

"The Gospel of the Spring. Flowers"

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FLOWERS

How we love them, and how eagerly we watch for the first blossoms of Spring! Think of the love of God in giving us the flowers. So many of the things that we have talked about together, He has provided to supply some need of ours, something that we could not live without, and the air which brings us the breath of life, the sunshine, and the food that He brings for us out of the earth. But have you ever thought that

"God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
Without a flower at all.

"Our outward life requires them not;
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth."

Yes, our Heavenly Father, when He prepared a home for His children, did everything that could be done to give them pleasure. He made things "pleasant to the sight," as well as "good for food." And think, too, of the delightful odours of so many of the Spring flowers, the sweet breath of the violet, the hyacinth, and the cowslip.

All this God has done on purpose for us His children; for as the great and good poet George Herbert has truly and sweetly sung:—

"Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure."

It is told of the great naturalist Linnaeus that when he first came to England and saw our common gorse or furze bush in its blaze of yellow flowers, he fell on his knees and thanked God for letting him see such a beautiful sight.

Is not a flower a beautiful gift for one friend to give to another? For not only is it so sweet in itself, but we love it all the more because of the kind thought of the giver; of whom it makes us think every time that we look at it.

Now if you will take each one of the sweet blossoms of Spring as just what it is,—a gift to you from your Heavenly Father, how much sweeter they will be to you than ever before. Then every time you see one you will think of Him who made it with His own hands for you, who painted it with lovely tints of colour to please your eyes, and scented it with delicious

fragrance for you to smell. Then every flower you see will preach the Gospel to you, for is it not "good news" that your Father in Heaven loves and thinks of you so much?

Let me tell you one thing more about the flowers. Not only has God made them for you, but in them He is giving Himself to you. The life that the flowers have is God's own life, their beauty is "the beauty of the Lord."

When in the beginning God said, "Let the earth bring forth," "the Spirit of God moved" upon the earth, and His living Word sprang up from it clothed in all these beautiful forms. God wanted His children to see His loveliness, so that they might be attracted to Him and learn to love Him more and more.

Now as you "consider the lilies, how they grow," they will teach you how you, too, may grow in grace, and show forth the beauty of the Lord, so that others may see and learn to love Him.

It is just by hearing His Word, by letting His Word, which He says is "Spirit and life" come in and move upon your heart, and work there as you can now see it working in the earth, making the grass and flowers to spring up from it.

If you keep the precious and powerful words of God in your heart, this good seed will bring forth in you aft the sweet graces of His Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance.

"Sweet is the opening flower
Which just begins to bloom,
Which every day and every hour
Fresh beauties will assume.

"But sweeter that young heart
Where faith and love and peace
Blossom and bloom in every part,
With sweet and varied grace."