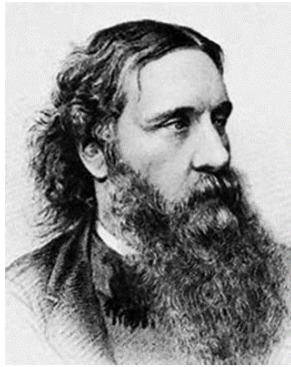


The Bulwark

OCTOBER 16, 2022

A HIDDEN LIFE

George MacDonald was a noted Scottish author, poet and minister for the Congregational church. He was born in 1824 and passed from this life in 1905. During his time as a minister it was wrought with controversy and he directed more of his time and energy toward writing, especially works of fantasy. He turned his back on an advanced degree from the University of Aberdeen to return to the family farm and be a support to his aging father. Several well known authors, the likes of which include Mark Twain, Lewis Carroll, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis openly acknowledge being influenced by his literary works.



During his time on the farm MacDonald engaged himself in doing what he described as “ordinary deeds” and “simple forms of human kindness”. During this time he penned the poem, “A Hidden Life”, wherein he explores the virtue of doing the little, often unseen things in life. Perhaps part of the motivation of this poem was that his friends thought he was wasting his talents. After reading the poem one realizes the fulfillment he experienced and wanted for others.

On the cusp of His death, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, reclining at the table with others. The account, which is found in Mark, chapter fourteen, notes that a woman came in and

poured a vial of costly perfume over Jesus’ head. Those assembled there had questions and others scolded the woman, but Jesus said the following as found in verse six. *“Leave her alone; why do you bother her? She has done a good deed to me.”* Shortly thereafter, Jesus stated, *“She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial.”* (v 8)

In the ninth chapter of Acts, a disciple by the name of Tabitha, is noted as being a woman who was *“abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did.”* Without fan-fare she did what she could, when she could. Her simple acts of service clearly made an impact on the brethren in Joppa. Equally, she and what was done by her serve as an apt example for all even to this day.

Throughout the pages of the New Testament the appeal resonates that every child of God open their eyes for ways to be of service in the body of Christ. *“And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially those of the household of faith.”* (Galatians 6:9-10) Paul in chapter twelve of Romans goes into some ways in which all can be of service.

Spend some time really looking over Romans twelve. Appreciate that all of us have different ways in which we can serve. Awaken to the fact that there is so much that can be accomplished for the cause of Christ if only each one of us does what he or she can do. Ordinary deeds and simple forms of human kindness can accomplish so much. Being present for one another. Listening and caring.

Such service is not done in order to be noticed by others. It is part of that “hidden life” that we engage in because it has become as it were part of our “nature” as child of God. *“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”* (Colossians 3:23) (wbe)

A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

- 7054 Winnetka Ave.
Winnetka, CA 91306
- 818-795-5566
- Bruce Evans
Minister
- Website:
www.winnetkachurch.com