

*William F. Rick,
Pastor St. Mark's Lutheran Church,
Market Street.*

Williamsport, Pa.,

1896

Dear Friend:-

The hour is come; the long wished for event is at hand; our prayers have been heard. Our beautiful church will be dedicated October 4th,--not merely the dedication of a building, but the dedication of a great influence for God and good is what I hope it to be. Have I your support? My friend, I feel St. Mark's is on the march to great victories. Are you in the lines? Have you drawn the sword for the Master? Have you caught the enthusiasm? Are you singing the battle cry "We march, we march to victory?" I believe a great destiny lies before our beloved church. She is to become nothing less than one of the foremost churches in this land. Will you pledge your hearty co-operation? How, you ask?

(1). Dedicate your life anew to God. Read His Word more diligently and live according to it. Closely examine your life, and by God's grace rid it of its besetting sins. Men and women of Christ like character are a church's greatest strength.

(2). Learn to love your church more deeply and dearly. Lukewarmness is a sin. The lukewarm are the church's enemies. The Saviour says He will spew them out of his mouth. The church can do much for you in gaining Heaven; but I have found she does most for those who do most for her. "With whatsoever measure you mete, it shall be measured unto you," says the Scriptures. Give her then your full support. Be regular at all her services and Communion. Cherish no ill will, but love all the members. Speak kindly of them. Know their faults only to help them. Welcome strangers. Bring into the fold the straying. When your interest flags, seek by prayer and every way possible to revive it. It is a sign of spiritual dyspepsia that may cause your soul's death.

(3). Labor to make the dedication a grand success. As no human being can know what grand things the birth of a child may mean to the parents, the city, and the nation, so is it with the birth of a new religious influence. Neither you nor I can estimate what this dedication on October 4th may mean. How many sinners, drawn thereto by curiosity, may be saved. How many, weary in well doing, be strengthened. How many despairing encouraged. How many mourners comforted. How many young guided from the shipwreck of their higher nature. Think of these things, and then resolve to put aside five minutes of each day in which to pray for it and for me, your pastor. Ask many to come to it. The services will continue for a week, Saturday excepted. Good speakers and excellent music will be in attendance. There will also be preparatory services on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings of this week. Come to as many of these meetings as you can.

I have much else I wish to say to you, but my space will not allow it. I feel deeply the ambition to make St. Mark's a power for Good and God second to none. I rely upon your help. You will not live forever on this earth. Opportunities for doing good come but once. The greatest good we can do is to be loyal and loving and active in our own church. If you are not so, believe me it will be your keenest regret when you come to die.

And now may God bless you and our dear St. Mark's.

Your friend and pastor,

William F. Rick