic. The Rev. Williston Ford formed a plan for helping his people to worship in the homes during the quarantine. Each week he mailed to each home in the Missions a meditation which he personally typewrote. At Olanthe a league of twenty-five people was formed to read the Bible daily according to a carefully arranged card. We are indebted to the Western Colorado Evangel for three of Mr. Ford's meditations, as follows:

You are asked to take half an hour at home this coming Sunday to rest and renew yourself spiritually. If the churches are closed we must open our hearts at home. We all need more strength at this time of epidemic. The closer we draw to God in thoughtful prayer, the stronger we will be in body, mind and spirit. The following outline will not fail to help you:

Meditation:—

"The inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. 4:16.)

The inward man is the spiritual life within us underneath all we do and say: the purpose of life is really to develop the inward man day by day. To renew is to invigorate. God is the source of all strength. The irreligious person has only his own limited strength. The religious person has the endless strength and life of the Almighty One to draw upon. How can renewal of strength from God be gained? In quiet, thoughtful prayer. We can renew our spiritual nature by dwelling on these four thoughts:

God is the source of all strength.

God is always present: His renewing strength is always close at hand.

To gain touch with God is to renew our strength.

The inward man can actually be renewed day by day.

You are urged to take time at home this Sunday to be renewed from on high. A closed church must not mean a closed heart. There is a service of Family Prayer on page 322 of our Prayer Book; the lessons for the day are Isaiah 49, verses 1-23, and the first chapter of the Epistle of St. John.

Meditation:—

"Put on the armour of light."—(Rom. 13:12.)

Mind curtains body at every turn. If your mind is amused your body laughs or smiles; when you get angry, your heart beats faster. Science shows that a right frame of mind has a beneficial effect and a wrong frame of mind a poisonous effect on the body. Prayerful thought has, therefore, a health-giving and healing influence. St. Paul says plainly, "Put on the armour of light"—the strengthening power of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is life-giving and health-giving; He creates a protective armour of increased strength; this armour of light is gained in thoughtful prayer. Let your mind dwell prayerfully on these three thoughts:

1.—God, the Source of all strength, is always close at hand.

2.—To be with God is to be renewed in strength.

3.—This will create an actual "armour of light."

Since quarantine prevents our Holy Communion service, will you join in with a plan of home communion? At the usual time on Sunday start reading the service on page 221—the gospel is on page 184. After this spend half an hour over these words:

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."—(Isaiah 40:31.)

Waiting is a word for thoughtful prayer. In thoughtful prayer we renew or increase our vitality—we gain an actual "armour of light" to strengthen us against disease, difficulty or depression. Without the Spirit, people become dispirited. Guard against this by an effort to realize the full meaning of these following phrases:

Meditation:—

1.—The near Presence of God—every day of our life.

2.—The need of our prayerful waiting upon God.

3.—The renewed strength which God alone can give.

4.—Our own personal need of strength at this time.

5.—The needs of others, whether sickness, sorrow or sin—that God may strengthen them in body, mind and spirit.