

Influenza Sermons in S. J.

THE influenza embargo against public assemblages is still on, and in order to circumvent this difficulty, pastors of churches are continuing to avail themselves of "The Examiner's" offer to publish one-minute sermons that may be read at home.

Following are the sermons contributed yesterday:

RIGHT REV. WILLIAM FORD NICHOLS, Episcopal bishop of San Francisco—Cities have had their rallies for "go-to-church Sundays." Just now our cities in loyal compliance with Health Board instructions are experiencing in good part their "stay-at-home Sundays." But a city masking against a mysterious peril in the air should all the more consistently become a city asking safeguard against improvidence in its religion. Anxiety and affliction have invaded many homes. And as every face wears a mask so every person thrown back more or less upon his own identity. The trouble is epidemic upon the people at large. But that only means individuals multiply. Singly each patient has his own temperature and each doctor, nurse and relief helper has his own personal touch distance from every one else. An epidemic is like the photograph of a crowd. It takes in a mass, but every upturned face is there by itself. There is nothing like the blending of them into composite face.

There is then in it all a real getting down to strong intimations of each one's essential loneliness of spirit. That affords the very determining instinct for religious use of a time of intermission of public worship. Many who can will nobly turn it to account in bearing their own burdens, by busily ministering to the sick and suffering, and so by bearing one another's burdens "fulfill the law of Christ." Others will turn to fuller use of the private and household prayer of faith which when accompanied with all human skill means so much to the sick. And whatever gazed breath may provide as prescription against invisible microbes, prayers protected breath means everything against the infection of spirit from closed churches. Every home and every sick room may be made a sanctuary and every life a new power in communion with self and with God and His word. The silent church of these days may but make more personally vocal the spirit of worship.

REV. JOSIAH SIBLEY, Pastor Calvary Presbyterian Church—Our usually genial vegetable may was very depressed yesterday. Instead of a cheery greeting there was a dismal silence broken only by the tales of sickness among his friends and fellow workers. He was typical of most of these days.

But we must remember, there's a silver lining to every cloud. There are treasures of darkness that sunlight could never discover. In the dark shaft sunken in the bosom of earth the beholder can look up and see the stars which were not visible in sunshine. It took the darkness to reveal them. Shafts of grief and sorrow sunk in the human heart reveal the stars of hope and faith and God which we never saw in the sunshine.

These clouds will pass. Returning health will be the lot of our city in the near future.

But may we see the precious jewels revealed by the darkness. What magnificent examples of heroic service being revealed by the physicians and nurses, who go right "over the top" in the fighting of disease. And what unselfish devotion is exhibited on every hand. A father lost his lovely young daughter and returned with his wife to town. They are not giving up to grief. He said to me over the telephone: "I'm back to help the Red Cross as a driver of my auto-

mobile; if we can save a single life it will help make up for the one we have lost."

We shall not see truly the silver lining of these dark days unless we discover God in our lives as never before. Trouble always brings the human heart back to God. The Bible answers the craving of hearts everywhere because it speaks so often of God and sorrow.

The eighth chapter of Romans is a masterful chapter. It is good for these days. It tells us that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us—the glory of character and faith. It also tells there isn't anything that can separate us from the love of God.

REV. J. H. LEWIN, pastor Wesley Methodist Church—gladly accept the privilege of giving a one-minute message to the readers of "The Examiner." Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich yet for your sakes He became poor that we through His poverty might be rich. Even Christ pleased not Himself, but freely gave Himself for us all.

In these dark days of war and still darker days of Spanish influenza, the example of Christ in His magnificent self-denial makes its insistent appeal. Already there have been great responses. The nation with glad and generous feet has climbed the heights of a truer patriotism than ever it has known before. On those heights the Red Cross workers like angels of mercy—they are speed to the relief of the sick and the sorrowing and the poor. Medical men are there spending their strength and skill in stemming the torrents of suffering. Surely this is a sight well pleasing to God, who by His unspeakable gift supplied not only the example but the incentive and the grace that we might emulate Him. Let us then in these drear days of sorrow think of ourselves last, practice still further self-denial, "live while we live," intensely, deeply sacrificially and spiritually, "heart within and God overhead."

REV. DAVID MILES DAWSON, Pastor Central Baptist Church—It is a blessed fact that when we worship God in spirit and in truth a humble culture can be the very shrine of God. Therefore, on this Lord's day, we can set apart the usual hours of worship and, assembled in our homes as families, sing some of the grand old hymns of the Kingdom, open the Word of God and pray to our Father.

Let us read Psalm 46 and may the Holy Spirit help us to make that first verse our own: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Let us pray much these days, remembering our President, our beloved country, and her allies; the church of Jesus Christ everywhere, our local church and her workers, and that the world may be brought to realization that peace, joy and satisfaction are only possible when the heart is right with its God. May our Father safeguard you all these days and keep you well both physically and spiritually.

THE REV. W. A. COUDEN, Assistant Pastor First Presbyterian Church—Philip was one of the seven chosen by the church and ordained by the apostles to dispense relief to the poor. As a consecrated layman he was no doubt faithful in the work committed unto him by the church, but he was not satisfied with doing that work and that alone. For the Master had said, "Ye are My witnesses," and so wherever he went he testified for Jesus and in Samaria through his testimony many were brought to a saving knowledge of the Christ.

In the desert he met the Eunuch reading the prophecy, and when

questioned as to whether or not he believed what he was reading he said: "How can I except some man should guide me?" Many times we who are Christians forget or do not realize our responsibility toward those around us who do not know the Master and will possibly never know Him except some man should guide them. The need of the church is and always has been consecrated laymen. And now may I leave with you the story of Joe Stoker, a railroad brakeman, who was one night out on his regular run when an accident happened to the engine and he was directed by the conductor to go to the caboose and get his lantern and flag; the passenger train which would soon be due. Joe went to the caboose, but delayed starting on his mission, and when he finally started had only gone a few steps up the track when the express train dashed around the curve and crashed into the rear end of the freight train. The next morning they found Joe wandering in the fields near by and took him to an insane asylum, where he walked up and down the corridor repeating, "Oh, if I only had. Oh, if I only had." Before him were the faces of dying men and women and ringing in his ears were their shrieks. He couldn't get away from those faces and cries. God help us to do our duty now and not have to look back with regret and remorse when it is too late.

REV. C. L. BENT, pastor First Methodist Church—Laborers together with God. So many phases of life have been opening up to the followers of Christ in the last few years that the church is bewildered in its attempts to meet them. Some cry that Christianity has failed. What will the church do now? Some cry one thing and some cry another. Allowing—for the sake of the arguments offered—that the church has not measured up to the opportunity offered by world conditions, we would still be far from admitting that Christianity had failed.

Christ has not failed. Every true follower of His may depend upon it. The Father and Son have a programme for the church that must and will be carried out.

We are in the habit of going to the store or place of business and inquiring the cost of the articles we find ourselves in need of; if it suits us we pay the price, appropriate the articles and use them.

So many people do a part of this matter of laboring together with God. They inquire the price to be paid; some pay the price and never appropriate the thing sought. God expects us to take the power offered and appropriate it for use in His kingdom. It is the will of God for the church to be useful in the community. He gives us the will to do. The only honest thing for us to do is to labor together with God in seeing His will done among men. It is God's will that men should be saved; it is for us to help them to the One who can save them. This can be done, even though there are no regular church services. We can create the atmosphere of faith and confidence by our steadfastness. We can meet the world of sickness and sorrow and death with the power of faith, knowing that Jesus Christ cares enough to be near.