

THE EVANGELIST VOLUME 4 1870

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60 Chapters

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The Evangelist Volume 4 1870

Acceptance

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

"And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and, It shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."—LEV. 1: 4.

ON looking into the Gospels, and tracing the words and varied ministry of Jesus, we cannot fail to be struck with His frequent reference to the authority of Scripture. This is a most important point to note in a day like this, when Scripture is thought so little of, and men's writings are so much extolled. You remember how successfully the Lord overcame the temptations of Satan by, "It is written:" how He exposed the errors of the Pharisees by, "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God:" how He met His adversaries on another occasion with, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal' life, and they are they which testify of Me." Of course, it was the Old Testament writings to which our Lord referred; the New Testament was not then written; and this settles the point, not only of their authority, but that they so testify of Christ, that no one can rightly understand their meaning, who does not see Christ in them.

The Lord also remarkably honored the books of Moses. Not only did He say, "Moses, wrote of Me," but He said, If they had believed Moses, they would have believed Me; and, after His resurrection from the dead, we are told that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself." This divine evidence of the authority and worth of Moses' writings, is of all-importance just now, when so many would have us look at such a chapter as we have read as an old parchment, that has been done with and laid aside, and only now to be regarded as a mere historical record.

This chapter, Lev. 1, is a part of the Mosaic writings. To the natural eye, nothing can be seen, but an old legal ordinance, that has passed away. Not so, however; for by the testimony of Christ Himself, and the gracious ministry of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, to dwell in us and teach us, we find Christ most blessedly presented. The apostle Paul refers to it in the 2nd verse of the 5th chapter of Ephesians 5:12

It is not now my purpose to expound this chapter, but to confine my remarks more particularly to the precious subject of Acceptance. The Old Testament, as well as the New, teaches this blessed truth. In Eph. 1 we read, "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." It is all of God, and therefore to the praise of the glory of His grace. It is a fact, that each of us now is either "accepted" or not. In the testimony both of prophet and apostle, we have beautifully set before us, what we are to understand by a person being accepted in God's sight. Such are the depths of divine mercy that God has come down to us in Christ, and not only delivered us from the wrath to come, to which we were so justly exposed, death but given us to stand in favor and blessing before Him in Christ glorified, in perfect unchanging love.

For a man to need acceptance shews that he must be far from God, unclean and unfit for His presence. So it is. Man fell, was turned out of Eden, because he had sinned, and ever since the

one question has been about reconciliation and acceptance. Man's utter ruin, as fallen, is greatly lost sight of, and, sad to think, by many ignored. Some say, "I am as God made me." This is not true. Others say, "Man was made for this world." I have lately seen it in print. This too is false. He was made for Eden, when there was neither curse nor death. This world is under judgment, for Jesus said in prospect of the Cross, "Now is the judgment of this world," and we know that curse and death are here. These, and many other sentiments of the day, are doctrines of men who ignore the solemn fact of man's utter ruin and distance from God. The man of this world knows no more of the presence of God, than Adam did when God drove him out of Eden.

The way in which God accepts man is strikingly shown in this chapter. First, it was through a spotless sacrifice; secondly, it must be killed before the Lord, and blood sprinkled; thirdly, it must be that which God could wholly accept; fourthly, the man attained all the blessedness of acceptance through connection with the offering.

First, then, a spotless sacrifice must be, found—"He, shall offer a male without blemish." (v. 3.) Acceptance, then, is wholly through sacrifice, not by works, prayers, or anything else of man. How many are looking at their feelings, or doings, or experience, to see whether they are accepted; but here we see it is entirely through a burnt offering. It is not a question of good intentions, or good desires; but there must be an unblemished offering presented to God, or there could be no ground for a single person being accepted.

Surely Jesus the Son of God is the unblemished one, and we are told that He "offered Himself without spot to God." It is the personal worth of Christ that gives such efficacy to His work. We know that He was truly man and truly God—God manifest in our flesh. He is called the Lamb without blemish and without spot. Once and again the heaven opened over Him, when God declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is because He was without spot, inwardly and outwardly, the Holy One of God, that He was suited to be a sacrifice for sinful creatures as we. If there had been a single spot, the smallest blemish, the minutest taint of evil in Him, He would not have been a fit sacrifice for us,—a burnt offering.

Secondly. The sacrifice was killed—"He shall kill the bullock before the Lord, and the priests Aaron's sons shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood, &c (v. 5.) Nothing less than death could meet the case so nothing less than the death of Christ could meet our need. Christ hath loved us, and given Himself for us, a sacrifice and an offering to God for a sweet smell and savor. What love! The absolute necessity of the death of Christ for our acceptance was insisted on by Him in His ministry." Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Thus we see Christ must have been alone—He could not have us with Him unless He had died. He was infinitely holy. Death therefore had no claim upon Him; and though He died for us, He could not possibly be holden of death. It is a marvelous mystery that the Prince of Life died. We are told, "they killed the Prince of life," but He saw no corruption. He could say in the prospect of death, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption." If He had not been the unblemished One, He could not have died for us; if He had not died, we could not have been brought to God. The death of Jesus is therefore the ground of our acceptance with God. The poured out blood was shed for us, and the risen and ascended One went into heaven itself by His own blood. The blood gives us title to stand before God in His holy presence for ever.

Thirdly. The offering must be that which God could wholly accept and find rest in—a savor of rest. The priest shall burn all upon the altar, a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord. (v. 9.) The whole offering is so perfect that all can be presented to God as a sweet savor. In this account of the burnt offering, the Holy Ghost lays before us in symbol the infinite perfections of Jesus. When searched by the fire of divine holiness He was found wholly acceptable to God. The offering was "cut into his pieces," and "the parts, the head, and the fat, were put upon the wood, that is on the fire, which is upon the altar." The inwards also and legs were washed, that they might fitly typify the inward holiness and walk of the Holy Son of God. So if you look at Jesus as to his person, life, walk, ministry, every part was fully acceptable to God. As to inward feeling He could emphatically say, "I love the Father." "My meat and drink is to do the will of Him that sent me." Never did a desire or a thought emanate from His heart that did not glorify God. Trace Him in every department of His course, in private walk, social intercourse, alone with disciples, or in public ministry; see Him in temptation in the wilderness with wild beasts and hungry; observe Him, when they came by force to make Him a king, or when, on another occasion, they bade Him to depart out of their coasts; look at Him with multitudes crying out, "Hosanna," or not long after when all the people cried out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," when one betrayed Him, another denied Him, and all his disciples forsook Him and fled; consider Him forsaken of God, and in unutterable woe, crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Wherever you view Him, from Bethlehem's manger, till He cried with a loud voice, "It is finished," every thought, feeling, act, and word was always well pleasing to God. Well, it is the infinite perfection of Himself that gives such everlasting value to all He did; and, thank God, it was all for us. All was burnt, all was accepted, all was for God, all was consumed on the altar. "He offered Himself without spot to God," and God found a sweet savor in it all. He glorified God in the earth. He finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. The death of Christ was not only the accomplishment of divine righteousness, but in it God was infinitely glorified about our sins, and we see also the perfectness of the Son's love to the Father, His perfect obedience, and the perfect love of the Good Shepherd for the sheep.

But there is another most important point—there must be identification with the offering. Many know that Jesus was holy and that He died for sinners; they have heard too again and again of His infinite perfectness, and yet they know that they are not saved. How is this? Because while their intellects have been informed, their hearts have never known personal contact with the Savior. They have never really felt their need and danger, because they have never considered their lost and guilty condition. They believe there was a wonderful person here called Jesus, but they have never believed on Him for salvation. They have not touched Him by faith, have not fled for refuge to His open arms of mercy. Whatever therefore they may know, they are as far from salvation as those perishing souls who were just outside the ark in Noah's day. You have seen a locomotive engine, with a long line of carriages standing close behind it. The whistle has sounded, the engine moved rapidly on, but the carriages remained perfectly still, and were all left behind. Why is this? Because they were not linked to the engine. So it is with souls. Many hear of Christ, read of Him, and oh how solemn, speak of Him, but they are not saved, because they are not (if I may so say) linked with Christ. Have you, my dear hearers, received Christ? Are you accepted in the Beloved? These are vital questions. If you are not, it is because you have not looked to Him, and trusted in Him to save you. Faith is the link. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The vilest sinner that takes refuge in Him, with the heartfelt utterance,

“Myself into thine arms I cast,
Lord save this sinful one at last,”

is linked with the Lord Jesus; for He receives all, welcomes all, and keeps for ever all who come to Him. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37.)

It is said in our chapter, that "He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering;" and those who have abandoned every other refuge, and simply rested in the record God hath given of His Son,—believed. God's word concerning the atoning work of Jesus—can intelligently sing,

“My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there.”

When the hand was laid upon the head of the sacrifice, observe that it was God who said, "It shall be accepted for him." So now, if you can say, "My trust is simply in Christ and His finished work," you are linked by faith to Christ, you are "accepted in the Beloved." There is no room for a doubt. You have God's word for it. It is God who says, that He "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The word of God thus gives a divine certainty to our souls. Suppose the offering without spot had been provided, and the man had not put his hand on the head of it, what profit would it have been to him? None at all. So it is that many in the present day hear of the atoning work of Christ, and know much Bible truth; but they are not saved, because they look not to Jesus, nor trust in Him.

It is the certainty of present acceptance, based on the finished work of the Son of God, and the unalterable word of God, that is the spring of all true communion, worship, and service. Being consciously brought into the light of God's holy presence, as objects of His perfect love, in the enjoyment of that perfect peace which His never-failing word warrants, our hearts are constrained to serve, and honor, and follow Him, in whom we have acceptance and redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." This is not merely an informing light, that which informs the intellect; but living light communicating living blessing to the heart, and filling it with joy and gladness in the Lord.

If, dear friends, any of you are not trusting in Christ, and Christ alone, and His finished work, may you do so now, and have the joy of knowing that you are "accepted in the Beloved," and now stand before God in all the fragrance of the acceptability of Christ.

The character of the acceptance then is that of the risen and accepted Christ, for you are accepted in Him. Is He alive for evermore? then you have everlasting life, for Christ is your life. Is He near to God? so are you made nigh in Him,—as near to God as He is. Is He righteous? then you are righteous as He is; for Christ is made of God unto us righteousness. Hence we are told, that "as He is, so are we in this world." Wondrous truth! But all this is involved in the glorious fact that we are "made accepted in the Beloved." By and by it will be known that the Father has loved us as He

loved Jesus. Precious reality! lay you fully receive God's own unfoldings of His grace, and follow Christ!

“Is Not God's Love First?”

IT is to be feared that many make a ruinous mistake on this point. They try to make themselves fit for God, as they say. They labor and work, vainly hoping to make their cold hearts love, and their proud hearts submit to God. They tell us that they feel they have a great deal to do, and their hope is, that they will be good Christians one day. They put salvation at the end, instead of the starting-point. They sometimes flatter themselves that they are better than other people; but they are withal still far from God, unwashed and un-reconciled. Into this most serious mistake they are sometimes helped by those who call themselves ministers of religion, who are deceivers, and themselves deceived; and it is only when the scriptures of truth, which testify of God's love and Christ's finished work, are received into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the snare is made manifest, and they are delivered from the power of darkness, and brought to enjoy the liberty of the children of God.

We lately read of a little girl who was thus led astray, till God in His mercy delivered her; and we quote freely from it, because it illustrates, we fear, the condition of many others. This little girl had become very anxious about her soul, and was told that God would not love her, or give her pardon, until her then. She was told, "No, not until your proud heart submits, and your cold heart loves." Accordingly, the heart had submitted to Him, and until she loved Him. Consequently, the dear child was directed to go away and pray, and struggle to get her heart to submit, and to obtain this love. After striving for some time, and finding herself no better, she came back, and 'asked if God was willing to forgive and love her poor child was almost driven to distraction, and would sometimes throw herself upon the floor of her room, and agonize in effort and in prayer to get her heart to submit, and to love God; but still she felt no change in heart, no love springing up there, after all her toiling and prayers. Unhappy child! led into the wrong road, by the false teaching to which she had listened—man's tradition, instead of God's truth. She almost suspected she was taking a wrong course; and complaining that she was no better, asked, "Must I love God first? Will He not love me and pardon me before I have love to Him?" To this she was answered, "No." "But," she rejoined most judiciously and correctly, "Is it not said, ' We love Him because He first loved us?' and if so, is not God's love first? "To this she had an unsatisfactory reply; still, she was told, "No, my dear; you must first love God for what He is in Himself, and then, like other Christians, you will love Him for what He has done for you." Upon this the dear child was sent away, unsatisfied with the reply, but still supposing that her affectionate instructor could not be wrong. However, she became no better or happier.

She toiled on for months. At length, one day, she was listening to a sermon in which the love of God in providing a Savior, and in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God, was depicted in such a glowing and lovely manner, that she could not help beginning to love God where she sat. She saw so clearly that God loved sinners BEFORE they had love to God. She felt the force of the apostle's words, " Herein is love; NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US;" and this at once relieved her of the difficulty so long felt, and made her rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Nor was it a mere transient emotion. No; she proved" love" by her works and

words.

How blessed a theme is the love of God! How full of joy and gladness to a sin-convicted soul the Savior's words often prove—" God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Dear reader, are you, like many others, trying to love God first? or, like many more, intending to come to Jesus, but trying to make yourself better first so, you will find what the hymn says to be true, that,

"If you tarry till you're better,

You will never come at all."

De you not see that all such efforts are at variance with receiving at once the gospel testimony of God's love to the world? Oh! it is His love, not yours; His goodness, not yours; His faithfulness, not yours; His righteousness, not yours, that secures the salvation of sinners like you and me. The death of Jesus on the cross shews you that God loves the sinner FIRST, and the Scripture declares, that "WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US."

Remarks on Matthew 24 & 25

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

Chapter 25:31-46

THE concluding section of this prophetic discourse of our Lord's extends beyond the range which has hitherto been brought before us, It is very peculiar, and distinct too, in its character of instruction. It is not the Bridegroom coming for the wise virgins, nor is it the Master judging His servants, but it is the King sitting upon His throne and judging the nations, which will then be gathered before Him. Such it is stated to be. It describes a scene of judgment on living persons, which will not have its accomplishment till after we have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, for the Lord does not take unto Him His Kingly power and reign, till He comes forth in manifested glory. Then we shall come with Him; for "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. (Col. 3:4.) This is enough to shew that this judgment cannot refer to us, put is simply what it says, a judgment of nations.

"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations."(vv. 31, 32.) This judgment must not be confounded with the "great white throne" scene, for that is a judgment of the dead, when the earth and heaven will have fled away; but here we have "nations" judged on the earth. I say on the earth, because Christ is coming to the earth as King, and He will be King, over all the earth, and all will be made subject to Him. "He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." (See Zech. 14, and Psa. 110) It is a scene to be fulfilled on the earth, and therefore there is not the least hint of a single dead person being raised at this time. It is the King in manifested glory, attended with angelic hosts (See 2 Thess. 1) judging "the nations" gathered before Him. It is not Israel, but Gentiles—all nations.

The character of the judgment is as to how they have dealt with His brethren. It is important to see that there are four companies in this scene—"the King," "the sheep," "the goats," and "the brethren."

Who are these brethren? Surely, as we have seen, they cannot be those who form the body, the church, for we shall have been caught away from the earth before this. The principles here inculcated are always true, for those who love the Lord Jesus love His saints, &c., but we are not now considering principles, but endeavoring to understand the true character of instruction which the Lord here sets before us. That there will be a company of Christ's brethren after the flesh, of the true and literal seed of Abraham and David; raised up, inspired with Jewish hopes, joyfully anticipating Messiah's kingdom, who will carry what is called "the gospel of the kingdom" after the church is gone, is plainly taught in the Scriptures. Their prayers will come up to the throne of God in heaven as incense, while the heavenly saints are there, hence we read in Rev. 5 of "vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." We also saw Jewish saints in suffering during the great tribulation when meditating on Matt. 24 Again in Rev. 6 when the fifth seal is opened, we read of

souls under the altar crying for vengeance. This is surely not a Christian cry. How came they there? We are told they were Slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. (v. 9.) Our Lord spoke of this testimony. He said, as we have already considered in ch. 24., "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world," that is the civilized world, or as Mark expresses it "among all nations." The gospel of the kingdom, or the glad-tidings of the King coming to set up the promised kingdom on earth, will characterize this testimony. The consequence will be that some will hear and treat these messengers of the King kindly; others, however, will not hear, but will persecute and put some to death. This testimony, therefore, will be connected with a special judgment. However, when the King comes, all nations will be gathered before Him.

Of necessity, therefore, there will be two parties, sheep or righteous, goats or wicked. He knows all things and reads every heart. Hence we read that, "Se shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left."(vv. 32, 33.) The whole question, I repeat, is as to how they acted towards the King's brethren. Nor can this judgment be regarded as singular, for when God called out Abraham, he said, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." (Gen. 12:3.) This has often been marked in God's dealings with the descendants of Abraham, and will be specially fulfilled in this judgment, in connection with God's having raised them up to go forth with "the gospel of the kingdom."

No wonder then, that it is written, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Observe here, it is the kingdom they are brought into, and it is from, (not before) the foundation of the world. "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or, thirsty, and gave Thee drink? when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or, naked, and clothed Thee? or, when saw we Thee sick and in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (vv. 34-40.) What characterized these "sheep," or "righteous," as they are called, was their love to the King's brethren, and their destiny is a place in the kingdom, and a kingdom, too, prepared from the foundation of the world. It need scarcely be added, that there is nothing heavenly in this scene.

Now, look at the goats, "Then, shall He say unto them on His left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not., Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." (vv. 41-43.)

The sentence is final. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

How Can I Be Justified?

AN EXTRACT

"I KNOW I am not at peace, nor assured of Divine favor resting upon me, as I see you and others enjoying it, and it is a serious thing, because if "being justified by faith, we have peace with God," as you say, and as Scripture says, I have not peace with God, and how then can I be justified?"

"You have not the true knowledge of justification by faith. I do not say you are not justified in God's sight, but your conscience has not possession of it. The Reformers, all of them, went further than I do. They all held that, if a man had not the assurance of his own salvation, he was not justified at all. Now, whoever believes in the Son of God is, in God's sight, justified from all things, but till he sees this as taught of God, till he apprehends the value of Christ's work, he has no consciousness of it in his own soul, and, of course, if in earnest, as you are, has not peace; nor is his peace solidly established, till he knows he is in Christ, as well as that Christ died for him; and the Christian's getting on, as you say, day by day, is a false and hollow thing, which must some time or other be broken up. It is that which often causes distress on death-beds. And the character of Christian activity is sadly deteriorated and made a business of, a kind of means of getting happy, not work in the power of the Spirit, by a soul at peace. If a person is really serious, and walks before God, he cannot rest in spirit, till he be at peace with Him, and the deeper all these exercises are the better. But He has made peace by the blood of the Cross. All these exercises are merely bringing up the weeds to the surface, as plowing and harrowing a field. They are useful in this way and necessary, but they are not the crop which faith in the finished work produces. His work is finished. He "appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice," of Himself," and He" finished the work which His Father gave Him to do." That work, which puts away our sin, is complete and accepted of God. If you come, to God by Him, if your sins are not all put away by it, completely and forever, they never can be, for He cannot die again, and all by "one sacrifice," or else as the Apostle reasons in Heb. 9 "He must often have suffered."... What you want is to be in God's presence, and know there that you are, if God enters into judgment with you, (as it must then be in righteousness and in respect of your state and works,) simply lost! Now you are a sinner, and a sinner cannot subsist before God in judgment at all. It is not help you want here, that is, if actually in God's presence, but righteousness, and that you have not got; I mean in your own faith and conscience, through and in which we possess it. Righteousness can alone suffice before God, and now the righteousness of God, for we have none, and only this is to be found. Nor does the work of grace in us produce this. It is by faith, through the work of Christ, and in Him, we possess it; through Him God justifies the ungodly..... God in love has taken up the question of our sins and of our evil nature, has anticipated the day of judgment, and settled the question for every one that comes to God by Him, "once for all" and forever on the cross has dealt with the sins which I should have had to answer for in the day of judgment; and dealt with them, in putting them away according to His own righteousness, and that there our fullest form of sin in the flesh against God, that is, enmity, Against God, met with God dealing with sin, in grace to us, but in judgment against it. Sin and God met at the cross, when Christ was made sin for us, and by His death we have died

to it, and are the fruit of the travail of His soul before God...

"But, must I not accept Christ?"

"Ah, how I gets through the most blessed testimonies of God's ways towards us in grace. I say, here is Christ on God's part for you,—God's Lamb: you answer, but must not I? I am not surprised; it is no reproach I make; it is human nature, my nature in the flesh; yet, know that in 'I,' there is no good thing. But, tell me, would you not be glad to have Him?"

"Surely I should."

Then your real question is not about accepting Him, but whether God has really presented Him to you, and eternal life in Him. A simple soul would say "Accept, I am only too thankful to have Him!" but as all are not simple, one word on this also. If you have offended some one grievously, and a friend seeks to offer him satisfaction, who is to accept it?

"Why, the offended person of course."

"Surely; and who was offended by your sins?"

"Why, God of course."

"And who must accept the satisfaction?"

"Why, God must."

"That is it; do you believe He has accepted it?"

"Undoubtedly I do."

"And is—"

"Satisfied."

"And are not you?"

"Oh, I see it now, Christ has done the whole work, and God has accepted it, and there can be no mate question as to my guilt or righteousness; He is the latter for me before God. It is wonderful! and yet so simple! but why did I not see it? how very stupid."

Redemption and Growth

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold.... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.....As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter 1:18 to 2:11.

THERE is a striking difference between the writings of Paul and Peter, though both are indicted by the same Spirit. Paul generally looks at the saints as now in Christ, and in Ephesians as already in heavenly places seated in Christ—"in whom we have obtained an inheritance." Peter, however, in his epistles, looks at the saints down here in manifold trials, going on to their heavenly inheritance—" an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven," &c. Paul often looks at us as " a new creation," one with Christ, and complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power, and by this new order of truth shows the wide contrast between Judaism and Christianity. Peter writes to Christians who were Jews by nature, and suffering persecution for Christ's sake, and turns to Jewish ideas and scriptures to instruct them in Christian truth. For instance, he calls them " elect," but not now as an elect nation, but "strangers scattered." He speaks, too, as we have seen, of an inheritance; not an earthly land of promise, but an inheritance reserved in heaven for them. If he speaks of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, it loots the morning and evening lamb of Israel's daily repetition, but the Lamb of God; and if Israel were promised to be a "kingdom of priests" of an earthly order, they were now a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. They were to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear it is true; but not the slavish fear of distance that Israel knew at Sinai, but to fear because they had been redeemed at such a cost as the precious blood of Christ. But whatever be the difference in the lines of instruction of these two apostles, we need them both. It is well to know the joy and liberty of the one, which shows our present standing and blessings in Christ risen and ascended; and it is equally important and comforting to know the present resources for the manifold trials of the way in the manifold grace of God.

As to great principles, whether of God's character and ways, or of man's moral condition, both in their several style, in the diversity of operation of the same Spirit, speak the same things. If one ascribes all our blessings to the grace of God in Christ, the other traces all from God, and secured to us in the blood of the Lamb; and if one says that no flesh shall glory in His presence, the other repeats the prophetic announcement, that "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass," and that what endures is the word of the Lord.

It is that word which plainly unfolds the grace and sufficiency of God in Christ. Hence it is that Peter addresses the saints as those whose faith and hope are in God. This is most blessed, and most wonderful too, that we should know God Himself, against whom we had so sinned, and before whom we had been so guilty, to be now our confidence and hope. The fact is, that God's gift of His beloved Son has manifested His love to us; the unblemished Lamb has redeemed us by His blood, and God has shown the perfectness of that work in raising Him from the dead; so that

by Him we believe in God—our faith and hope are in God.

Observe that it is by Christ that we believe in God. How simple this is God sent forth His Son, and shows us what He is for us on the cross. There He tells out to our hearts His perfect love, and brings home by the Holy Ghost its unutterable depth and fullness, thus inviting and securing our confidence. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." No marvel, then, that we are called to behold the Lamb—to look by faith at Him lifted up; for there we taste that God is gracious, are drawn into His presence, and approach with confidence; for we are assured that Christ died for the vilest of sinners, and that His blood cleanseth from all sin. Learning thus God's love in the atoning work of His beloved Son, our faith and hope are in God. Our confidence is not in self, nor in circumstances, but in God; for not only does He give us title to stand in His presence for ever through the blood of His Son, but He hath made Him, whom He hath raised from the dead and given glory, to be unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We rest, then, in God, having perfect peace in His presence, reckoning on His love, His faithfulness, and His power to us-ward in Christ. If a soul hesitate and say, while gazing on the Lamb of God, Is ill that salvation for me? the divine answer is, He "was manifest in these last times for you who by Him do believe in God." What clear certainty and precious assurance this word gives the heart—"for you who by Him do believe in God." And why? Because He glorified God and established divine righteousness in putting away our sin by the sacrifice of Himself, so that He is now able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. It is most blessed for the soul to be thus landed peacefully in God's presence, through knowing God in Christ. It was God who gave His Son to be a sacrifice for sin; it was God who condemned sin in the flesh; it is God who declares that He hath obtained eternal redemption for us; and it is God who has made known His will, that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life, and be raised up at the last day. How can it, then, be otherwise, while looking unto Jesus, than that our faith and hope should be in God? The already accomplished work of redemption and God's infallible word give the fullest assurance. Christ risen and exalted proves God's estimate of that work, and He will be true to His own word. He cannot deny Himself. It is not what we are, but what God is; not what we feel, but what God says; not man's opinion, but the word of God, and that word He proclaims to us by the gospel. Thus the soul, by faith in the Lord Jesus, has peace and rest in God's presence; his faith and hope are in God.

There are two things necessary to make a sinner happy in God's presence, and they are both brought out here—redemption, and the new birth. No one could be at home in heavenly glory whose sins had not been righteously and judicially put away; or old he enjoy the presence of God and the Lamb, unless he had a nature capable of it.

We have already looked at redemption. Here we are reminded that we are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. The glory of the Person gives efficacy to the work. In the blood of Christ we see the perfectness of divine love; and God, raising up of Christ from the dead and giving Him glory, skews how completely the work of redemption was accomplished.

The new birth is another thing—the work of God in us. The Spirit does this by the Word. James says, "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth;" and here it is: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." In

John's gospel we have, "Except a man be born of water [the word] and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And when Nicodemus asks "How can these things be?" the Lord directs him to His death on the cross, showing him that life can only be had through faith in Him lifted up. Here you see the death of Christ, the Spirit, and the Word, all brought into action in the work of the new birth. Thus those who are born again have believed in Jesus lifted up on the cross, and through Him they have "eternal life." Hence we are told, in John's first epistle, that "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." No one, then, is born of God, who has not received the Lord Jesus as his Savior; and this is deflected by the word of God and the Spirit. In this way, by the Spirit, he obeys the truth. The effects are seen in love to the brethren, & the second chapter opens very remarkably. To these persons who had obeyed the truth and were born again, he writes that they should lay aside all malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speaking. What! is it possible that true Christians can have these things? Certainly, or they would not be told to lay them aside. For the new birth is not an alteration of the old evil nature, but is something additional — "a new creation." Hence our Lord said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here are two natures. The malice, guile, &c., are the actings of the old nature, and they must be laid aside. It is very humbling to feel that we still have such things, but it is too true; and in order for growth (mark, not security, but Christian progress, growth in grace), these evil lusts and workings must be laid aside, and the word of God constantly fed upon. If malice, guile, &c., are not laid aside, the Spirit will be grieved, and there will be little or no appetite for the truth. By disallowing evil, and drinking in the word, as a new-born child does the milk, there will be growth. And as the word of God always leads the heart to Christ, because it testifies of Christ, so will the soul thus feeding be brought into constant association with Christ. Hence the next words, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." It is impossible, perhaps, to overrate the importance of this truth in the present day of looseness and indifference. If then there would be growth, spiritual progress, in a soul who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, there must be laying aside of the lusts of the flesh, a drinking in the sincere milk of the word, and personal intercourse with the Lord Himself. Let us seriously ponder these three things.

But further. Every Christian is a priest. In the next verse we read, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood." The upward action of spiritual life and energy will be in coffering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ! The outward action of the Christian we find, in the ninth verse, to be expressing Christ, living Christ showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

The result of all this knowledge of Christ is such fellowship with Him, as to make us feel strangers here where He had no rest; a stranger where He was, and still is, rejected; where He could say, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." He is necessarily a pilgrim also, because he is going home. He is basting on to the possession of the heart's dearest object. The knowledge of Christ necessarily makes him long to see and be with Him.

"'Tis the treasure I've found in His love,

That has made me a pilgrim below."

May we know what it is, not only to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory in Him whom having not seen we love, but looking to Him, abiding in Him, holding personal intercourse with Him, our souls may gratefully worship, faithfully serve and honor God, and take our true place as not of the world, but strangers and pilgrims, who cannot be fully satisfied till we are with Him and like Him in glory.

“It Is Finished.”

JOHN 19:30

OH! the blessedness of knowing that a full, free, perfect and everlasting salvation is mine! mine now! mine by God's appointment! for the shed blood of Christ is to every one free. (See 2 Cor. 5:15; 2 Peter 3:9.) The poorer the wretch the welcomer he! Its power is almighty—its virtue divine, to cleanse souls completely though filthy as mine.

“But now in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:13.)

'My chains are snapt! the bonds of sin are broken!

And I am free:

Oh, let the triumphs of His grace be spoken

Who died for me!

O death and hell! I cannot dread your power:

THE DEBT IS PAID.

On Jesus, in that dark and dreadful hour,

My guilt was laid.

Yes, Jesus bore it! bore, in love unbounded,

What none can. know:

He died—but then revived, and so confounded

The awful foe.

He's now up there! proclaim the joyful story,

THE LORD 's ON HIGH

And I in Him am raised to endless glory,

And ne'er can die!

The Snake in the Grass

Soma twenty years ago I remember, when out riding near S—, seeing a little bird standing quite motionless in the middle of the road. It was a warm summer's day, and I was riding slowly; but it seemed quite heedless of my approach, and remained as if transfixed just before me. I must either ride over it or pull up ray horse. I did the latter, when about six feet from it; but still it retained its position. I could now examine it at my leisure. It was a little sparrow, and its bright sparkling eyes were intently fixed on some object in the grass by the side of the road. I followed the direction of its gaze, and saw shining in the long, thick grass the scales of a large snake that was intently watching its would-be prey. It had completely fascinated the poor little bird with its gaze, and had I not come by would most assuredly in a short time have buried its fangs in the heart of the helpless little sparrow; but seeing me watching it, it turned suddenly, and shot away through the grass with a loud hiss into the hedge adjoining, and the little bird, relieved of its anxiety, and taking notice of me for apparently the first time, lifted its wings and fluttered away through the pure summer air, chirping as it went.

I rode on my way, being quite a lad at that time, and soon forgot the circumstance, and never thought of it since till last Sunday evening as I was preaching the gospel; (for though a careless lad then, I am, through the grace of God, allowed now to testify for, Christ) when it suddenly occurred to me as an illustration of the way in which Satan apparently seems to fascinate poor souls until he wraps his fatal coils around them, and lures them to destruction, or would surely do so had not God in His rich mercy sent them a deliverer.

Let me ask you, dear grown people, or dear children, whichever you may be that read this, in all affection, whether you are quite sure at this moment that you are not in some way under the baneful fascination of "that old serpent which is the devil and Satan"? His arts are various, and his energy never seems to flag. His one thought is to drag souls down to the perdition that he knows must be his own doom; and he has thousands of pitfalls set, baited with thousands of tempting allurements.

Let us enumerate some of them. Religion is one. The little child, taught from its earliest infancy (and rightly so) to read the Bible and pray to God, by and by takes a pleasure in attending religious services and Sunday schools. It would not miss its chapter of the Bible or morning or evening prayer for anything,. Early and late it attends the services of the religions association it belongs to; and so diligent is it in its lessons that the Sunday-school teacher marks its entrance to the class on the Lord's-day with great delight, Presently, as years roll on, it becomes itself a teacher) and sees around it a group of smiling little ones, each with his text and lessons at his fingers' end. But ah! even here may not Satan be in the grass after all?' and may not all this religiousness be the result of sentimentalism, and not of Christ known to the soul? God forbid that I should say one word against the pious parent training up his little one for the Lord; God forbid I should depreciate in the slightest degree one of the most valuable of institutions—the Sunday-school; but I do feel there is a danger of the little one, or the child of riper years, being satisfied with religion apart from Christ,

and keeping his conscience quiet by a round of services and a routine of duties, without 'ever having seen Jesus as his own Savior and deliverer.

How is it with you, dear reader? Are you consciously the possessor of eternal life in the Son of God? (1 John 5:11-13.)

Again, the world is another bait for the heedless little one, and a more attractive one as it grows in years. From childhood, a sash, a new frock, has been its delight; and the desire for the "soft raiment," the wearers of which live "in kings' houses" (Matt. 11:8), only deepens as childhood ripens into girlhood, and the little thing that cried for and got a bright ribbon may be presently seen decked for the children's party, the ball, or the concert, in the height of the present fashion.

Is not the snake in the grass here? Most assuredly he is, and knows full well how to tempt Eve with an apple, or the nursling of the present day with that which suits the desires he knows exist in the natural heart of the very youngest.

Let me ask you who know that the world, and the pleasures and gaieties of the world, are your whole desire how would you like the Lord to come in the Midst of it all and find you unprepared? He has written, "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.... and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. 5:2, 3.) Ah, little do you think, perhaps, that as you gaze in at a shop window, attracted by the bright colors displayed there, or peruse with delight an invitation to an evening party or a ball, that the snake is in the grass, and is using these things to draw your mind away from Him who loves you, and gave Himself for you!

Or perhaps ambition may so fascinate you as to ultimately be your ruin. Your big brother tells you of his success at school and college, and comes home laden with large volumes in gilded coverings, emblazoned with coats of arms, and the master's name written commendatorily within; and you begin to think, "When I am a man I will be a great scholar,, will make a fortune at the bar, or some day may become archbishop of Canterbury." Or perhaps the fifes and drums of the neighboring barracks have given you military tastes, and your whole thought is, "When shall I be old enough to wear the gilded forage-cap and sword, and march with my regiment to the parade?"

May not this after all be but a subtle device of the Wily serpent to occupy your mind with other things, to the exclusion of the Lamb that was slain? Right, most surely right, that education should be carried to the highest point. Fitting too, and surely blessed for the country, that "rulers" should be "for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." But let me warn you, that as to fifes and drums there will be none in the world to come; end forage-caps and swords will have to be laid aside on the dying bed.

Many a poor soul has found his splendid scholastic attainments and martial glory avail him nothing when it came to the last, and has found out then that the one thing needful had been omitted—the consciousness of sins forgiven through faith in a risen Savior. (Acts 13:38, 39.)

Well now, my dear reader, it becomes my unspeakable privilege to tell you of One that came by at the moment when man most needed Him, to deliver him from the thousand pitfalls with their lures that Satan only too successfully had placed in the way of us poor helpless ones.

Jesus, sent of God, came into this world when Satan was most busy; saw in all their hideous intensity the variety of his devices for the poor sinner's destruction; and determined, with a love peculiar to Himself, to deliver man from his impending ruin. He resisted, in all the perfection of His humanity, all that the serpent could do—for He "was in all points tempted like as we are" (Heb. 4:15)—to draw Him away from the pathway of perfect obedience to God—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," were put before Him in vain. (Luke 4:1-13.) He repulsed the arch enemy with the written Word, and thus proved His perfect fitness to be as man the sin-bearer or substitute for those whom He desired should be forever with Himself in the glory. At Gethsemane Satan returned to renew his attacks; but as in the one case obedience to the written word proved successful in resisting him, so in the other, prayer or dependence upon God was that which enabled the perfect One to come forth in triumph. But although Satan was repulsed, a righteous and holy God must have His just claims against sinful man satisfied by the blood of this sinless victim. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) And therefore Jesus undergoes the penalty of separation from His God, that loved Him from everlasting, the agony of which separation is evidenced by the heart-rending cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Psa. 22:1.) But the atonement accomplished "peace," made "through the blood of His cross." (Col. 1:20.) It was the Father's delight, and necessary to His glory (Rom. 6:4), to raise from the dead the One who had so perfectly glorified Him, and satisfied His claims against the sinner. On the third day He rises. Forty days after, He takes the place that was His by right as God, and which He had earned as man, at the right hand of the majesty on high, and thence proclaims (by the Holy Ghost) to you and me, dear reader, peace, perfect peace, the moment we believe on Him. (Rom. 4:23; 6) We had all "sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); but He came in between, settled God's claims against us, tells us that peace is made, and the moment we believe on Him we have peace, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

How simple is this, and how blessed, that even the little children who need a Savior may learn from God's own book that He has provided one, and that the moment they rest their souls on Him they have no cause to fear, but on the contrary may rejoice in hope of the glory where both God and Jesus dwell,—they may long to see Him, and be with Him where He is, and behold His glory. (John 17:24.)

May not you, dear reader, now, like the little bird of which we spoke, flutter away, with outspread wings and cheerful note, in token of liberty and victory, towards the home you know through Jesus is your own, to meet Him who shortly will come Himself to bring you there? (John 14:3.) Surely you may; for "behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation."

Whom Will Ye Serve?

AN EXTRACT

"And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha."—John 19:12, 13.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John 15:14.

CÆSARS friends, or friends of Jesus?

Solemn question for to-day:

Friends of Cesar! friends of Jesus!

Take your sides without delay.

If you pause for man's forbidding,

Cæsar's friendship ye secure;

If you do the Father's bidding,

Scorn, reproach ye shall endure.

Friends of Cæsar! friends of Jesus!

Stand revealed—your choice declare!

Who in truth two masters pleases?

Who may rival banners bear?

Jesus' friends account Him precious;

Lose for Him all other gain;

Dearer far the smile of Jesus

Than the praise of sinful men.

Caesar's friends! ye foes of Jesus!

Mingling in a motley throng—

Shall your sheepskin garb deceive us?

Wolves to Christ's fair flock belong?

Mighty is Jehovah's Fellow,

Though on earth in weakness seen;
Righteous is our Royal Shepherd;
He will sweep you from the scene!
Free from Cæsar, friends of Jesus!
Stand in phalanx-never fear!
Love, severely tried, increases;
Courage yet—the Lord is near!
Onward still, His name confessing,
Weaving crowns to grace His brow;
Lo! His hands are full of blessing,
Lifted for your succour now.
Cæsar's friends were we, but Jesus
Owns us for His friends to-day!
What! shall rival friendship please us
While the Bridegroom is away!
No! through grace would we surrender
Cæsar's things to Caesar's care;
Whilst to God, our God, we render
Filial homage, praise, and prayer.

The Law

"I BELIEVE the Law to be the perfect rule of life for man in the flesh, but it supposes sin, and applies to sinful flesh, to man in the flesh, and being on the principle of requirement, and rightly so (for it is a very important principle, and maintains God's rights), condemns me as to righteousness, and is no help to me, but the contrary, as to sanctification. If, then, the Law be holy, just, and good in its contents, why not be under it—why not maintain it? Because I am then in a relationship with God which involves condemnation and the power of sin. Law is law, not grace, and the strength of sin is the Law. Maintain the Law as law, and you destroy its authority if it be not law to you; and if it be law to you it is the strength of sin, and sin will have its dominion over you. It must, as Law, have eternal authority—God's authority as such. If you weaken that, you have destroyed it as a law.... I do not raise the question of Gentiles, not being under it, though historically true; because, if not, they are lawless, and I admit the Law to be a perfect rule for man in the flesh. I say I am not on Gentile ground, though a Gentile; not lawless in respect to God. I do not say under the law to Christ—that is an utterly false translation, but I am duly subject to Christ. But I do not say the authority of the Law is weakened or done away, but that I am dead to it. The Law has power over a man as long as he lives—and can have it no longer, and I am no longer alive in the flesh. I reject the altering or modifying of the law; I reject Christianizing it; that is weakening its legal character by an admixture of grace that is neither law nor gospel. I maintain its whole absolute authority. Those who have sinned under it will be judged by it. It will have its own authority—that is, God's—according to its own terms, in the Day of Judgment; but I am not under it, but under grace—not under the schoolmaster, but a son, because faith is come, and I have the spirit of adoption. I am on another footing, and in another relationship with God; I am not in the flesh—not in the place of a child of Adam at all—but delivered out of it by redemption. I have died and risen again—I am in Christ. Let us see what Scripture teaches on this point. Positive transgressions are blotted out by the blood of Christ. The law, we are told, as a covenant of works, is gone in Christ's death. Now, I say that Scripture teaches more than that—teaches what applies to the whole old man as regards our standing before God, and that we have for faith died out of the place and nature in which we were, under the law. Take the fullest and clearest case—a Jew actually under it. I do not doubt it will be practically realized by a Gentile as a principle. What is the judgment of law on my old man, my being as in flesh—condemnation only as a covenant? No, death. It is not merely a new motive—a new spring of conduct afforded by which law being maintained as law I keep it. Law is (2 Cor. 3) a ministration of death as well as of condemnation. But what then? I through the law am dead to the law. It has killed me that I might live to God. 'Add not to His words lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.' You might say it is abrogated as a covenant of works, but not as a rule of life—though Scripture does not say so; it is a mere human invention. But you cannot say I am dead to it, but it is to be my rule of life. That is nonsense. I am dead to the law, by the law. It has done its work, and killed me as regards itself. I do not exist as regards the law, or it has failed in its power. And I am dead to the law that I might live to God. If I have not done with it, I cannot live to Him. And how? "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and

gave Himself for me." —An Extract.

Abraham Believed God

Heb. 11:9-18

FROM the 9th verse we see that the pilgrim and stranger character was kept up—dwelling in tents: houses are for Canaan, tents for the wilderness. God's dwelling in the wilderness was a Tabernacle or Tent, in Canaan a Temple. Abram kept true to the pilgrim character, Lot did not. He pitched his tent first toward Sodom; afterwards he had a house in it, and sat at the gate. What a place for a child of God to settle in and receive honor!

Abram had his eye on a far different city, "whose builder and maker was God." Meanwhile he was satisfied to live in a tent, with God for his portion.

When tested, Abram refused to take anything from the king of Sodom, from a thread even to a shoelatchet, lest he should say, I have made Abram rich. The very next thing we find is God saying to him, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Whenever we are enabled to surrender what nature clings to for Christ's sake there is blessing, in a clearer revelation of himself to the soul; as it were, room is made for the Lord by the displacing of lower objects, and the promise of John 14:23 is made good in our experience—"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

What a wall of fire the Lord is round the soul that is separated to Himself! He plants the blood of Christ right behind us. Has He spoken to us of His glory, and told us of the glories awaiting us as fellow-heirs with Christ, and shall we turn back and mind earthly things? Shall not His country be our country, His associates our associates, while we are waiting in strangership down here, confessing ourselves pilgrims by our walk and ways, shewing by our blessed independency of all the good things which nature esteems so highly, and our indifference to the attractions by which so many are dazzled and blinded, that we are passing through this scene in haste to a better country, choosing nothing for ourselves, but receiving all as God's gift.

Does anything bright offer itself? Our first question should be, Does my Father give me this? if not, I don't want it. If I am a true pilgrim, I won't be thinking of settling down in a world like this; I will say, that can't be God's gift for me, it is not good enough; He has prepared for me a city; I am going home: meanwhile I want to keep my mind and heart free for Him, who gave Himself for me.

We never read of God being the God of Lot, not but that He was Lot's God quite as much as Abraham's, but He could not associate His Holy Name with Sodom, of which Lot was a citizen. He is not ashamed to be called the God of pilgrims and strangers, and to associate His Name with theirs.

The trial to which God put Abraham in offering up Isaac was very remarkable. He wanted to see whether he was hanging all his weight on the promise or not. He tries us often in the same way. How blessed when the faith He has given, when tried, is not found wanting.

The Drunkard's End

I SHALL never forget his face—that earnest face gazing at me as I preached the Gospel in the Hall at E— He never seemed to take his eyes off me for a moment; and when I spoke to him afterwards about his soul, he listened most respectfully, and seemed at all events impressed by what I said. He soon, however, ceased to attend the meetings, and I feared that what I heard was true, that he was a confirmed drunkard. I watched my opportunity, however, and spoke to him again about his soul, and his reply I remember well: "Ah sir, I never can forget what you said to me that night in the Hall." He died the other day, and they say his end was fearful.

He used to drink in bed, and though the Doctor had frequently told him that he would die in one of these fits of drunkenness, he persisted in drinking. A brandy bottle under his pillow; he had gone to sleep, and awoke to find himself dying. "Oh," he said, "my soul, my soul! oh, my soul, my soul!" and he screamed in his agony. "My poor soul, my soul!" he shrieked again, as the horrors of his approaching doom burst upon him. He was given up of God, because he loved darkness rather than light, his deeds being evil. His friends and companions do not like to speak of him; but his neighbors will not readily forget the screams of terror which reached their ears on that fearful night. Well might the poor man scream indeed, as, God's providential care removed, he was hurried, away by Satan into an eternity of unutterable woe.

Dear reader, be you drunken or sober, be you sceptic or professor,—What about your soul? Is it saved? You may have neglected it till now; will you neglect it still? How can you, as you read these lines? I, your fellow creature, yet, thank God, saved by the blood of Jesus, beseech you to come to Him, who has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John 6:35, 37.) "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are' heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) Rest for your accusing conscience; meat and drink for your needy soul. Eternal security is yours, if only you will come to Jesus. Will you not come?

"BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME; BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF SILENCE."

A Time to Dance!

NOT most assuredly for the Jew, or the poor worldling, but for the Christian: though most certainly not, in the exuberance of fleshly delight, but in the holy, happy joy of communion with the Father.

“As he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.” (Luke 15:25-27.)

Surely this was a time to dance! The father rejoiced he had received his lost one back again, The son rejoiced, because he rested in the father’s love.

Dear reader, do you know anything of this time of dancing? Do you know anything of resting in a heavenly Father’s love? If not, I pray you to-day in spirit to enter the Father’s house, and join the happy throng of saved ones that are rejoicing in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. You have heard of God’s provision to meet your need—of one now seated at His right hand, who has made a full and sufficient atonement for the sins of the vilest sinner. I want you to-day to take the prodigal’s place, and believe that so filthy is your state, so distant your condition from God by nature and by practice, that He had Himself to come forth to meet you; and nothing short of the death of His own Son would avail to provide for you the robe, the ring, the shoes, the fatted calf, and the salvation your case demanded. I want you to believe that these—all these—are your instantaneous and eternal possessions the moment you believe on Jesus the Son of God, the moment you receive the testimony of God that He has done all this for you. I repeat, the moment you confess that so vile was your state, so entirely shut out were you from the presence of God, that God’s own Son alone could through death bring you nigh to God, and fit you for His presence, and believe that Christ has done all this for you, that moment are you entitled to take your place among the innermost circle of the dancers in the Father’s house; and great as may be your delight in having all the recollection of your sins (not merely the sins themselves, but the remembrance of them) effaced—great as your joy in having exchanged your vileness for His righteousness, great as your rest and comfort in the shoes of His providing, great as your happiness in wearing the ornaments of His free gift, great as your soul’s delight in feeding on the dainties with which the Father’s table groans—all your happiness is as nothing to the absolute perfection of enjoyment summed up in the Father, who sees in you the fruit of the travail of His dear Son’s soul and is satisfied. He delights to have you there; His eye rests on you with real enjoyment. He, in His own words, “eats” with you—is “merry,” and is “glad.”

Would you not delight to gratify Him thus? I feel sure you would. Well, then, as a self-judged sinner—one who can only say, “I am vile”—believe on Him who “bare your sins in His own body on the tree,” and joy in Him through whom (being justified by faith, without the deeds of the law) you have now received the reconciliation.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. 5:10.

WE read in the Ecclesiastes that God hath set the world in the hearts of the sons of men, and each day witnesses to the truth thereof. Men live on through their short lives as if there was nothing in eternity worth a thought. One man lives for pleasure, another for ambition, a third to provide for his family; but in every case where grace has not wrought, this short life, with its pleasures and cares, is the boundary of metes hopes and affections, and God is not in all their thoughts.

To arouse men from this fatal indifference to their eternal welfare, the Gospel of Christ addresses itself to the conscience, and brings the light of eternity to bear upon the present moment in words such as these which head this paper: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Paul, who wrote these words under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, knew experimentally their searching power. He remembered well the anguish of his own soul, when, though three days blind, and unable either to eat or drink, he learnt the terror of the Lord, who can destroy both soul and body in hell. He remembered how he had been arrested by God's Son, when madly striving to blot out His name by the destruction of His people; and how he was laid bare as a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious in the light of that divine and heavenly glory, which shone upon him; and as one already manifested to Him, he now would sound in the ears of all careless sinners what had been to his soul of so overwhelming importance, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

He was free in his own spirit from all fear of judgment to come, and therefore he was at leisure from himself to feel for perishing souls, whom the revelation of that day would put to eternal shame.

He looked back with adoring gratitude to that moment, when the One who had appeared to him in glory, and had smitten him to the ground as the chief of sinners, sent His servant Ananias with a message of salvation. How sweet to his broken heart must have been those gracious words: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way as thou earnest, hath sent me."

Four days before, he was the mad destroyer of the saints; now Jesus sends Ananias to salute this object of sovereign mercy as "Brother Saul." Saul's guilty conscience might have expected to hear Ananias add, that he was sent to pronounce the doom of the arch enemy of God's Son; but no! Ananias brought a message of grace from the Lord Jesus: "He hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." From that moment Saul knew that all his sins were forgiven, and he could look up to the blessed Lord, who had stopped him in his mad career, and say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." From that moment his soul yearned after his

fellow-sinners; and the sense of the terror of the Lord, which he had so deeply felt in his own soul, made him thus earnest in persuading others "to flee from the wrath to come."

Let us dwell for a few moments on the solemn statement of the Apostle: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." We may consider what that judgment seat will be. What it will be for each of us to appear individually there? Whom we shall meet there? And, finally, let the reader ask himself if all is settled between his soul and God, so that he can say with the Apostle John, that he has "boldness in the day of judgment!" What then will the judgment seat be? It will be the eternal settlement of man's loss in hell, or of the Lord's approval of those who are now justified by His blood for every act of service they have done according to His will. God has made man for Himself, and for His glory, and we must answer to Him for all that we are, and all that we have done. Let not the reader say, this is a future concern, and put away from himself the evil day. The Word of God reveals the future to cast light upon your present condition, that you may now be brought into God's presence about your sins. Your conscience sets its seal to this truth of revelation. The judgment seat is the necessary result of what God is, as a God of holiness and truth. God would deny Himself and outrage His majesty if He should, as men hope He may, pass by sin.

Away then with any vain hope that the judgment seat will display mercy to the guilty. Now indeed God's throne is a throne of grace, where the vilest sinner is received through the mediation of God's Son. None are too vile, too sinful, too lost, to be forgiven and saved, who come as they are to God through Jesus Christ, resting on His infinite atonement. But the judgment seat is a throne of righteousness; and unless you appear before it as one whom God has justified, you will appear before it to be everlastingly condemned. The one and greatest proof of God's inflexible righteousness in dealing with sin is exhibited in the cross of Calvary, where God judged the sins of all people in the person of His sinless Son, making His soul an offering for sin, making Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Did He thus deal in judgment with His own Son, and can He pass by sinners, without judging their sins? No, indeed; conscience and revelation declare the righteous character of the judgment seat, where we must all appear. But what will it be for each of us to appear individually before the judgment seat?

It will be far more than each of us being personally there. True we must all appear there, and each will stand there individually; but the word the Apostle uses conveys the truth, the solemn, awful truth, to all that are hiding themselves under vain excuses and false coverings, that we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. Men will come out at that dread tribunal perfectly and exactly as God sees and knows them to be. The hypocrite, the self-deceiver, the formal professor, the self-righteous, will be manifested there. The Christ-rejecter, the infidel, the blasphemer, will be manifested there, in all the hatefulness and wickedness of their state in God's sight.

No scorning of the scorner will dare to lift its voice there. No human reasonings against the truth, so pleasing now to those who love darkness rather than light, will avail there. No human righteousness, however idolized now, will bear the testing of the light that shines there.

Reader, we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. What a word is this to search our hearts with now! Let us take it home to ourselves. Let us ask ourselves the question; what would come out as to my state before God, if I were at this moment Manifested there?

But if a poor Self-condemned and 'broken hearted sinner should read these lines, one who is ready to cry out, as one of old: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord; for in Thy sight shall no flesh living be justified." Let such an one contemplate whom he shall meet there, seated on that judgment seat. This brings us to that part of our subject which fills the breast of the believer with unspeakable comfort. He who sits upon the judgment seat is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior. True, He will sit there as Judge; but will He forget His own redeeming blood, and those whose sins He bore on Calvary? Will He condemn those whom God has justified through believing on Him? No, indeed; we shall all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. The sin-stained robe that has been washed white in the blood of the Lamb will shine unsullied in that day; the feeble faith, though now tried with fire, will be found then to praise, and honor, and glory; the least of all saints will share the likeness and the glory of Him who sits upon the judgment seat. Ah! trembling believer, what hast thou to fear in the presence of thy Savior's love, who regards thee as the travail of His soul? Thou wilt be manifested as His; manifest before Him, who settled thy judgment on the cross, and who left thy sin and condemnation behind Him in His opened grave. He has declared for the comfort of all His believing people, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, shall not come into judgment." His believing people, shall not come into judgment, for they shall be manifested at His judgment seat as those whom God has justified; they shall appear there glorified bodies, not to have, their acceptance in the beloved called into question, but to receive the approval of the Lord Himself, for every act of faith and love which they have done, while waiting for Him in this evil day.

Oh then, beloved reader, ask yourself, Am I amongst the justified of God, who shall shine forth in the glory of God's righteousness, in that day of manifestation? If all that must come out then has come out now, and you have found yourself consciously manifested to God in your sins, there is the answer to it all in the death of Christ; for God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

To meet God now in grace is the sinner's eternal salvation. Can we, then, say "I am reconciled to God." "God was," says the Apostle, "in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The four Gospels narrate this wondrous fact. That meek, and gentle, and compassionate Jesus, of whom they speak, was God manifest in the flesh. Reader, has that blessed one won your heart? Does your heart find in Him its needs met, its desires satisfied, its hopes centered? What a blessing, if so, to know that He who has attracted and won your heart is the very God against whom you have sinned, and whose anger you have justly feared. But then He has not only become a man to win your heart by His grace, but He has died on the cross to bear your sins in His own body, that your conscience may be perfect towards God. Are you resting upon Him as your only righteousness before God? Then fear not. God is perfectly, eternally satisfied with that precious sacrifice. He delivered Him for your offences, and has raised Him again for your justification. As He looks out in love upon the glorified Jesus, He sees your justification. All the sins He bore on Calvary are gone forever, and God sees none now, as He looks upon Jesus and looks upon you in Him; therefore the Apostle declares, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." But what shall we say of those who are not reconciled to God through our Lord Jesus Christ? You, dear friends, unless God in His mercy give you grace and repentance before it be too late, will be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ, not only in all your sins, but as those who have heard of God's great love

in Jesus Christ, and have heeded it not. What will you answer Him when you see Him on the throne with the marks of the nails and of the spear in His blessed body? You will lie dumb before Him, and you will perish as your own destroyers, for having heard and rejected all the dying love of Jesus Christ. Oh, once more would we beseech you to believe in Him now, and be reconciled to God!

Gospel Preaching

How needful it is not only to preach the glad tidings of a present and eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ to everyone that believeth, but to preach it in the Savior's style—in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to have such a divine sense in our hearts of the realities of eternal damnation and eternal salvation, as to the blessed tidings with deepest fervor of affection. It is here we need to watch, for careless professors abound, and lukewarmness grows apace. An address may be orthodox enough, accurate as to expression, faultless as to sound doctrine, but so cold, dry, and formal that it quickly falls to the ground. It lacks savor, and therefore power. It seems to the hearers more like a work of duty than the heartfelt utterances of one who seeks to snatch souls from eternal misery, and bring them to present reconciliation with God. The message has been so coldly delivered, that it comes pointless and heartless. It is in word only—a doctrinal statement rather than a message of divine unsearchable love.

When we preach, we should seek to do so in the Lord's strength; to go forth in real dependence on Himself—looking unto Him; not satisfied with anything less than a felt sense of His presence, being in direct exercise of faith in Himself, abiding in Him, and entering into His thoughts, His feelings, as to the value of immortal souls, considering that Christ is forever glorified in the salvation of one lost one. Be assured that this only will make us earnest, fervent, successful winners of souls. As ambassadors of Christ, should we aim at less than the message being delivered worthy of Him—according to the deep love of His heart who sends it? If it be a work of faith and labor of love, it must flow out of personal communion with Himself. This entails much self-judgment, earnest prayer, unfeigned dependence, and true exercise of faith in Himself. The apostles so felt this that they said, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." O to be men of earnest prayer and simple faith! If there be earnestness with God in the closet, depend upon it there will not be lacking fervor in preaching. If our Father sees us dealing with Him in secret, be certain that He will reward as openly. Let us think of the quality of our service rather than the quantity. Let us beware of trafficking in mere Bible knowledge, instead of telling out the love of God from deep, heartfelt enjoyment of personal intercourse and fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

"Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach,
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul wouldst reach:
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.
"Think truly, and thy thoughts

Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a faithful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.”

“Go Out Quickly”

“Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.... Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.”—LUKE 14

THE Lord is coming quickly,
And darker grows the night;
Our souls are faint and sickly,
We quail where we should fight.
Alas! how Truth is sunken,
She's trampled in the streets;
Some drink, too, with the drunken,
And eat; their dainty meats'
O brethren, then awaken,
Arise, ye sons of day!
We soon shall hence be taken,
Now let us work and pray.
In ev'ry town and village,
At many a cottage door,
Is soil awaiting tillage,
Is fruit among the poor.
Go forth, ye earnest preachers,
Where God shall guide your feet,
And tell His sinful creatures
How He their souls cloth greet;
Proclaim in lane and alley,
How Christ the Savior died;
And preach, in earth's dark valley,

That He is glorified.

Lift up your eyes, enlightened,

And look upon the fields;

Already are they whiten' d,

The crop abundance yields:

God in His grace engages

That they shall rest who toil,

The reaper shall have wages,

The sower, too, have spoil.

Then heed we not the weather,

Nor care for toil and heat;

We all shall rest together,

When Christ has housed His wheat.

Then, gone all grief and sadness,

In yonder place we'll roam,

Rejoice in Christ's own gladness,

And shout His harvest-home.

MANY men use the law to sit in judgment on everyone but themselves.

ATONEMENT covers the insult put upon divine glory in connection with sin.

The Starting-Point and Spring of Devotedness

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord t for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—Phil. 3:7-11.

IN considering any book of Scripture, it is most helpful to have some knowledge of the particular subject of which it treats. Ephesians, for instance, sets forth most blessedly the church of God—the body of Christ. Colossians, the glories of the Head of the body, and the mischievous results of not holding the Head. In Galatians, the apostle contends most uncompromisingly for the finished work of Christ, glorying in the cross, and refuses everything added to that work as subversive of it. In Philippians we have devotedness. There is much more, doubtless, in all these epistles, but in these remarks I call attention to the prominent points.

But what are we to understand by devotedness? Did not our Lord refer to it when He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me"? Devotedness, then, is simply yielding: to the claims of Christ, and therefore it refuses the claims of self In a word, devotedness Christ—walking as He walked:

You will observe that Philippians begins with, supporting that we are in Christ. It addresses itself to such—"to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi," as we find by the first verse of the epistle. This is surely where God begins with us—"when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This, then, is the starting-point of true devotedness; and a soul cannot be said to be intelligently on the ground of devotedness, till he enters upon this new position God has given him as a new creation in Christ Jesus. This is again alluded to in the third chapter, where four characteristics of true Christians are grouped together. 1st. With such there is no question of mending, or improving man in the flesh. The death of Christ forbids the thought. But we have so judged the flesh, with its affections and lusts, to be so irremediably bad, that we have accepted its crucifixion with Christ, and set it aside, as God has, as unfit for anything but judgment and death—"we are the circumcision." 2nd. We so know God in Christ, as the giver of His Son and the source of all our blessing, that our hearts adoringly praise and worship—"we worship God in the Spirit." 3rd. We so know Him who has glorified God in our redemption, and loved us, that we delight in His highest exaltation, and thus "rejoice in Christ Jesus." 4th. Seeing God's estimate of our old man in the cross, we refuse the claims of the flesh and all its resources and pretensions, as unworthy of our trust—we "have no confidence in the flesh." It is plain then that the starting-point of all true devotedness is our new position in Christ Jesus.

The energy of devotedness is associated with rejoicing in the Lord. Again and again this rejoicing is alluded to in this precious epistle, like another witness, reminding us that the joy of the Lord is our strength. The heart being set free from self and sin, finds in the Lord an unchanging source of joy and strength. Here there is no question of conscience as to sin, no failure to be judged, but the soul is taken up with the Lord and stayed upon Him. Peace, communion, and devotedness is the divine order. And it is when the heart is taken up with the sweetness and perfectness of divine love, and, disentangled from self and circumstances, enjoying full liberty in Christ, that we are free to follow Him with girded loins, holding forth the word of life. It is because He is above all circumstances, and the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, that we can "rejoice in the Lord alway."

The secret spring of true devotedness is the knowledge of the infinite worth and perfections of Christ Himself. "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ," &c. Paul had seen the Man In the glory. The brightness of that light had disclosed to him the imperfection of all that he had gloried in. The ineffable glories of that blessed Person had shown him, that what he had hitherto boasted of in the flesh was altogether a corrupt and foul mass, which could only be counted dung. That which man glories in must all vanish before the glory of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus. Weighed in the balance with Christ, all is lighter than vanity. Measured by the eternal standard of His excellencies, all comes short, and is found only dung and dross—corrupt and worthless before God. Having had to do with that blessed Man who is at God's right hand, Paul's heart was so captivated, that he never could be satisfied till he was with Christ, and could not bear to be outside the light and joy of His blessed presence, or fail to respond to the desires of His heart. Nothing can supply the lack of this personal acquaintance with Christ. Intimacy with Himself is certainly the secret of true devotedness. Occupied with Him, the heart readily refuses the voice of the stranger, and cannot but own His paramount claims. Nothing so thoroughly tests the state of our hearts, as whether we are taken up or not with personal intimacy with the Lord Himself.

"Far from Him we faint and languish,

Oh, our Savior, keep us nigh."

Association with God

[AN EXTRACT]

“You must give up that which alone elevates man— his association with God, or associate him with Him according to what He is. The nature and character of God must be maintained, or it is not with Him I am associated. And I must have morally the qualities which judge of good and evil, as He does, to be really associated with Him. But I do judge the evil, and see the guilt. Now Christianity meets this, and gives me a full Messing, because it gives me life. He that hath the Son hath life. He is a life-giving Spirit. But then, besides that, it takes away all guilt from me. I can judge evil fully in my heart and conscience, because I know I shall never be judged for it,—that Christ has by Himself purged my sins, and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. I affirm, that without these two principles—a new life and the perfect purging of sins according to God's nature by redemption, no real moral elevation of man can take place, because he cannot be spiritually associated with God according to the perfection of God's nature. The communication of the divine nature, though absolutely necessary, does not suffice, because the communication of that nature makes one judge evil as God does, at any rate in principle. I see the selfishness and impurity that is in man's mind, that is now in mine. And for that very reason I see guilt and wretchedness in myself. I have the conscience of evil or guilt (not necessarily by crimes and vices, but by comparing my whole inward life with the loveliness of divine nature) on my soul. My conscience must be purged for God, as a consciously responsible creature before Him, that my heart may be free before Him,—that His holy nature, which must repel evil, and which is the very source of my delight, may be maintained even for my soul to enjoy.... The purging the conscience by a work done without us, and which is perfect in glorifying God, gives me unhindered delight in Him, and, I may add, in the love which has done it. God has put this in the simplest way—blessed be His name!—for simple souls; but it is of the deepest moral necessary' truth. You, may have amiable men, but no God if' you have not this. A truly upright soul, a divinely-taught soul, has a moral need that the love of God, the favor which is its light and its joy, should be a righteous favor. As Scripture speaks, grace reigns through righteousness; hence that God should righteously not see sin upon it; has need, therefore, that the conscience should be purged. And this it has through the truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Without it God's love would be an unholy love; would not be God or love at all. We walk in the light as God is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses from all sin. Hence comes that bright and blessed testimony, though there in outward figures, ' He hath not seen iniquity in Jacob, nor beheld perverseness in Israel.'”

How Am I to Know I've Got the Right Faith?

NEW-BORN souls are often puzzled as to this, especially when they are so frequently warned about "historical faith," "faith of assurance," "faith of reliance," &c.

Surely the following is a simple answer: That is the right faith which rests upon the right object. If your faith rests solely upon the One who died for your sins and rose again for your justification, you may be sure it is that faith which is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8), "the, faith of God's elect" His excellence become to your gaze superior to everything you have hitherto trusted in, whether it be prayers, works, ordinances, or the so-called means of grace; you rest in Him, you enter not merely into God's satisfaction, but God's delight in Him.

“I Tried for a Long Time to Save Myself”

IT was a very severe night. The ground was covered with snow, and the wind was piercingly cold, when we entered the night train for the south at Newcastle. One of the passengers, after speaking of the severe weather, muttered in a low tone, "A day's march nearer home." I said, "Do you really mean that?" But he gave a very vague reply. He was sitting exactly opposite me, and observing he was ill-provided with rugs, I offered to share mine with him. He was a gentlemanly man, and very modestly accepted my kindness. But not taking so much of the rug as I wished, I said, "Do not be afraid, for as a follower of Christ, I feel I ought to love my neighbor better than myself." He smiled, and sat very quietly for some time. At last I broke the silence by saying, "I heard you repeat just now a line of a hymn that I know very well, found in this verse—

'Here in the body pent,

Absent from Him I roam;

And nightly pitch my moving tent,

A day's march nearer home.'

and it struck me much. Pray, Sir, may I ask if you have peace with God?" To which he readily replied 'in the affirmative. On asking him if he had long enjoyed peace with God, he said, "I tried for a, long time to save myself, but the more I tried the more darkness and misery I knew, till I saw that Christ had done it, that He had saved sinners by His death upon the cross." It was comforting to find a passenger in a railway carriage reply so clearly to such a personal and pointed interrogation, and our conversation went on to the consideration of such scriptures as show that the true believer has the present possession of everlasting life, &c.

But what struck me especially was his saying that he had tried for a long time to save himself, because it describes the state of thousands, if not millions, in the present day. They are working and praying, keeping days, sacraments, priding themselves on their benevolence and sincerity, hoping to merit heaven in this way; closing their days, as they say, with the happy reflection of a well-spent life, while, at the same time, they are dead in trespasses and in sins—without Christ as a Savior, but trying to save themselves. How different is God's way of salvation. He cuts down all their self-righteous law-keeping pretensions by one sentence, that "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight," and that salvation is entirely by grace—the free love and favor of God to sinful men, and not of works, lest any man should boast, Should these lines meet the eye of any dear soul; who are thus blinded, may you be turned from darkness to light, from the darkness of your own thought, to the light of God's word, and the crucified Son O, God. Then only will you learn God's way of saving men, and you will find it done only by the death of the Son of God. Observe it is done. He said upon the cross, "It is finished," and bowed His head in death at once. Redemption is what you need, and it has been accomplished. Hence the Apostle said, "In whom (Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. 1:7.)

May you then, dear reader, give up at once every thought of your own goodness, of your getting better, of your making peace with God, or becoming by your own works in any degree fit for His presence. Such 'religion is all false. Look only to Christ's death upon the tree—see Him there made sin for you, made a curse for you, bearing your judgment, purging your sins, and now your life and righteousness at the right hand of God. This alone is God's way of peace; for He has made peace by the blood of His cross. But you say, Must I do nothing in order to be saved? Nothing, absolutely nothing—it is finished. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." When you have peace with God, you cannot work too much to please and honor Him who saved you in such wondrous mercy, and at such a cost.

The Blood

NOTHING is more clearly taught in Scripture than the need of the sinner being cleansed from sin in order to be fitted for the presence of God. We read of one under a sense of guilt crying out, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psa. 51) Again we find an inspired prophet calling on sinful people to hear the word of the Lord, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, with the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like , crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1.) Thus we learn not only the necessity of man being cleansed from sin in order to stand in blessing before God, but that a remedy, an all-cleansing remedy, is alluded to, which in God's estimate so perfectly cleanses the sinner as to make him spotless in His sight, or, as Scripture so forcibly puts it, justifies "from all things." No marvel then that God could say of some, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins," and should again assure us of the perfect efficacy of the work by such a precious announcement as—"Their sins and their iniquities will I remember, no more." Hence it is that the cleansed sinner can say with one of old, "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Surely no words could more plainly convey to our minds that there is a way of thoroughly and forever putting away sin.

The question is, How is this effected? Scripture from one end to the other ascribes it to the blood. Moses wrote—"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11); and elsewhere we are told, that "without the shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) It was "the blood" that gave the Israelites perfect shelter from the destroying angel when executing the judgment of God throughout the land of Egypt. Again we find that it was by blood that the high priest entered into the holiest of all, "that he die not." But while the blood of lambs or of bulls and goats were typical of a great reality, we are told that ".it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sins." (Heb. 10:4.) Those sacrifices, however often repeated, could not give remission, could not blot out or take away sins from the eye of God. They pointed to that one sacrifice which should be once offered, which should put away sin—the crucified Son of God. The blood of these many sacrifices often offered set forth in type the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the one effectual sacrifice which was once offered. Hence He said at the supper, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins;" and an apostle afterwards tells us, that "when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:3.) Precious statements! Again, to show the unlimited efficacy and the cleansing virtue of this precious blood, we read that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.) And further, that we might understand and enjoy the perpetual title this blood gives us to stand in God's infinitely holy presence, we are not only told that we now have "liberty, or boldness, to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," but that when we are actually in the glory we shall gaze upon that precious Lamb, and sing, "Thou art worthy; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every nation, and people, and kindred, and tongue." (Heb. 10:19; Rev. 5:9.)

Observe then, dear reader, that the blood of Christ is the true ground of peace. Not prayers, but the blood; not feelings, but the blood; not good desires, but the blood; not reformation, oh no! but the blood; as we are plainly told in another Scripture that Jesus, the Son of God, "made peace through the blood of His cross." (Col. 1:20.) Thus peace is made, redemption is accomplished, a new and living way into the holiest of all has been opened, the work of atonement is finished, and, believing God's Word about this, we have peace with God, a present blessing, through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why you find so many young converts finding comfort and rest for their souls in that precious text we have just quoted—"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." It is the sense of pardon, and that too on the ground of righteousness established and atonement made which so fills the heart with peace and confidence in God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"God who gave the blood to screen us,

God looks down in perfect love;

Clouds may seem to pass between us,

There 's no change in Him above.

"Though the restless foe accuses,

Sins recounting like a flood;

Every charge our God refuses:

Christ has answered with His blood."

Some years ago a poor woman, who was well known as a person of loose and careless habits, was asked by a friend to accompany her to the preaching of the gospel. She consented. The preacher that evening was expounding the touching narrative of the paschal lamb set forth in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. He earnestly called attention to the 'value of the blood, and showed that those only were sheltered from judgment who availed themselves of the blood according to God's word. He dwelt on the precious words of God—"When I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt." So that all now whom God sees trusting in the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, are perfectly safe. In this way the vilest and worst of sinners may be happy, and at peace with God, the moment they are really under the shelter of the blood. Divine light flashed upon her soul, and divine love was shed abroad in her heart, so that from that time her whole conduct was changed; the Lord was the great object of her life; and she at once sought to bring others to taste the same grace, and to know the same shelter from the wrath to come which she had found in the blood of Jesus. Her purpose from that hour seemed to be—

"Now will I tell to those around

What a dear Savior I have found;

I'll point to His redeeming blood,

And say, Behold the way to God."

But there is nothing uncommon in such a case. Multitudes have found peace and joy, and delight too, in serving God, through the power of the blood of Jesus.

Dear reader, what say you about the blood of Jesus? Is it precious, most precious to you? Can you say that you are cleansed from all sin by it? Why not? Is it not because you have not submitted to it as God's only way of justifying the ungodly? Oh beware of despising this sin-atonement, sinner-cleansing remedy, this only way of approach to God, this only title to stand in His holy presence in peace?

Let me call your attention to another case of a needy, guilty soul finding peace through the blood of the Lamb. The writer has lately read it, and would conclude this paper by quoting it.

“A visitor among the poor was one day climbing the broken staircase which led to a garret in one of the worst parts of London, when his attention was arrested by a man of peculiarly ferocious and repulsive countenance, who stood upon the landing-place, leaning with folded arms against the wall. There was something about the man's appearance which made the visitor shudder, and his first impulse was to go back. He made an effort, however, to get into conversation with him, and told him that he came there with the desire to do him good, and to see him happy, and that the book he had in his hand contained the secret of all happiness. The ruffian shook him off as if he had been a viper, and bade him be gone with his nonsense, or he would kick him down stairs. While the visitor was endeavoring with gentleness and patience to argue the point with him, he was startled by hearing a feeble voice, which appeared to come from behind one of the broken doors which opened upon the landing, saying, “Does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?”

“For the moment, the visitor was too much absorbed in the case of the hardened sinner before him to answer the inquiry; and it was repeated in earnest and thrilling tones: “Tell me, O tell me, does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?”

“The visitor pushed open the door and entered the room. It was a wretched place, wholly destitute of furniture, except a three-legged stool and a bundle of straw in a corner, upon which were stretched the wasted limbs of an aged woman. When the visitor entered, she raised herself upon one elbow, fixed her eye & eagerly upon him, and repeated her former questions, ‘Does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?’ He sat down upon the stool beside her, and inquired, My poor friend, what do you want to know of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?’ There was something fearful in the energy of her voice and manner as she replied, What do I want to know of it? Man, I am dying! I am going to stand naked before God. I have been a wicked woman, a very wicked woman, all my life. I shall have to answer for everything I have done;’ and she groaned bitterly as the thought of a lifetime's iniquity seemed to cross her 'soul. ‘But once,’ she continued, once, years ago, I came by the door of a church, and I went in—I don't know what for. I was soon out again, but one word I heard I could never forget. It was something about blood which cleanseth from all 'sin. Oh, if I could but hear of it now! tell me, tell me, if there is anything about that blood in your book? The visitor answered by reading the first chapter of the first epistle of John. The poor creature seemed to devour the words, and when he paused, she exclaimed, Read more, read more.’ He read the second chapter—a slight noise made him look round; the savage ruffian had followed him into his mother's room, and though his face was partly turned away, the motor could perceive tears rolling down his cheeks. The visitor read the third, fourth, and fifth,

chapters, before he could get the poor listener to consent that he should stop, and then she would not let him go till he "Remised to come again the next day. He never from that time missed a day reading to her until she died, six weeks afterwards; and very blessed it was to see how almost from the first she seemed to find peace by believing in Jesus. Every day the son followed the visitor into his mother's room, and listened in silence, but not indifference. On the day of her funeral he beckoned him to one side as they were filling up her grave, and said, ' Sir, I have been thinking there is nothing I should so much like as to spend the rest of my life in telling others of the blood which cleanseth from all sin."

Worship and the Lord's Supper

WORSHIP is the free adoration, and for us in the holiest, of those who have been brought nigh by sacrifice—who know God as love, who know Him as a Father, who has sought in grace worshippers in spirit and in truth, and brought them in cleansed to do so. The worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. By one offering Christ had perfected them forever; such is Scripture truth (see Heb. 10.); and then they worship, adore, praise in the sense of perfect, divine favor, and a Father's love. They have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way He has consecrated for them through the wail. It is not that Christ is doing it in heaven actually in the (so-called). triumphant church (there is no church triumphant), and they on earth in the militant.

They enter in spirit into the holiest, into heaven itself, to worship there; and hence it high priest made higher than the heavens was needed for them, because their worship is there: they do not offer the sacrifice in order to come in, they are within in virtue of the sacrifice. And this is the place the symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood have in worship. The worshippers are in spirit in heavenly places. Christ in spirit is in their midst, and they own and remember that blessed and perfect sacrifice by which they can so worship—by which they have entered in. Doubtless they feed on Christ in spirit, but that is not the point we are on now. The Christ that is represented in the Eucharist is a Christ with a broken body, and the cup is His shed blood, not a glorified Christ in heaven. It is His death, a broken body and the blood separated from it, life given up in this world, that is before us. We may in spirit eat also the old corn of the land, be occupied with a heavenly Christ; assuredly we may, and blessedly so, but that is not the Christ which is here. We eat His flesh and drink His blood, i.e. separate from His body—not only the manna which was for the desert and ceased in Canaan, the bread that came down from heaven; but the additional and necessary truth of His death.

Sacrifice is that by which we approach to God as coming from without: worship, adoration, and praise when we have got within. The Jewish temple-service had the character of sacrifice in general, because they could not go within, the Holy Ghost signifying by the un-rent veil that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest. But we pass through the rent veil into the holiest, and worship there as in the holiest. Knowing withal God as our Father, we recognize—remember with adoring thankfulness—that sacrifice, that rending of the veil, that breaking of the body, that shedding of the blood, through which we can so enter, purged from all our sins and reconciled to God. Christ is in the midst of two or three gathered in His name, but it is a living Christ in spirit, not His body broken and shed blood. Having Him in our midst in spirit, we celebrate His precious death; we do this in remembrance of The Eucharist is a symbol and sign of the dead. Christ—a broken body and shed blood. Christ is personally in heaven. He is present in spirit in the congregation; as He expresses it "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

They were to do that, i.e., use the emphatic symbols of His death in remembrance of Him. Hence it is the center of worship, because hereby know I love, because He lay down His life for us. Here He

glorified the Father for me, so that I can enter into the holiest, then the veil was rent and the way opened; but here was the perfect work accomplished by which I, as risen together with Him, can say I am not in the flesh. In the heavenly Christ I say, by the Holy Ghost, I AM in Him and He in me. It is being in Him, being united to Him, He in our midst in grace, a dead Christ I remember. I do not, in the joy and glory in which I have a part, through and with Him, forget that lonely work in which He bore the sorrow and drank the cup of wrath. I remember with touched affections the lowly rejected Christ, now that I am in heavenly places through His solitary humiliation... The remembering Him, that divine person in His solitary suffering and perfect love to His Father, is the most touching of Christian affections, the basis and center of all true worship, as the efficacy of the work wrought there alone admits us to worship at all. The drinking of the blood apart points it out as shed. We show forth the Lord's death emphatically, not a glorified Christ, but we do so as associated with Him the glorified man, who Himself purged our sins, remembering with thankful hearts how we got there, and above all Him who gave Himself up that we might.—An Extract.

The Characteristics and Path of Devotedness

Phil. 1-4

THE characteristics of devotedness are largely set forth in this epistle. It is, to have in us "the mind which was in Christ Jesus;" like Him, to be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation..... lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." As redeemed by Christ, standing in Christ, and aiming to be like Christ, it is easy to understand that such would therefore see everything in relation to Christ, and this is remarkably brought out in the first chapter of this short epistle. Thus if, as in the sixth verse, he thinks of God's present work, or, as in the tenth verse, he is occupied with the walk of the saints, he looks at both as they will appear in the day of Christ—that day when everything will come out according to God, when all will be made manifest, and all His saints shall have reward from Him according to their works.

If his heart goes out after the saints, he thinks and feels for them, not as they are seen of men, but as they are precious to the deepest feelings of the heart of Him who loveth them, and washed them from their sins in His own blood. He could say, "God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." (v. 8.)

If he looked at the heavy chains that bound him, and so painfully pressed upon him, as a prisoner for the truth's sake, he could think of those heavy irons as associated with the person of the Lord Jesus, whom he served, and for whom he suffered.' Hence he called these fetters his "bonds in Christ." He saw Christ, as it were, written on every link of his chain. His faith so looked to Him, so dealt with Him, and so received everything out of His hand, that he knew himself to be the prisoner of Jesus Christ, and felt his chains to be as he said, "my bonds in Christ." (v. 13.)

Then as to preaching. Here too the person of his adorable Lord was everything. It was not merely the quantity, as people now call it, of evangelical machinery, but whether Christ—that blessed Man in the glory—were exalted in it. It was not enough for the 'apostle that persons preached about Christ, but whether the person—Christ Himself—were exalted; that was the point; and if so, no matter by whom it was, he could say, "I therein do rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice." (v. 18.)

If bodily health or bodily suffering were the subjects, he seemed to have had but one desire animating his soul; and what could that be in one who knew Christ in the glory to be the one absorbing object of his heart? Could he consider his own body apart from Him? Certainly not. It was therefore that "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death." (v. 20.)

As to this present life, he could say, "For me to live is Christ." Blessed testimony! True mark of the faithful! It is not merely holding doctrines about Christ, however orthodox they may be, but expressing Christ, showing forth His characteristics, exhibiting His ways, habits, and spirit continually,—being really yoked with Him who was meek and lowly in heart. What is devotedness but this? Happy those who, rejoicing in Christ, are seeking in all points to be like Christ—obedient, faithful, meek and lowly in heart, not seeking to do their own will, but subject in all things to His will.

Wondrous expression, "For me to live is Christ!" (v. 21.)

Then as to departing. It was not rest, or joy, or heaven, or happiness, that fired his soul with hope when he thought of putting off this tabernacle. No! As in other matters, so here he looked at it in relation to the great object of attraction before his heart—Christ Himself. His joy in the prospect of departing was to be with Christ. Blessed prospect It was not the crown, the deliverance from sorrow, or even the positive and eternal enjoyment of the place. No; it was to be with Him, as it must be with every truly devoted heart; Christ there as well as Christ here—"having a desire to depart, and be with Christ." (v. 23.)

In the second chapter we read that his sorrow was, that "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" that other interests came in, to displace the paramount claims and interests of Christ; that self became an object, and therefore Christ was so far set aside. He could speak of Epaphroditus as sick nigh unto death for the work of Christ, and that he should be received in the Lord by the saints with all gladness. Nor does the apostle fail to mark out the lowly, obedient Son of God, as the true and perfect pattern of devotedness, and that it was marked with humiliation and rejection here, and the highest exaltation above. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and in earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The path of devotedness is blessedly marked out in the third chapter. The pursuer resembles a runner at the games, pressing on most perseveringly toward the mark for the prize. This "one thing" absorbs his energies. He has but one object—that he may win Christ—be actually where He is, in the sweet enjoyment of the person of the Lord face to face. He seeks knowledge, power, and position, while enjoying the place of highest possible privilege, and finds every step of the path lighted up with the most blessed hope. To sight and sense the way is fraught with difficulties, while faith knows no halting-place, and counts nothing worthy of a moment's delay, and promises itself no rest till with the Lord. Its longings are that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Let us look a little at these four marks of the path of devotedness, knowledge, power, position, and hope; and is it not remarkable that the path of worldliness and unbelief proposes the same four subjects, yet alas! how wide the contrast as to their true worth.

1. As to knowledge: the press can scarcely print copies fast enough to supply the craving of the world-teeming millions for knowledge in the present day. It is found too among all classes. The cheapest forms of periodical literature abound to meet the growing desires after knowledge, among the poorest of our neighbors. But what is the object and end of all such knowledge? Does it climb a step beyond the range under the sun of vanity and vexation of spirit? How different is the heart-longing of the devoted saint! That "I may know Him," is his constant, most fervent desire. What he had already known of Christ had so captivated his heart (and who ever knew Him so well as Paul), that his whole soul went out after Him; to know more of the infinite worth, unsearchable

perfections, and moral excellencies of the Lord Himself, was the knowledge that he so craved.

My Christian reader, are we growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Are we desiring it? Are we searching the Scriptures, and having such personal intercourse with Christ as to ensure our better acquaintance with Him, His fullness, offices, grace, faithfulness, unchanging, perfect love?

2. With regard to power; what is there that men will not give for a little increase of power over their fellow-men? What sacrifices do they not make to obtain it? But after all it is only power that exercises its jurisdiction in a world that is under judgment, and lying in the wicked one, and limited by the chilly hand of death. But the power which the Lord's devoted servants desire is not that, but "the power of His resurrection." It is known only on the other side of death. It is a fact that Christ died, and that we died with Him; it is a fact also, that Christ rose from the dead, and that we have life in Him who is risen; hence the apostle so craved the power of this new risen life in his soul, that he might live in it, and not in the flesh, outside the world and above it, and manifest the walk and conduct of one who is risen with Christ, one with Christ. Beloved, are we ardently desiring this power?

3. The third point is position. Men will work night and day, and persevere for many a year to raise their position over their fellow-men; but the position Paul desired so earnestly, was to be cast out with Christ—to be hated, despised, and to suffer for being like Christ; to suffer for righteousness' sake for well-doing, to have "the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." Is this, dear Christian brethren, the position in this world that we are honestly seeking? If so, like the apostles, we shall rejoice at being counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of the Lord Jesus.

4. As to hope: the world professes to hope for better days, but alas, how it flatters itself in its own eyes. What boasts are heard of "peace and safety." How largely too it talks of "progress" and "advancement," thus refusing to listen to the divine verdict, "Now is the judgment of this world." But the Christian's hope is eternally bright and glorious, shedding its gladdening rays back on every part of the path of devotedness—it is Christ Himself. As already risen with Christ, seated in Him in heavenly places, one with Him by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, having too already, by the eternal purpose and grace of God, and the precious blood of His own Son, citizenship in heaven, "we look," not for earthly things, "however pleasant in some respects, but" we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ," to come from heaven, when, redemption being applied to the body, we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; this body of humiliation changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus, and thus we shall be like Him, and with Him forever. The body then, as well as the soul, will have capacities for entering into and enjoying our eternal inheritance as joint-heirs with Christ.

Such is the climax of the Christian's path of pilgrimage, and how glorious it is! Then we shall "win Christ." The race will have been run. Days of faith and times of failure will be over. The wilderness will be an event of the past. Hope will be realized. The glory of God and of the Lamb possessed and enjoyed. The path began with our being "in Christ," and ends with being with Christ, and like Christ forever. There is no room for doubt as to the end. He said, "I will raise him up at the last day," and "He is faithful that promised." Hence we can truly sing,

"We nightly pitch our moving tent,

A day's march nearer home."

It may be well to notice two things that may hinder our pursuing the path of devotedness hinted at in the fourth chapter; a want of yieldingness, and the heart burdened with cares. "Let your moderation [yieldingness] be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." You never find Christ contending for His rights, though He alone had a right to anything. He yielded everything in obedience to the Father's will. A Christian leaves the path of devotedness the moment he insists upon his own rights. He, can afford to yield, and he should be known as such, for "The Lord is at hand." We are enjoined too, to "be careful for nothing," but to pray about everything with thanksgiving, casting all our care upon Him, because He careth for us.

“Dead in Sins,” and “Dead to Sin.”

WHAT an amazing difference these two conditions present. Few it may be think of it, and yet each person is in God's sight either "dead in sins," or "dead to sin." Perhaps my reader has not yet solemnly considered these weighty points, and would like to know what Scripture teaches concerning them.

“Dead in sins” is the divine estimate of every one of us in our natural condition. (Eph. 2:1-5.) Man, however amiable, benevolent, or virtuous, is spiritually dead. God speaks, but there is no response—man perceiveth it not. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Not a thought, feeling, or desire springs out of his heart that is acceptable with God. All the fruit he brings forth, religious or irreligious, is “unto death.” He is “dead in trespasses and sins.” What a dreadful state to appear in before God—“in sins,” yea “dead in sins.” And as a dead man neither feels, understands, nor sympathizes with the living round about him, so man in his natural state, educated, or uneducated, neither understands the living and true God, nor does anything according to His mind.

In these days, men do not object to be called sinners. They have become accustomed to it. Besides, what they understand by it is that they have a good nature, and have only occasionally and accidentally done what is evil in God's sight, which a few good deeds may counterbalance. They thus deceive themselves. They do not believe God, who says that “we are all by nature children of wrath,” that we are all “under sin,” “alienated and enemies in mind.” They do not see that their nature is bad. Hence they speak of serving God, and keeping His commandments; they like too to be told to keep commandments, because it gives importance to them as men in the flesh, but it denies the divine verdict, that they are “dead in trespasses and sins.” The consequence is that they are further blinded by false hopes of improving men in the flesh, “raising the masses” as some call it, and the like, which give impetus to a multitude of schemes, all of which reflect more or less credit on man in the flesh, and bolster up the false doctrine that, though man is a sinner, he is capable of being made subject to God; thus plainly setting aside the testimony of God that man is “dead in sins,” “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

The Scripture however cannot be broken. God has declared what man is, and his whole history proves the truth of it. The fact is, what man needs is “life,” nothing less than a new nature capable of entering into God's mind and enjoying Him. This is the starting-point. Hence we are told that when we were dead in sins, we believers were quickened or made alive together with Christ. (Eph. 2:5.) For this purpose we also learn that “God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.” This is simple enough. Man is not only a sinner, but dead in sins—not only needs pardon, but life; and Jesus lifted up and crucified brings us all we need. The brazen serpent was a type of this. Hence we read, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Life, observe, through looking, by faith to the Son of God crucified for sinners.

To be "dead to sin" is a very different thought. The wages of sin being death, nothing short of death could meet the requirements of divine righteousness. Righteousness demanded death for sin. In fact, there is no deliverance from sin in any other way than by death. Divine mercy brought in a Substitute; one able, because man, to stand in man's stead, and because He was God, able to meet every demand of divine righteousness. Thus Jesus the Son of God died—the just for the unjust. "He died unto sin once;" not for Himself, surely, for He was without sin, but for us, who were "dead in sins." Hence it is that we died unto sin. Blessed, precious truth—"dead with Christ." The cross shows us this. There we find that "our old man is crucified with Him." There righteousness is maintained as to God's dealing with sin, and grace abounds. God is just, as well as rich in mercy. Grace reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." God has, then, met sin judicially with death on the cross. He spared not His own Son. He "condemned sin in the flesh." Therefore the believer is free, delivered from condemnation. He has been judged, condemned, crucified with Christ; and being thus made free from sin, he becomes a servant to God. He is made free, and is now at liberty to serve God. But Christ is risen; then he is risen. Christ is alive again, on the other side of death—alive from the dead, and Christ is our life.

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The believer then has life, life in Spirit, life in Christ risen from the dead. As a matter of fact he feels flesh in him, its affections and lusts working; he is enjoined, therefore, to reckon himself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in our Lord Jesus Christ. This is liberty indeed, based on every claim of divine righteousness having been met, and redemption accomplished. The delivered soul is able therefore to look up to Christ at the right hand of God, as his life, righteousness, redemption, strength, and source of every good. Such have no longer the false idea of improving the "old man," but seeing that completely and judicially set aside in the cross, they practically "put off the old man," and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them, and gave Himself for them. On the cross, it was Himself instead of myself; in the glory, it is myself in Himself, "complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power."

The doctrine of the believer being now "dead to sin," and "alive unto God," is set before us in Scripture both for peace and for power. As to peace, it shews us that every question as to flesh and its doings, sin and its workings, has been already judicially met for us in Christ, who was "made sin for us." Every exercise of conscience which we have of the evil nature in us is answered by the fact that it has been judged, condemned, and crucified with Christ. Faith therefore reckons it dead. Experience says, "I feel its dreadful lusts." True, and Scripture recognizes that "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," but calls on us to reckon it judged and dead. When the conscience is so troubled, that the inward cry is raised, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The Spirit, through the written word, directs us to Him who was crucified for us. Faith, therefore, looks to Jesus, and says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The power over sin, and for practical holiness, that this truth gives, is also most blessedly set forth. If our old man is crucified; we cannot but deny all its reasonings, its claims, and its resources. We have "no confidence in the flesh." This is an immense clearing away of hindrance to practical godliness. Then, if we have life in Christ risen, life in the Spirit, and the Spirit is in us, we can have fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and power of testimony for Him in this time of His rejection. Our eyes, therefore, by the sanctifying action of this truth, are turned outward and upward to the Son of God Himself, the true and only source of joy and strength. In this way we are above the

atmosphere of self and sin, we are able to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, we are willing to suffer with Christ, and, if need be, for Christ, and wait patiently for His return from heaven. It gives true rest of soul, and deep joy to our hearts, thus to enter into the divine teaching that we are dead; that Christ is our life; that at this moment God can speak of us as not in flesh, but in Spirit. But we need watchfulness, lest we get away from the enjoyment of this liberty wherewith Christ path made us free, and the eye gets turned inward, so as to give importance to self—the old man, instead of reckoning ourselves to have died indeed unto sin, and to be alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord. May all true believers enter into and enjoy their blessed new-creation place in Christ!

“Complete in Him!” how sweet that word!

For ever be our Lord adored;

Once without hope, far off from God,

We in our fallen condition stood.

“Complete in Him!” through matchless grace,

Before the world, by Abba's choice;

And though we sinned, redemption's plan

This purpose wrought for ruin'd man.

“Complete in Him!” no longer viewed

As "dead in trespasses" by God;

"Ye are not in the flesh," says He,

"From condemnation thou art free.”

“Complete in Him!” God's only Son,

Who came forth from the Father's throne;

Made sin and curse, for us He died,

So we with Him were crucified.

“Complete in Him!”—of power the Head,

As risen with Him from the dead;

In Him we sit on heaven's throne,

Waiting to share with Him His own.

“Complete in Him!” Thy name we bless,

Our Savior, Wisdom, Righteousness!

The Spirit's gift has made us one,

Thy body's members, flesh and bone.

The Cities of Refuge

A CASUAL observer must be struck in reading the Old Testament by the various gracious provisions made by God to meet His people's need. Among these we do well to notice the cities of refuge.

Their number, their position, and the various laws attaching to them, were all detailed with minutest accuracy, as an attentive study of Num. 35:6-34; Deut. 4:41-43; 19: 1-13; Josh. 20, will convince the reader.

First as to their number and position. Out of the eight-and-forty cities allotted to the Levites, who had no inheritance, six were to be cities of refuge—three on this side Jordan, three on the other—Kedesh, Shechem, Kirjath-arba, on this side; Bezer, Ramoth, Golan, on the other.

The Levites dwelt in these cities; and the Levites were those who were especially set apart of God to minister and act in dependence on the High Priest.

These cities would seem to have been most judiciously selected in order to be accessible to everyone —"a way prepared" (Deut. 19:3) to them, and the coasts divided into three parts, each part having a city allotted to it.

Thus the cities were provided of the Lord, and made in every way accessible to those who needed them; and those dwelt in them who had been especially set apart of God to exercise their office under the High Priest, and thus suited to act for Him.

We will now consider under what circumstances they were made use of, and came into exercise. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood; by man shall his blood be shed," was a law not confined to the days of Noah (Gen. 9:6); it had been incorporated into the Jewish laws (Ex. 21:12); and simultaneously with its incorporation we find allusion made to the cities of refuge. (v. 13.)

These cities were for the man-slayer; not for one who had shed his fellow's blood by malice prepense, as lawyers say, but for those who "unwittingly,"

"ignorantly," "at unawares," "without enmity," not having "hated him in times past," had had the misfortune to kill any person, "as when," as it so simply says, "a man goeth into the wood with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbor, that he die," then "he shall flee into one of these cities, and live." But for the murderer who hated his neighbor, and laid in wait for him, and rose up against him, and smote him mortally, that he die, there was to be no pity, but he should at once be delivered over to the revenger of blood, to be put to death. Whether the murder was committed with an instrument of iron, or by throwing a stone, or with an hand-weapon of wood, or with the band, there was to be no mercy; the revenger of blood, if he met him, should slay him; or if he had even taken refuge within the city, the elders of that city should deliver him up, that he die. The murderer then must die; the man-slayer who did it in ignorance must escape. "Witnesses" must give evidence in the case, the elders of the city must judge, and the revenger of

blood must abide the issue.

This revenger of blood has neither pity nor mercy. He stands for God, and as such his justice is inexorable, and he cannot abate his judgment.

Next, these cities were open to all. They were a refuge for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither. All were welcome, provided only they had offended unwittingly.

On their arrival at the city, what were they to do? To stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and declare their cause in the ears of the elders of that city; and then they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place to dwell among them; and if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand, because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. He shall dwell in that city until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, and unto the city from whence he fled. (Josh. 20:3-6.)

The congregation shall judge between him and the slayer, and restore him to the city of his refuge; but if at any time he come without the border of the gates of his refuge, before the death of the high priest that was anointed with the holy oil, the revenger of blood shall kill the slayer, he shall not be guilty of blood. But when the high priest is dead, he shall return to the land of his possession.

Surely, from this interesting history, beloved, we may learn precious lessons.

Has God, do you think, in any sense diminished the provisions of His grace for our need, who live in times of greater privilege and blessing? Unquestionably not. What do we find on turning to Rev. 21? not six cities, but one city; not a refuge in an earthly Canaan, but an eternal city in glory—the city of God. Not cities composed of wood and stone, bricks and mortar, but a city formed of glorified saints,—those living stones which, fitly framed together, are now growing unto a holy temple in the Lord. The city of our refuge is the heavenly Jerusalem—the bride, the Lamb's wife. It is but one, it is true; but so plain is its description, so evident the way to it, that whosoever will may come: he that flees may enter. The door is open to Jew, stranger, sojourner, "whosoever will." What a magnificent city it is! Heavenly in her origin, divine in her character—the glory of God is hers. Separated she is as by a wall great and high, and yet her gates are always open, while angels as porters stand in wonder and amazement: apostles rule from thence the tribes of Israel, specially given to their charge. (Matt. 19:28.) Righteousness and purity characterize her, while the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb dwell therein, and are her light and glory. Nations walk below beneath her radiance, while streams of blessing flow froth her, and food and healing are found therein. There the saints have perfect blessing in presence of God and of the Lamb.

Surely such a description as this would attract the heart that had not even learned its need to flee for refuge; but, alas! there is only too sad cause for each and all to enquire whether they have got both right and title to enter therein. A murder has been committed in this world in which every member of the human family, has had a share. You and I, my reader, are all murderers in the sight of God. You ask me "how?" I say, Christ was murdered eighteen hundred years ago by the representatives of every section of the human family. All were there. Kings and

rulers—represented by Herod and Pilate. 'Religious professors in their delegates the scribes, elders, chief priests, and Pharisees. The heathen even by the Roman soldiers. Members of that vast parliament of the human family all gave their vote against Him, and a murderer and robber was preferred to the spotless Jesus. Just as a constituency is identified with the acts of its members, so the world at large is guilty of the act of its representatives in the death of Jesus. Now comes the question, Are you guilty of the death of Jesus ignorantly or designedly? Do you, now that the matter is brought before you, repudiate the world's sin or consent to it? Are you a murderer or a man-slayer? Are you on Christ's side or the world's? Paul obtained mercy, because he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:13.) A remnant of the Jews found grace because "through ignorance" they did it. Why should not you have a place in the heavenly city, by fleeing at once for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before you? The murderer was wont to lay, hold on the horns of the altar in his terror,—why should not you, whose conscience tells you you are still guilty, flee to Jesus, and in Him find a title to the new Jerusalem? He says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." You hear the message; receive it, and life eternal is yours,—peace, safety, through the blood of the Lamb. The avenger of blood—God's inexorable justice—is after you; to-morrow may be too late; flee, I pray you, now.

But what, you say, is this about the elders of the congregation, the danger of being found outside, the abiding till the death of God's anointed priest, the returning into the land of the possession? I will tell you. The Bride, the Lamb's wife, the church of God, the Body of Christ, has now its reflection upon the earth. His saints are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. In measure they, some at least, are endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. They are gathered together to the name of Jesus as their only center, and He Himself is in their midst. (Matt. 18:20.)

Being assured of your interest in Christ, having no question that your sins are forgiven, that you have peace with God, with these is your place upon the earth, even to "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Tim. 2:22.) They are, so to speak, the Levites. They have a loving welcome for you. They will listen to your ease, and if you can assure them you are not a mere professor, but a repentant, forgiven sinner, they will introduce you to their company, and give you a place to dwell among them. A change of scene you will find it, no doubt, and among a different company to what you have been accustomed; but it is the place where God would have you, and the place where He can bless you. Paul thus, on seeing his place in the body of Christ (Acts 9), "assayed to join himself to the disciples;" and though, because of his previous ways, they questioned at first his sincerity, he ultimately found a place among them; and we find him, when we come to Acts 20:7, gathered with the rest to remember the Lord in death on the day of His resurrection, the first day of the week. This, beloved, is your place, and mine likewise, if we would walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. Have you thus taken your place among the disciples of the Lord Jesus?

"Oh, but," you say, "if he stayed outside he was in jeopardy." I grant it; and in Heb. 6:4-8 we find the most solemn warning as to the professor (and the professor only is referred to there) who should creep in unawares, and then go out because not of us. (1 John 2:19.)

We want you not, professor; our company would soon become distasteful to you; and your last state would be worse than your first. Like the washed sow, you return to the wallowing in the mire,

to be beaten with many stripes, because you knew your Lord's will, and did it not.

"But can our High Priest die?" you say. No, thank God! Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us. His priesthood is without beginning of days, or end of life; but His present office will not always last. He is Melchisedec in His order (eternal), Aaronic in His office (intercessory). Presently His Aaronic office will cease; for His saints will no longer (translated to glory) need His intercession; and then, like Melchisedec, His royal priesthood will commence—a blessing, not an intercessory priesthood. We wait that time. He Himself will come forth to introduce it, and then we return to the land of our possession; or, in other words, enter upon the inheritance which, as His joint-heirs, He will share with us. Then will come our glory; then the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. We shall be forever with Him and like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. May it be yours then, dear reader, to anticipate that time, and know, through faith in the Lord Jesus, not merely that every claim against you has been met by Him upon the cross, but see your title to the heavenly Jerusalem, and consequently your place now with the members of His body here below—in weakness, no doubt, but still true to divine principles, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to share with them their waiting-time, as presently you will their glory-time. Amen.

O Boundless Love!

JESUS died upon the tree,
O boundless love!
Died to set the sinner free,
O boundless love!
To the cross grace matchless drew Him,
There man's sin and hatred slew Him,
Now we have redemption through Him,
O boundless love!
Love beyond a mortal's speech,
O boundless love!
Love that thought can never reach,
O boundless love!
Death most cruel Jesus suffered,
When for sin His soul He offered,
And His love to justice proffered,
O boundless love!
Loud and far the theme shall swell,
O boundless love!
On it saints shall ever dwell,
O boundless love!
Matchless theme! He died, yet liveth;
To that soul salvation giveth
Who in Him by grace believeth,
O boundless love!

The Difference between King Uzziah and Us Who Believe

"But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hosted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the, Lord: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land."—2 CHRON. 26:16-21.

UZZIAH, being a king, sought to become a priest, and is smitten with leprosy—a type of sin—and cast down, abased. We who were "without strength," "ungodly," "sinners," "and "enemies" of God, covered with the leprosy of sin, have been, by His grace, washed, and brought nigh, and exalted to be kings and priests. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5, 6.)

Double-Mindedness; or, Lamenting After the Lord

IT is one thing to be a Christian, it is another thing to be a happy Christian. To know' the Scripture doctrine of the believer's position and privileges is very different from having the possession and enjoyment of them. The fact is, that we are slow to enter upon and make our own the blessings God has graciously given us in Christ.

In Samuel's day the people were characterized for a long time by lamenting after the Lord, and this, we fear, describes the state of heart of thousands of Christians now. They are desiring rather than possessing—longing for instead of enjoying fellowship with the Lord Himself; hoping to have instead of entering into God's thoughts and purposes, and tasting His joys. Why is this? In Israel's day there was unjudged evil among them, and the eye and heart were not single. Hence they were told to "put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth," and also to "serve the Lord only." So now there are "strange gods," some things occupying the heart contrary to the truth, something between the soul and the Lord; it may be the world, its pride, wealth, honor, pleasure, in some shape or other; or it may be darling lusts, self-love, self-exaltation, or something else cherished or allowed, which the word of God positively condemns. The eye, therefore, cannot be single, nor the heart only desiring the glory of God—serving Him only. The affections are not set on heavenly things; the eye and heart are not exercised in the life and walk of faith; and things of time and sense so occupy the soul, that there is desire to have rather than present possession and enjoyment, so that, like Israel of old, they go on year after year lamenting after the Lord.

The people, however, hearkened to the prophet's counsel. They were willing to think badly of their ways. They took the place of self-judgment. Their errors were made manifest. They determined at all costs to separate from evil. They were conscious of having sinned. They saw that their strange gods and Ashtaroth had displaced and dishonored Jehovah. They resolved therefore to "cease to do evil," by putting them away from among them. So far this was good, but the next step would be "learning to do well." Separation from known evil was not enough—they were to pursue positive godliness and devotedness. We, therefore, read of their humiliation before God for such deep dishonor to Him, fasting before the Lord, confession, saying, "We have sinned," and taking the place of conscious weakness, and of relying only upon the strength of the living God, as their desire for the prophet's prayer plainly intimated. This was learning to do well. The result was that they were soon delivered from the power of the enemy that had so long oppressed them, and their joy in the true God Was manifest by their setting up a stone, and calling it "Eben-ezer; saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

How simple is all this, and yet how full of instruction and admonition to us! What searching of heart and ways should this inspired account produce in us! If our walk be so careless that unjudged sin is covered up, no marvel that the Holy Spirit is so grieved that we are not possessing and enjoying the Lord's presence and truth. And if the eye be not single, and the heart really set upon serving Him, and Him only, it is not surprising that weakness and lamentation characterize us both individually and collectively.

How different is the condition of saints as contemplated in the epistles. There we read "we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Being "in Christ," "complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power," our state is supposed to be rejoicing in the Lord always, rejoicing evermore, rejoicing in Christ Jesus,—happy, and making others happy. It is a mark of our being really happy in the Lord when we are making others happy. As love provokes love, so there is something infectious in real spiritual joy. Who visits saints much, and does not often prove this? If we cannot make others happy in the Lord, the inference is strong that our own souls are at a low ebb. The apostle said, we "comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

Is it not possible that the standard of practical godliness is too low among us? To have as much of the world as possible, and to satiate the desires of the flesh as far as can be, and still to maintain credit among the saints of being "consistent Christians," as the term is, may be the conventional thought of this day; but it will not do, for such a standard opens wide the door to many a "strange god," and gives a lodging-place to many an "Ashtaroth." Whether we think of ourselves as individuals, or of the church of God collectively, there cannot be but one question as to the standard of practical conduct, and it is this, Does it suit Christ? When you hear a person say, "What harm is there in this or that?" you may be sure that he has not the sense of the holiness due to the place and relationships the grace of God had brought him into, nor of the claims of Christ; for we are not our own; but are bought with a price. Does this suit Christ? should be the question, and it carries with it an answer for all the difficulties of the most active imagination of the fleshly mind. To walk worthy of the Lord is he w Scripture puts it.

The truth is that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We have been made alive, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Observe this word "made." It is done. We are already associated with Him who is exalted at God's right hand. We have the present possession of life eternal in Christ, we are in Christ in heavenly places, we are fully blessed in Him, we are sons of God. Marvelous blessings! Should we then be lamenting after the Lord? Certainly not, but rejoicing in the Lord; seeking the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God—our hearts set and fixed on things above, and not on things on the earth. In a word, possessing and enjoying all that God has made us and given us in Christ; yea more, joying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received these amazing blessings. If you say, How can I possess and enjoy all this? we reply, not by efforts and resolutions, but by simply believing God's own statements as to His rich mercy in thus blessing us in Christ.

Beloved fellow Christians, let us beware of the snares of unbelief, by whomsoever presented, or in whatever shape. Let the Scriptures be the sole and exclusive authority to our hearts and consciences. 'What can be worse than not to receive implicitly what 'God has written? Let us watch against the Christ-dishonoring, soul-damaging ways of false humility and doubt. When Scripture gives us the plainest possible statement, what but unbelief could suggest the question, What does it mean? In these days of growing rationalism, we need to guard against every insinuation which refuses the direct and absolute authority of the written Word of God. Let us not take lower ground than it gives us, notwithstanding the scorn of unbelief, and charge of presumption that skeptical minds may intimate. "Let God be true, and every man a liar," was and still is the motto of believing souls. To have "strange gods" among us—the heart set on things of

earth—and to be faithfully serving the Lord too, is simply impossible. To be consciously and happily one with Christ, and to be practically taking a place of one with men in the flesh, cannot be. No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. If the world, and men in the flesh are worthy, or if the interests of self in your esteem have the first place, let it be so, and honestly abandon Christian ground, and say, "Baal is my god." But if Christ be worthy, if He who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, have in our esteem most justly the first and only claim, then let us serve Him only, follow Him closely, and walk worthy of the Lord who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory.

"My Savior, keep my spirit stayed

Hard following after Thee,

Till I in robes of white arrayed

Thy face in glory see."

“Made Meet”

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”—Col. 1:12.

ONE thing marks every variety of false religion; it is uncertainty as to salvation, which is exactly opposite to the teaching of Scripture. It denies that the atoning -work is done, that redemption has been accomplished, and the truth of new creation in Christ Jesus. It is particularly characteristic too of the present day, for even true Christians, when asked if they are children of God; or if their sins are forgiven, are very commonly satisfied to reply, "I hope so;" which really means they cannot speak with certainty about it. Those who have the most extensive opportunities of judging, know how rarely such pointed questions elicit the hearty response of simple confidence which take, unalterable word of the Lord warrants.. Some think that to doubt and fear are marks of humility of mind, and judge it presumption to take the ground that the grace of God in 'Christ Jesus has given us. It becomes, therefore, a question of great importance as to what Scripture teaches on the subject.

We have looked in vain for a single instance in the New Testament of a child of God doubting his eternal salvation. On the contrary, it abounds with witnesses of present joy because of the knowledge of present salvation. It is what the Holy Ghost teaches. Our blessed Lord, told His disciples before He left them, that they would know their security and standing Him. Referring to: the time of the Comforter's coming, He said to them, “In, that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” (John 14:20.)

When a poor sin-burdened woman came to our Lord and shed tears over His dear feet, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, the blessed Savior would not allow her to depart without the fullest rest of soul as to her sins and guilt. To those present He said, "Her sins, which were many, are forgiven;" and turning to her He added, "Woman, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Again, when a rich publican came down and received Him joyfully, the Lord also assured him that for a sin-convicted soul to receive Him whom God had sent was to have present salvation. "This day is salvation come to this house," said He; "for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 7:47-50; 19:9, 10.)

And so also taught the apostles. We find Paul, when addressing saints by the Holy Ghost on the gospel, saying, "Unto us which are saved, it is the power of God;" and when writing to Timothy he exclaims, "Who hath saved us?" Again, in another epistle we find the same ground of faith maintained: We know (not we hope, but we know) that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have (not we hope to have, but we have) a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Peter, too, by the same Spirit, not only says that we rejoice in Him, whom having not seen we love with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but, referring to present salvation, he adds, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." John also by the same Spirit says, "We know

(not we hope, but we know) that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "We know that we are of God."

Quotations might be multiplied on this point, but enough has been adduced to show the unshaken confidence that formerly characterized Christians, who simply rested on the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the word of God, and the accomplished redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The same line of truth, only in more detail, is brought before us in the epistle to the Colossians. It appears that Epaphras had gone to that idolatrous city with the gospel. Some believed. This success he communicated to the apostle Paul. They had only just turned to God from idols through Christ. The two cardinal points of Christianity were very manifest in them, viz., "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and love unto all saints." The apostle thanked God when he heard of these characteristics of true Christianity. It was not people merely saying that they believed, but as true faith in the Lord Jesus is always connected with life in the soul, being born of God, the consequence is that this life flows out in like-mindedness to Christ who is our life; they therefore love what He loves. He loves all saints, so do all that are born of God. But more than this. He learned from Epaphras that it was not merely affection which they manifested to certain persons, for after all this might be mere natural affection, but with these saints it was spiritual,—"love in the Spirit." There could, therefore, be no mistake as to their reality; hence the apostle addresses their as "in Christ," for all true believers not only have life, but Christ risen and ascended is their Life, they are therefore in Him. Thus Scripture now speaks only of two classes,—those who are "in the flesh," and those who are "in Christ." Here the apostle looks at them in the new creation, where God sees them; hence in the second chapter he tells them, "Ye are complete in Him."

In turning to the apostle's prayer, we find he prays first that they may have, knowledge of God's will—have that spiritual intelligence and understanding as, to God's mind, that they may be able to walk (verses 9, 10). How can Christians do God's will if they do not know it? The great adversary, therefore, has gained a great step in souls when he has succeeded in hindering them from reading and meditating on the word of God; for God's word gives us His will. In the third chapter he exhorts them also that the word of Christ may dwell in them richly. It is impossible that the importance of habitually reading the Scriptures prayerfully, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, can be overrated; in fact, it is impossible that a believer can know how to act so as to please God without it.

Observe as to walk, it is to "walk worthy of the Lord." How seldom we find such a standard of walk contended for. We hear much as to "consistent walk," but such a loose indefinite character of walk is not found in Scripture, it is "worthy of the Lord," who loved us and gave Himself for us. This is a different thought, and silences a thousand questions as to going here or there, doing this or that. The whole point is, Is it "worthy of the Lord?"

But more than this; His heart's desire by the Holy Ghost is that they may honor the Father as they ought for having made them fit for glory—"Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." The verses which follow declare that they have present redemption—"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins"—present deliverance—"who hath delivered us from the power of darkness;"—and present translation—"who hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." Here it is something beyond the other blessings—"made meet" for the inheritance. And how can it be otherwise if we are "in Christ," yea, "complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power." And yet how

many Christians in the present day, while really in Christ, and having the Moiling work of Christ as the foundation of all their hopes of glory, are nevertheless looking for something yet to be done in their souls to make them meet for glory. Hence it is not uncommon to hear some veldt of affliction and trial as squaring and fitting them as stones for the heavenly temple. Others talk of the present sufferings purifying them for glory; or of ripening them until they become like a shock of corn ready for the garner. Their souls have never, entered into that precious declaration of the Holy Ghost that the Father hath made us meet to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and that (bur place now is thanking Him for it That affliction doth afterward yield peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby, and that through the trials we get profit and are made partakers of His holiness are most blessedly true; but being made meet for heaven is something not to be done, but has been done. The idea of saints getting by their trials, &c., more and more meet for glory, denies the truth of man's thorough ruin in the flesh, sets aside the workmanship of God in the new creation, and questions the full value of the redemption work of Christ; for "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

Scripture tells us that Christ is "made of God unto us righteousness," that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." He is also spoken of as our life—"Christ who is our life." If, then, as we have before noticed, we are regarded by God now as not in the flesh, but in Christ, complete in Him who is our life and righteousness; and, further, that God now speaks of us as accepted in Christ, and that "as Christ is, so are we in this world," it becomes simple enough. All this too is traced to the Father. It was the Father who loved us and chose us in Christ, who gave us to Christ, and redeemed us by Christ; it is the Father now who welcomes us through Christ, accepts us in Christ, assures us that the cross of Christ has judicially rolled away all our sin and guilt, and evil nature too, in the death of His Son; so that now we are in the new creation, and brought into the new relationship of sons, and partakers of the divine nature.

That we wait for the redemption of the body, that change which will fashion this body of humiliation like unto His glorious body, is quite true; but as to life, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, standing, and completeness in Christ, union with Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, sonship, full title to glory, we do not wait for, because we have all this now. We are "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Hence we are told that "after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Eph. 1:13, 14.)

Beloved, have our souls so believed these precious truths of God as to know the joy and rest of soul, and thankfulness too, that must necessarily result?

The Lie-Water

A CHINESE silversmith to whom the English gave the name of Tom Workwell, brought some silver spoons, as he called them, to a captain of a ship who had ordered them. The gentleman suspecting that according to the tricking practice common in China, no small quantity of tutenague was added to the usual proportion of alloy, taxed the silversmith with the cheat, which he denied with strong asseverations of his innocence. The captain then told him that he carried with him some famous water, called "lie-water," and that a drop of it applied to the tongue of falsehood would burn it through. Challenging Tom to submit to this ordeal, he consented, and a single drop of aqua fortis won put on his tongue, when he instantly jumped about the room in violent pain, and cried out, Very tree, half tutenague, half tutenague," in the hope that confessing the fact, would stop the progress of the lie-water.

Dear reader, are you in the same position with regard to God, as Tom Workwell was with regard to this captain?

Are you bringing to God your own sin-polluted works, instead of the finished work of Jesus?

To your fellow-men you may seem to deserve the name given to this Chinaman, but will the testing Word of God's truth prove you to be an evil-doer, a liar, and a hypocrite?

The lie-water of man may never be applied to your tongue, but you cannot escape being tested by the Word of God.

"He that rejecteth me (CHRIST), and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the WORD that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:45.)

The lie-water of the captain only burnt the tongue of the Chinaman, but "The WORD of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12.)

No base metal of your own works will ever satisfy the righteous requirements of God—the only work which He can and will accept, in, full discharge of all His claims against you, is the atoning work of Christ.

May God in His grace apply His word in power to your soul, revealing to you your own righteousness as filthy rags in His sight, and compelling you to confess it, as freely and sincerely as this Chinaman.

The captain, well knowing the character of the Chinese, expected that the spoons were base metal, and was not deceived for a moment.

And do you really suppose that God is more easily deceived than His creature, and expects man, whom He describes as "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), and of whom He says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12), to produce works acceptable to Him?

What blind folly! The testimony of Jesus is, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

And the Holy Spirit, speaking by the prophet Jeremiah, says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

And the word of God asks of those who entertain such a delusion, Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil.

Dear reader, if you are trusting to your works for salvation, I earnestly entreat you to trust to such a rotten plank no longer.

If the word of God says, that "by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified," how can you possibly hope to be just with God by your works, which are corrupt from beginning to end, and infinitely short of those of the law, which law you have transgressed times without number?

The Jews of old, asked Jesus "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"

Oh that the Lord may give you to understand the Savior's answer, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him, whom He hath sent." (John 6:28, 29.)

It is after the Holy Spirit has set forth a full salvation for poor sinners through faith in Christ Jesus, and a full deliverance, not only from their sins, but also from the evil nature which produces the sins, that He proceeds in the 12th chapter of Romans to say, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.)

"By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast,—for we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8-10.)

Oh! when your soul is simply resting on the finished work of Jesus for salvation,—when you see the end of the flesh, and realize yourself to be a new creature in Christ—then, and then only, may you truly desire the name applied to this poor Chinaman, and to work and testify for Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you.

Jesus said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3:36.)

Are you saying, "I believe on Jesus as my Savior, but it would be great presumption on my part, to say that I have now eternal life?" If so, hear this,— "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life: he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Dear reader, which is presumption? To believe what God says, or to make God a liar?

Forgiveness of Sins

I WILL tell you what I heard from the lips of an old woman. She had been a sinner for many years, and thought little about it. She was fretful, anxious, and un-reconciled to God. She was careless about Him and His grace, who has no pleasure in the death of a sinner. He called, and she refused. Her heart was burdened with the cares of life; and, although death and judgment lay before her, she was carried away, and occupied with every-day concerns.

But a change was to come. Old age and infirmity stole upon her, but her heart was still hard, and she was unprepared to die. On one occasion she prayed that God would give her a sight of her sins, and shortly after, as she lay upon her bed, the sight asked for was vouchsafed. Her sins came before her in battle array most vividly and distinctly. She felt as never before, that it was God who was doing it; and she was filled with alarm. However, it broke her heart, and she experienced a change; but it was not peace, it was not her soul yet resting in Jesus, but her conscience fully alive, and the sense that God was in it, that she was not the same as she was before. God Himself had met and shown her something of her sinfulness. Her former state of apathy gave place to one of great seriousness and enquiry; but still she could not say that her sins were forgiven. About that time a Christian laborer called; she was very infirm and unwell, but his message gave her much comfort. She learned that there was such a thing as the forgiveness of sins, and that, through believing in Jesus, her sins would not be imputed. Having already learnt the lesson that she had sinned, and that in secret between God and herself, she now learnt from God's word that pardon was freely given because Jesus had died and 'borne and put away sin on the tree. She believed this; and whereas she was once selfish and hardened, she can now trust Christ and wait till He calls her home. I am sure it is so in every case where sin is discovered, and the cleansing blood seen by faith.

I trust my reader can place confidence in Jesus too. I note this incident in the hope that it may serve some anxious souls who are struggling and seeking their way to the light. If it does so, I shall be grateful to our God. Sin is put away forever, and He can justly and righteously receive all, even the worst, who come to Him. Of this there can be no doubt. Christ's life is given as a ransom for many. Sin discovered in the presence of God; their sins forgiven through the grace of God because of the sacrifice of Christ makes the person happy and the conscience perfect. We can never trust Christ too much. What people need is real faith in a living Savior.

The Day of the Lord

"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (1 Thess. 5.)

O YE who are dwelling at ease on the earth,
And, heedless of danger, seek pleasure and mirth,
Your joy is at best but a withering gourd;
And what will ye do in the day of the Lord?
Ye daring despisers of God and His truth;
Ye scoffers and scorers, corrupters of youth;
Whose practice and precepts by God are abhorr'd,—
Ah! how will ye wail in the day of the Lord?
Idolators, bowing to stock and to stone,
And Christians, in name, who the Christ have not known;
And all who a god of their own have adored;
Oh, where will ye flee in the day of the Lord
Ye children of night, who in lethargy sleep,
Oh, well might ye wake, and, awaking, might weep;
For ye, who know nothing of watching and ward,
Will all be ensnared in the day of the Lord.
Ye say, " Peace and safety," by Satan beguiled,—
But travail shall come as on woman with child;
And sudden destruction, the scriptures record,
Shall fall on ye all in the day of the Lord.
That day is of darkness, of woe, and affright,
Uncheer'd by a glimmer of hope or of light;
The proud and ungodly have then their reward:
That day, oh, how dreadful, the day of the Lord!
But now 'tis the day of salvation and grace,

Though near to its close, oh! the moment embrace;
And Christ will that soul, who His name has adored,
Preserve from the doom of the day of the Lord. T.

THERE is an immense difference between a quieted conscience and a purged conscience. Man with false religion gives the former; the latter is effected only by the blood of Christ!)

The End of the Lord

JOB was an eminently pious man. God declares that there was none like him in the earth. But he needed trial. Though he feared God and eschewed evil, he really knew little of himself or of God. "Before honor is humility." The pious patriarch needed to be brought low in order to be lifted up; to learn the sentence of death on everything here, in order to fully trust in God who raiseth the dead.

He had sons and daughters, and his thought of them was in relation to God—"it may be," said he, that "they have cursed God in their hearts." He therefore offered burnt offerings to God according to their number. Thus did Job continually. And most blessed too it is to see that when by God's permission Job was deprived of his oxen, sheep, camels, servants, and sons, at a stroke as it were, we are told that this distinguished servant of Jehovah "arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:20, 21.) This was most blessed. It showed a thorough subjection to God under His bereaving hand. It manifested that this servant of the Lord was walking in the way of faith, tracing every sorrow, by whatever instrumentality it reached him, to God alone, and taking everything at His hand. And so when further affliction came, wave after wave, so that he had to relieve his personal sickness, by scraping himself with a potsherd, and his wife a trouble rather than a comfort, breathing the suggestions of the great enemy of souls in advising him to "curse God and die," still his eye is so set upon God, that he turns sharply upon her, and says, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10.) This lesson of submission was, if I may so say, in the ordinary course of a pious man. Blessed, most blessed as it is, it is not the only lesson that God has to teach. The human heart is deceitful above all things as well as desperately wicked. There are deep things of God too which the Spirit searcheth. To bow in submission to God in a great bereavement is to some not so difficult a lesson as to cease from our own wisdom, and to refuse every idea of creature righteousness, and self-sufficiency. To have a place of credit among men, among saints if you please, often lies underneath many active energies that connect themselves with service to God, and acquiescence in heavy losses. God only is the searcher of the heart. He alone knows it thoroughly, for He alone has searched it. He teaches us that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and would have us cease from our own wisdom, and lean on Him as our only sufficiency and strength. He shows us that in the cross of Christ our old man is crucified. There He presents to us at a glance His estimate of man in the flesh. The flesh morally, intellectually, religiously, is there 'seen under the judgment of God. Its fancied wisdom, righteousness, strength, desires, weighed to God's balance, and pronounced unfit for His presence worthy only of death and burial. It is a very deep lesson to learn, that "the flesh profiteth nothing;" but oh! how blessed also the fact that our sufficiency is of God, and that He hath made Christ unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that no flesh should glory in His presence, but according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Job little thought when his Mends came, or they either, that he was going to be submitted to a further trial. But so it was. Real sympathy doubtless prompted them, for how can we suppose that otherwise they could have sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights in silence. Besides, we are told that their object was "to mourn with him, and to comfort him," and that they lifted up their voices and wept before they came near him, and that they also rent every man his mantle, and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. They saw that Job's grief was very great.

But pith all this good intention, and uprightness of purpose on both sides, a serious and painful controversy ensued among these men of God. Little did either of them suspect that God was permitting them to scourge one another in order to bring out what would otherwise have remained hidden, and to bring all in self abasement before Him. Job thought himself aggrieved and his Mends assured themselves that they were in the right. But the Lord at the end taught every one of them most valuable lessons.

It seems as if God allowed the matter to work itself out so far, that there was manifestly no help in the creature. Then the Lord came in, Job saw faults in his friends, and they were not ignorant of failure in him. Painful sentences were uttered and retorted. It was man against man, but we read little of the Lord in all the controversy. Before the controversy, Job was habitually found at the altar of burnt offering, and so was he at the end of it; but during the painful season of intercourse of these men of God, we have no reference on either side to God's altar of burnt offering. Surely this reads us a serious lesson; for I ask, can there be a clearer proof of our not being in communion with the Lord, than forgetfulness of the Lamb as it had been slain? Could we be filling our mouths with carnal arguments; or be relying on the stratagems of fleshly wisdom, if we were adoringly contemplating Jesus crucified for sinners? Is the flesh in us laid low, while we are unmindful of its being judged and dead upon the cross? And have we power to maintain controversy or conflict according to the mind of Christ, except we are living by the faith of the Son of God, in communion with Him whom God hath raised from the dead, who now appears in the presence of God for us?

During the controversy Job seems in spirit to be before men, but when he is brought into the presence of God, instrumentally perhaps, by Elihu, then he learns profitable lessons. But through all God was working; He marked every word that came out, and Anode His own judgment most clear at the end, that none of them had spoken of Him so rightly as Job. This pious man soon learned when in God's presence something of his own sinfulness. He said, "Behold am vile." But this, though a good beginning, was not all that God wanted to do for him. Generalities are often easily grasped and as easily uttered: but God must have details, if we confess our sins. The searching process therefore must go on, the hidden things of the heart must be brought so clearly to the conscience that the soul finds relief only in confessing it all, and knows rest again at the burnt offering.

In God's presence, as it were under God's eye, Job learned experimentally that He was Almighty, and the searcher of every thought of the heart. "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee." (Job 42:2.) He seems to quote the first words the Lard uttered when He spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, "Who is he that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" and then makes the solemn confession of his own guiltiness, "therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." This is indeed

renouncing his own wisdom. But further, he goes on to say, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

This is enough. The lessons, though so costly, have been learnt. He lays hands, as it were, on his own righteousness, and strength, and fancied goodness, and Condemns it; yea, more than this, he sets self completely aside as vile and worthless, "I abhor myself;" and in this self-loathing frame he confesses a change of mind, "I repent." His sorrow has wrought in him a repentance not to be repented of. He lies down in self abhorrence in dust, because he acknowledges self only fit to be laid low in the dust, and buried out of God's sight, a sinner by birth as one of Adam's fallen race, concerning whom it was said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3:19); and he takes the place of ashes, as withered up under the trial of the searching fire of an infinitely holy God. Thus the patriarch comes to the end of self, when under divine teaching in God's holy presence. It is enough; he judges himself, and needs no longer to be judged and chastened.

But more than this. He has to learn God and the provision that He has made for such as he. While Job is thus in felt weakness and self-abhorrence before the Lord, He now undertakes for His servant. Job having given everything up to God, God can now come in and plead His cause with his three friends. We are, therefore, told that the Lord said to Eliphaz, the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord also accepted Job."

How important is the last sentence, "The Lord also accepted Job." How truly the divine statute is here fulfilled. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And what a profound, but simple lesson the Holy Ghost here sets before us. Observe that God still calls Eliphaz and his brethren Job's friends, and Job is seen no longer wrangling and contending with them, but crying unto God for them. This was the turning point. Nor is this all. The time is now come that he who has been brought low shall be lifted up. Therefore it is added that the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Friends, substance, family, all more abundant, with the blessing of the Lord, than he knew before. Now I ask, beloved, what are we to learn from this divine narrative?

God Is Love

WHAT theme so worthy to engage
The soul of man, in youth or age,
To fit the heart, e'er prone to rove,
Like this great truth, that—God is Love.
The varied mercies shown to man.,
Since earth was made, and time began,
Declare to all, and plainly prove
This blessed truth, that—God is Love.
When Christ into this world was born,
There dawn'd on earth a joyful morn;
While heaven and. earth, together strove
To tell abroad, that—God is Love.
The wondrous cross, the Savior's blood,
His solemn cry, "My God, my God,"
His death for us,—all join to prove
The eternal truth, that—God is Love.
E'er since the Lamb, who did atone,
Was crown'd and seated on the throne'
The voice that speaks from heaven above,
Proclaims to all, that—God is Love.
How blest is he who God believes,
And Christ, for life and peace, receives:
This theme is with his being wove;
He knows and proves that—God is Love.

The Dead Alive and the Lost Found

LUKE 15:1-24

THIS chapter, from the fourth verse, gives us our Lord's reply to the charge brought against Him by the Pharisees and Scribes—"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them;" which becomes the occasion of His setting forth the unutterable depths of divine grace.

In this threefold parable, observe that it is only on one sheep, one piece of silver, one son, that there is such joy in heaven. If a whole city were moved to repentance, we can well understand how such an extensive work might be connected with rejoicing; but here it is one sinful, lost sinner over whom there is such gladness. This is a marvelous thought. Each too was lost—a lost sheep, a lost piece of silver, a lost son. So Scripture testifies that God now looks upon man as lost. Hence we read that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." There is all the difference between having wandered a little out of the way and being lost, between being an occasional offender toward God and being dead in sins—utterly unclean, irremediably bad—lost. Men and women, however refined or educated, never of themselves find their way back to God. No, they are lost! therefore in the riches of divine mercy Jesus came to seek and to save the LOST!

In this parable, we see the outgoing of the loving heart of the Good Shepherd, the gracious actings of the Holy Spirit, and the marvelous love of the Father toward the lost. In the simplest, and yet the most telling way, the blessed Lord thus proclaims the love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—to sinners.

He first tells out the Shepherd's love in seeking and saving one lost sheep. "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, cloth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" This is what Christ is still doing. He is going after the lost, in the publication of the gospel, till He find it. Do you know, dear friends, that you are lost? Do you see that you can never get back to God by any deeds of your own? that" by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight"? Do think of this precious fact, that Jesus is still calling the lost, seeking and saving the lost. It is not a question of what you are doing, or desiring, or intending—it is one of being lost or saved. If you are not saved, you are lost! You cannot be safe till your heart's trust is in the Lord Jesus, till you are in the loving arms of the Good Shepherd. Have you heard His voice, turned to Him, and fallen into His open arms of perfect love?

Notice Christ's joy in saving, and that He keeps to the end those whom He finds. "When He hath found it, He layeth it on His shoulders, rejoicing." How safe then is the sinner who takes refuge in Christ, and gives Him all the glory of saving him! None can phi& out of His hand. "He layeth it on His shoulders, rejoicing." It does not say that the angels rejoice, though they may; but what we have here is the deep joy of Christ in finding a lost sheep. When He saved the wicked Samaritan woman, He could say, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." How precious this is! And further, "When He cometh home." Oh yes, Christ will never let the sinner go that touches the hem of His

garment, until he is landed securely in the glory: He will carry him safe home. And then what endless joy! All the intelligences of heaven will rejoice with Him when we reach home) He will present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

(The second part of the parable is about a lost piece of silver. It is lost. We have here a woman taking a lighted candle, and sweeping the house diligently. Her heart is set on finding the lost piece. She may see a thousand things like it; but the moment the light shines upon the lost piece, it is found; and then, oh what joy! Evangelists sweep the world for the lost pieces. May we sweep diligently! If we took the bright light of divine truth in the power of the Spirit, and swept diligently, should we not be more successful in finding? Oh, to be more diligent seekers of lost souls! Here again we are told of the joy there is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

But some may ask, What is repentance? Is it not sorrow for sin? While no doubt those who repent before God are sorrowful at the thought of their having sinned, 'yet many are sorry for sin who do not repent toward God. We find that Judas "repented himself," and threw down the pieces of silver; but we are not told that he repented toward God. Repentance then is not simply sorrow for sin, but a change of mind toward God. Such grieve at the very thoughts they have had of God, and of their wrong conduct toward Him, who in such amazing love gave His only begotten Son to die for them. True repentance, then, toward God is always connected with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is this that fills heaven with such joy.

The third part of the parable opens out to us the heart of God the Father toward a poor, lost, filthy, guilty sinner. It blessedly illustrates the exceeding riches of divine grace. The self-willed man, following the desires of the flesh and of the mind, wandered far away: he was glad of the gifts, but cared nothing for the Giver. To gratify his own lusts was the absorbing object. He went further and further from God. This is where man's will and desires always lead him. He went "into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." It is a true picture of man every man. He gladly receives God's gifts, but how does he use them? Is it not to please himself? It may be the pleasures of the world, the religiousness or irreligiousness of the world; but gratifying himself is the object, and not God. Nothing can be worse. It is man doing his own will, not God's. It is man pleasing himself, and not caring to please God.

Dear friends, let me affectionately ask, What are you doing? How are you spending your time, your talents, and all the blessings God has entrusted you with? Are you squandering them about yourself in the far country, or have you repented and turned to God? Do lay these searching questions to heart.

The prodigal went on step by step until he "spent all," and "began to be in want." His resources were limited, and came to an end. All his means of self-pleasing were exhausted. What could he do then?

What does man always do when in distress, but turn to his fellow-man? He first of all made man his refuge, not his father. No; man will do anything rather than turn to God. And what did he find? He found that citizens of this world have self for their object. To feed swine was the only use men could make of him for their own profit. And there this once wealthy, jovial, pleasure-seeking wanderer into the far country found himself, in poverty, and hunger, and filth. He found all resources gone, and an aching void occupying his soul. He looked at men around, and no heart

throbbed with pity and compassion—"no man gave unto him." The "husks" of this world were all the resources at his command, and poverty and want were painfully pinching him. At last he discovers that he is perishing. What a striking picture of man who is without God, and having no hope. In helplessness and despondency he is forced to the conclusion—"I perish with hunger!"

What a solemn conclusion, "I perish" Does not this shew us that men have got so far away from God, and are so sunken and depraved, that they go on seeking to please self and fulfill the lusts of the flesh, until it may be they come to the end of these things, and find themselves perishing with hunger. And, dear friends, if some of you were to die to-night, or the Lord Jesus should come, do you not know that you would forever be banished from God's happy presence? A thousand ages might roll on, and still there would be the blackness of darlings forever. Do you say, "I am not a great sinner" I reply, what can be worse, what sin can be blacker, than living all your days, seeking happiness apart from God and Christ—using the very blessings God in His providence has blessed you with, to lead your heart and energies further and further from Him? What can be worse than this? You have been living in the rejection of Christ, saying in your heart, He shall not reign over me?' Can anything be more sinful? Oh, my friends, God is a just God; but He is now a Savior, and His message to you is, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Do you say, I have sinned and shall perish forever? Then God says to you, "Believe on my Son, who died for sinners, and you shall not perish, but have everlasting life." What love! The Lord Jesus not only made peace by the blood of the Cross as to sins, but, in that work, He so infinitely glorified God, that because of the infinite merit of that work, God is just in justifying the sinner that believes.

The prodigal's thought was to escape from perishing. "I perish with hunger." His need led him to think of the Father. We are told that he "came to himself," and what then? He thought of the father's home, and that the servants there were far better off than he. "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare." His mind, resting on the father's home, and love, and resources, not only shewed him more and more his own poverty and wretchedness, but so attracted his heart, until he exclaimed, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Surely this, was the only true and honest place he could take. The whole question now was, how the father would meet this sinful one in his ruin and degradation. Does He receive such sinners? Ah, that is the question. And are we not taught that the need and misery of this ungodly one served to draw forth the rich mercy which was deep down in the father's heart? And so God loves sinners, though he hates sin. He delights in mercy. His whole heart pours forth its richest, warmest love to the utterly unclean and helpless. For we are told that when he did actually arise to come to his father, while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and (without one upbraiding word) fell on his neck, and kissed him. Can anything exceed the depth and perfectness of such love? God only could so love. It needs an unworthy object on which to manifest itself. It indeed passes knowledge. We think of it, taste and enjoy it, and adore and worship, but we lack capacity to measure its divine and infinite depths. The father saw him in his filth, had compassion on him in his ruined state, kissed him in his rags, and when under the sense of his guilty, perishing condition, the son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," it only brought out yet more of the deep resources of grace that were in the father's heart. It

strikingly tells us that it is worthy of God to love, to save, and bless lost and ruined sinners. "The father said unto his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him," The father did not point to his rags and say, I must have them mended; no, God can use nothing of the flesh, with its affections and lusts.

God's way is not to mend up the flesh, but to give a new nature, and bring the sinner into a new standing and position before Him. He could not use any part of the old, filthy, worn-out, tattered garment, but he adorned him with the best robe. The richest blessings that God has to give are lovingly bestowed upon repentant sinners. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. "Put a ring on his hand," in token of the everlasting love and relationship subsisting between the Father and the repentant one, on whose face he had printed the kiss of reconciliation. Put also "shoes on his feet," and thus fit him for the path of service which he may have to tread; and then, that he might feel happy and at home in his father's presence, it is further said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry." Let us eat—the father and the son—for our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." "Let us eat, and be merry." What a wondrous place of blessing! Can anything exceed it? The lost one brought back into the Father's presence, fitted for it by the Father himself, and there called to share the Father's thoughts and joy, in the infinite worth and finished work of the slain Lamb.

"He saw us ruin'd in the fall,
And loved us notwithstanding all;
He saved us from our lost estate;
His lovingkindness, O how great!"

Thus, through divine mercy, the believer in Jesus is redeemed to God, made nigh, and has liberty now to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; he has peace with God, rest in God, joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost makes this known to our hearts. What a wondrous salvation—"made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." What rest and joy this gives us! How it puts us at once on the ground of thanksgiving and worship, especially when we enter into the Father's delight to have us near Himself, and in the enjoyment of His own love. "Let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." It is added, "and they began to be merry." Yes, it was only the beginning of the joy; for ages upon ages may roll on, and this wondrous joy will be in no degree lessened. In God's presence there is fullness of joy, and at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

It is surely, dear friends, not a light thing to hear the glad tidings of this marvelous love of God. How few seem to think of the eternal consequences of it. We are told that it is to God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. But O how very solemn! to the one we are a savor of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life.

Have you, dear friends, believed God's message, and received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior? Can you, do you now, look up to Him at God's right hand, and praise Him for having saved you by His death upon the cross? Is He precious to you? Do you know the blessedness of the Father's presence, and of holy joy with Him about Jesus the slain Lamb? Soon He will come forth, and every knee will bow to Him, every tongue confess that He is Lord. Can you, dear friends, look

forward to His glorious appearing to judge the living and the dead in peacefulness of spirit, knowing full well that before that you will hear His voice, be changed, and caught up to meet Him in the air? The true friends of Jesus cannot but rejoice at His being manifested as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," for they know how worthy He is that everything should be put under His feet.

Now Christ is saving to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Still His loving arms are wide open, and the gracious utterance of His heart to lost and ruined sinners is, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" that is, He will receive and keep secure those who come to Him. May this love attract your hearts, dear friends, and draw you into the open arms of divine, saving mercy.

“Of Necessity a Change”

Heb. 7:12.

PRIESTHOOD and law, as wrongly applied, are two giant oppressors of God's people, and two great robbers of the glory of Christ. Men do not, or will not, see God's necessity for changing the system of Judaism, because they do not, or will not, see the glory of Christ. And the reason we do not see the glory of Christ is because we are so full of ourselves. It may be our works, our religion, our church organizations, our preachers. But we say it without fear of contradiction, that immediately a saved soul sees the glory of Christ, he is free from priesthood and law, and rejoices in Him whom God has exalted.

There are many who would indignantly thrust aside every thought and teacher that insinuated the sacrifice of Christ was not sufficient, who will yet allow thoughts and teachers hinting that there is such a thing as a mere man standing between God and His people. Now one of the present glories of our Lord is His priesthood; it is a part of His gracious work for His people who are upon the earth. He stands their High Priest, in God's presence for them. He upholds them on their way to heaven. He intercedes for them. By Him they draw near to God. He has joy in this blessed office of His, and God will allow none to interfere with His Son in this work. As God will reject for all eternity every sinner that pretends to come into His presence save by Jesus, so too does God refuse the officiousness of those who thrust themselves between His people and Him, asserting that they occupy a more intimate place than their fellow-men, and that they are, by reason of their office, in a nearer position to God than other men. We say God rejects and refuses all this pretension because He loves to glorify His Son.

The Scripture gives us an insight of heaven after the death of our Lord, and it is of deep importance that we should know what is there. Fresh from His conquest of Satan, the grave, sin, He went up on high, and God appointed Him to be High Priest. (Heb. 8:1.) We see Him now, the man Christ Jesus, the glorified, the exalted—having entered the heavens by His own blood (as Aaron entered the holiest on the day of atonement) in the presence of God "for us." He has gone within the veil by His own blood "for us;" God beholds Him there "for us," and He bears the burden of all His people's infirmities there—He ever lives to make intercession for them there, in the very presence of God.

Christ being God's High Priest in heaven, there is no longer left a place for priests on earth (except the priesthood of all believers). Hence God has changed the whole system of priesthood. The earthly order of priesthood is set aside, there is no longer a successional priesthood, men are no longer called to the priesthood, but the priesthood is after Melchisedec as to order—a royal priesthood, a holy priesthood, a priesthood associated with the person of One whom God delights to honor as priest.

God forbid that we should glory in any other priest save Jesus Christ. What shall we say of those who go back in spirit to that Jewish system which God has changed? who divide between priests

and people, and worse, who divide between God's High Priest and His people; who make themselves a hedge between the holiest of all and the worshippers, who practically bind up the rent veil, and keep God's saints outside.

But the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law, and this brings us to that other giant law. Now the law is good, if a man use it lawfully, that is, we may bring the law to condemn the sinner and to slay him; but if we put the poor sinner who feels his sins under the law, we are enemies of the cross of Christ, and enemies, too, of His glory within the holiest of all.

"Of necessity," saith the Scripture, there is a change of the law; and the needs be is the glory of Christ. It would not consort with His majesty that the word spoken by angels should have a place with that salvation which Christ preached. There needed a change. Priests are set aside, and law is set aside, in order that Christ may be everything.

We would say to any beloved soul who is contending for the law as his rule of life, Consider God's necessity! Consider that as the priesthood is changed—that order of men who taught Israel the law—so also Christ and His salvation have taken the place of law which they taught. Consider, if you go back to the law, you leave Christ. You cannot have part Christ and part law, for this God will not permit. If you want the law then you must content yourself with the priests, if you have Christ you have salvation, and Him as your priest. The law made nothing perfect. It never made a man perfect in peace, righteousness, or joy. It was weak and unprofitable, for it gave no strength to the sinner to obey its commands, and produced no fruit in him. When a believer puts himself under law he begins to "do," he tries his best; and this is a sliding away from Christ. We have not to bring anything to God, we have not to bring Christ to God, for God gave us Christ, and Christ is in God's presence for us. If you say, but I must bring the blood to God by faith, you are doing something, and practically forgetting that God has done everything; you are attempting to give to God, forgetting that God gives, that Christ gives. We have only to believe.

Salvation which the Lord preached has taken the place of law which angels spake. And the salvation is complete. The blood has washed away sins. The cross has ended self in God's sight. The grave has been emptied of its prey. Christ is now in God's presence for us, and as Priest He saves to the uttermost—to the end, all that come unto God by Him.

What a blessed change has God effected for us! Shall we not delight in it? What! shall we go back and clothe ourselves in the old-fashioned garments of Jewish religion, and forget our risen Savior and Priest? Shall we return to temples, to priests and people, to the shadow? No, no—

"The veil is rent, our souls draw near

Unto a throne of grace;

The merits of the Lord appear,

THEY FILL THE HOLY PLACE."

The Flood

Luke 17:26, 27

WHEN God had declared that the earth should be drown'd,
And man should be swept from its face,
Because He had nothing but wickedness found,
Though long He had linger'd in grace;
The world, all regardless of hastening doom,
Still ate, and still drank, and still wed,
And saw not a cloud or a shadow of gloom,
Nor ought that occasion'd them dread.
The sun rose at morn in his glory and pride,
And set in his splendor at eve;
While earth still her bounties did daily provide,
And judgment no eye could perceive;
But when the day came that the flood should be pour'd,
And fountains should burst from the deep,
Too late was it then, though they mercy implored,
And vain in their anguish to weep.
No refuge the rocks, nor the mountains and caves,
Could give to those souls in their woe;
The ever-encroaching and pitiless waves
Would reach them and then overflow.
Alas! They thus perish'd, the strong and the weak,
The married, the youth, and the maid,
Engulph'd in the deep, with a groan or a shriek,
In judgment which none could evade.
And so shall it be in the day that is near,

When Jesus the Lord is reveal'd;
For men will pursue, unconcerned, their career,
Their conscience and heart being scaled.
E'en now, there are scoffers who question in scorn,
The coming of Christ in His day,
Though He in the Scriptures doth faithfully warn
That then He Himself will display.
When He in His glory from heaven shall come,
And shine as the lightning on all,
Ah! then the despisers with fear will be dumb,
His presence the guilty appall.
In vain, then, the thought of retreat or of flight,
Too late, then, for mercy to plead;
The sword of His mouth shall their consciences smite,
And finish the judgment with speed.
But like, as of old, in the Ark there were some
Preserved from the watery waste;
So now, there's salvation for those who will come
To Jesus as sinners abased.
In Him there is mercy and safety for all
Who rest in His work and His love;
Then, hear from on high His compassionate call,
And hide in His bosom above. T.

On Prayer

No. 1.

THE relationship with God, which by grace the believer is brought into, is necessarily connected both with child-like confidence and dependence. The knowledge of the Father, the liberty we have to enter into the holiest of all, by the blood of Jesus, at all times, the operations of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, and the all-prevailing plea given to us in the name of Jesus, lead us to suppose that the Christian while here would be peculiarly given to the exercise of prayer.

The cry which the Spirit produces, the Spirit of adoption, when sent forth into our hearts, being "Abba, Father," opens up to us at once His tender love, as well as His fatherly care and resources. It is this knowledge of the Father that gives such confidence and perseverance in prayer, and thanksgiving, and worship too. "The Father Himself loveth you," said Jesus, "because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." The Spirit thus reveals the Father, and makes us know that He delights to give His children good things. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good things unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." The sense on our hearts of the reality of this relationship, which, according to the Father's eternal purpose and grace in Christ Jesus, we are now brought into, makes it natural, if I may so speak, for Christians to be emphatically men of prayer, both for themselves and others: and especially when challenged with such a gracious declaration as "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things."

Nor can there be a doubt that it is the will of 'God that our souls should be going out to Him in much prayer for others. The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, makes this perfectly clear. He says, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;... for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." (1 Tim. 2:1-3.) Elsewhere we are enjoined to pray for "all saints," but this circle includes the widest possible range—"all men." Nor is it well to overlook the quality of prayer here contemplated. It is not cold, dry, formality, but as earnest and pointed as such a chain of words could well convey—"supplications, prayers, and intercessions."

We have, too, in Scripture, individual prayer as well as united, and it is well to consider this. The habit of prayer, or that state of constantly felt dependence on God, as shall lift the heart to Him on all occasions, is set before us in such words as "Pray without ceasing;" that is, wherever we are, whether in the house, or place of business, or walking the streets, to have the heart habitually going out to God about all our need. But there is another thing which nothing else will supply; it is going into a secret place to be alone with God, to pour out the heart to Him, and wait upon Him. We find the Lord going out into "a solitary place" to pray, or going up "into a mountain," or "into the wilderness," to pray. Our Lord expressed His mind for us on this point most touchingly when He said, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou halt shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt.

6:6.) Here we have, first, the believer going into a secret place, away from every human eye and ear, for the express purpose of prayer to his heavenly Father. 2nd . The fact announced that our Father is in that secret place—"thy Father who is in secret." 3rd. The encouragement that such who do thus seek the Father shall not fail to be openly rewarded." How blessed this is!

As to united prayer, we have precious examples of the marvelous way in which God has honored this. And our Lord blessedly encourages our hearts, too, on this point; and where are the Christians who cannot praise God for His mercy and faithfulness in again and again giving most precious answers to their united prayers? Jesus said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19, 20.) But observe there must be agreement. This is of the greatest importance. It is not one praying, and the others merely listening; but hearts united in presenting certain requests to God. All going together into "the holiest of all" to present common supplication. At Pentecost the disciples were not only "in one place," but "of one accord," before the mighty blessing came. Oh, if God's dear children would only simply take God at His word in this particular, and seek Him earnestly and together in supplications, prayers, and intercessions, what blessed results thee would be! This would soon put to flight the deadness and formality which so largely prevail in prayer-meetings at the present time. Thus crying to God, reckoning upon Him, and expecting only from Him, what rich and abundant blessing would follow!

In prayer, however, we must remember that God expects us to come before Him in uprightness. "If I regard iniquity in my heart," says the Psalmist, "the Lord will not hear my prayer." He must have uprightness. Evil must not be cloaked. Sin must be judged, and honestly dealt with before Him. The upright soul abhors that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good, and from such God will keep back nothing good. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." This is most encouraging. David had lamentably failed, and circumstances, because of his failure, seemed all against him, but he hoped in God. "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God," and we know the blessed deliverance that followed. The upright soul can turn to God with confidence, and find encouragement in Him, when there is none elsewhere.

We find also in Scripture that success in prayer is connected with obedience, and especially love to the brethren. Our Lord connected the act of praying with forgiving "if we have ought against any;" and so with obedience to the word of God, or fruit-bearing, "I have ordained you," said Jesus, "that ye should go, and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." (John 15:16.) And so the apostle John, after presenting to us God in His nature as Light and Love, and the relationship we are called into by the Father, and the conduct suited to such relationship, he exhorts that brotherly love may be real, that is, "not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth;" for in this way we shall assure our hearts before Him. If, however, this brotherly kindness be wanting our hearts will condemn us, and this God knows. But if we are walking in true brotherly love, then have we confidence toward God, and obtain answers to prayer. "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment." (1 John 3:18-23.) Nothing, then can be clearer, that if we would be successful in prayer we must be obedient children, and walk in true practical love with our brethren in the Lord.

Perhaps the importance of this is too much overlooked in the present day. We must never forget that in prayer we are acting in the relationship of a child to a father; and we know that when we are truly loving our children, how hindered we feel in granting them their requests if they are acting disobediently, and not walking lovingly toward their brothers and sisters. Oh, to be constantly in felt helplessness abiding in the Lord Jesus, finding all our resources in Him, drawing all we want by faith from Him; for He said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7.)

The Altar of Earth

Notes of an Address on Ex. 20:22-26

THESE words occupy a very remarkable place in Scripture. They come immediately after the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. They are full of grace and peace; whereas the law is called "the ministration of death" and "condemnation." (2 Cor. 3) They speak of blessing; but elsewhere Scripture declares, that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." (Gal. 3) To cling then to the commandments for salvation, is like a drowning man in the broad Atlantic clinging to a bar of iron to save him—it only plunges him down with the most positive certainty.

You get no idea of happiness or peace with God through the Law of Moses. Quite the reverse. When the people saw the thunderings, and lightnings, and the mountain smoking, and heard the noise of trumpets, we are told that "they removed, and stood afar off." This is the effect of commandments to men as sinners, it puts them "far off." Man's religion too always puts the person at a distance from God. It does not bring him what the gospel brings—"everlasting life," present sonship, present union with Christ, present peace with God. How different these things are from a law of commandments. But immediately after the giving of the law we find in a typical way grace brought out; as much as to say, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) Law and gospel are very distinct. They are set in widest contrast in Scripture. God presents them to us separately; man mixes them up, because it gives him importance to do something for blessing, instead of receiving everything in divine mercy. We may refer to this again by and by.

The first words I read were, "Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make unto Me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold." God knows our hearts, dear friends. He says, "I the Lord search the heart." He therefore knows its desperate wickedness, its proneness to idolatry. God saying, Ye shall not make these gods, shows that He cannot trust man in the flesh; for He had just before commanded, saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." What are we about now? Are any of us bowing down to gods? I do not mean gods like the heathen; but are your hearts bowing to and loving something else, instead of the living and true God? There are living idols and intellectual idols, as well as idols of gold and silver; and Satan knows how to put them in our way. Thus we see idolatry forbidden, and then we have what would be according to the Lord's mind. "An altar of earth shalt thou make unto Me," &c. (Ex. 20:24.) God must be honored and worshipped; and He has a right to it from His creatures. But how is God worshipped? That is the question. There is nothing, man would say, in a mound of earth, and sacrifices offered on it; but it is everything with God, inasmuch as it typifies the person and work of His beloved Son. And all is of God. Man has had no hand in the matter. The earth and the sacrifices were all of God. Man says, "I will worship God, and go to heaven my own way;" but God points to Jesus crucified and risen, and says that is the way, and there is no other way. Men boast of their own works, prayers, fasting, benevolence, and sincerity; God, however, cannot accept any fruit of mere nature, because man is bad to his heart's core. The source of his doings is polluted.

Being a fallen creature in Adam, he is unclean; so much so that Scripture says, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." The offerings on the "altar of earth" present to us in figure the sacrifice of Jesus as the alone ground of God being approached and worshipped.

The "altar of earth" speaks to us of the lowly Jesus, so despised and rejected of men that they said, "Away with Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Not this man, but Barabbas." Man saw nothing to attract him in Jesus—he saw no beauty in Him. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men." The sacrifices on the altar of earth speak of peace and acceptance; and how precious the words that are added—"I will bless thee!"

Is there a soul here desiring Jesus for his Savior? Think of Him as He was in the days of His flesh, always ready to bless all who desired it of Him. When distressed ones needed healing, He was always ready to heal—to open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, cleanse the lepers, or raise the dead. But what did men think of Him? They esteemed Him not. When He died for sinners they thought Him "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." But believers rejoice in the blessed fact, that "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace" (or which purchased our peace) "was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

Hence we read, "I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." To have to do with God's sacrifice is always the true place of blessing. Some spend half their days in trying to do better, or to be better, or feel better; but the moment they see Jesus the Son of God lifted up upon the cross for sinners, they say, What a wonderful sacrifice I What love Do not talk then, dear friends, about keeping commandments for salvation. There is nothing for you to do to be saved. It is all done, and needs nothing to be added to it. It is finished. Eternal redemption for us has been accomplished. From God's heart it all springs, and to Him be all the glory. The question then is not, What will you do? but, Do you believe that Christ has satisfied God, glorified God, established the righteousness of God about your sins? Are you thus satisfied with Christ? Are you saying, like another,

Give me Christ, or else I die,

None but Christ can satisfy;

None but Christ to me be given,

None but Christ on earth or heaven."

Observe then that the reason why God can bless you now and forever, is because the sacrifice of Christ has been offered, and is the alone ground of peace with God. The mound of earth with its burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, figured what God was going to do in the all-sufficient sacrifice of His beloved Son upon the tree; hence it is added, "I will bless you." Yes, true believers can say, Christ has by Himself purged our sins; He has redeemed us to God by His own blood. He has gone into heaven itself by His own blood; and this is our sure title to glory. We approach God in peace now, and shall enter glory by and by entirely through the finished work of Jesus.

But further, we read, "If thou shalt make an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." (v. 25.) God knows what man is. He knows that he always wants to glory in the work of his own hands, in some way or other, and not give all the glory to God. Man likes to bring something to God, and does not like to be altogether a receiver from God. Therefore God said, if you make a stone altar, it must be of stones just as you find

them; you must not lift a tool upon it; if you do, it is polluted. Ah, no saint in heaven will be able to say that he got there because of anything he did, for "no flesh shall glory in His presence. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

But you say, Must I not trust in something of my own and in Christ too? No, not in a prayer, or a feeling, or any other work of your own; if you do, you believe not in Christ's finished work. If you lift up a tool-add anything, however small, to Christ's work, you have something of your own to glory in; you ignore the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Even a true child of God may lose his peace, if he turns back from Christ, like the Galatians, to add an ordinance, or anything else to it. "If ye be circumcised," said the apostle, "Christ shall profit you nothing." (Gal. 6:2.)

The history of most Christians, I believe is, that they began at the wrong end. Their consciences were awakened to a sense of sin and guilt, and they immediately began to do something with the thought of appeasing an offended God, until they so learned their helplessness and wretchedness, that they gladly rested in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, as the alone ground of peace. Then worship, service, and devotedness follow in their right place—"We love Him, because He first loved us."

The last verse is equally solemn. "Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon." (v. 26.) Be assured, dear friends, there are no steps in salvation. Christ is the way, and a person is either in Christ, or he is not in Christ. He has either come to Christ and received Him as his Savior, or he has not. There are no steps in this—"Jesus cried and said, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" and again, "I am the door"—not a flight of steps, but the door; "by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Some are priding themselves on their doings, and of the number of religious steps they have taken, but in God's presence they will learn the utter folly of it. Saul of Tarsus thought he had gained some steps. He said he had been circumcised the eighth day, was of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. What a flight of steps But when the glory of the Lord Jesus shined upon him, he soon fell from this eminence, and said, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." There are no steps then in salvation. No, it is only one step of faith which takes the vilest sinner, in his guilt and ruin, straight into the loving arms of God; for

"Jesus did it, did it all,

Long, long ago."

Happy will it be for you, dear friends, if you now see that you have nothing to do, but simply receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior, for

"Everything was fully done,

Hearken to His cry;

'It is finished!' Yes, indeed,

Finished every jot.

Sinner, this is all you need,

Tell me, Is it not?"

Going up by steps, as we have read, only makes the nakedness manifest. How little do those think who boast of gaining heaven by keeping ordinances, being charitable, and the like, that they only expose their own nakedness, only make manifest that they have not actually received Him, whom God sent into the world to save sinners. How many are thus going religiously and respectably to hell! How different was the apostle's testimony! "This is the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Surely there are no steps here—it is simply receiving salvation by faith, through the already accomplished work of the Lord Jesus Christ!

"Cast your deadly doings down,

Down at Jesus' feet;

Stand IN HIM, IN HIM ALONE,

Gloriously complete."

“Behold, the Bridegroom Cometh; Go Ye Out to Meet Him.”

Read Matt. 25:1-13

O AFAR ye the cu, that the Bridegroom is coming!

The wise and the foolish have slumbered and slept;

The air of this world is so dense and benumbing,

That even the wakeful their watch have not kept.

But there's an arousing, and Christian profession

Is cleansing its garments, and trimming its light;

While many a soul who has Christ in possession,

Whose light is the Life, has it burning and bright.

How grand the event! when the glorious Savior

Shall summon His own to arise in the air;

That they may be like Him, and with Him forever,

His glory behold, and His blessedness share!

But sad and o'erwhelming to all who shall cherish

A hope without basis—mere Christians in name—

For they must forever and hopelessly perish,

And bear of their folly the sin and the shame!

O ye who have wash'd in the snow, or with nitre,

Whose garb and deportment are moral and clean,

Who cannot, as men, be made cleaner or whiter,

Who call yourselves Christians, and are so in mien;

Your virtue, though good for this life, is no better

To God's searching eye than the foulest of sin;

You yet are but captives in Satan's strong fetter,

And still are polluted and filthy within.

You may be religious, and burn with devotion,

Your substance impart to relieve the distress'd,
Send Bibles and missions far over the ocean,
And be by the godly esteemed and caress'd;
But if you're not washed in the blood of the Savior,
To Him by the Spirit eternally knit,
No matter how good and correct your behavior,
For God and His presence your soul is unfit.
Ye carry your lamps; ye have light, and ye've knowledge;
Ye call Jesus Lord; He hath taught in your streets;
Ye choose your own teachers, from school or from college,
And oft ye have questions in drinks and in meats;
Ye others can judge; of the simple are teachers;
In works and good actions ye labor and toil;
Nay, many among you are talented preachers;
Ye seem earnest Christians;—but have ye the oil
Yea, have ye the Spirit He dwells in believers;
The soul He doth quicken, uphold, and refresh;
But witnesses not with the souls of deceivers
Nor those who, called Christians, are still "in the flesh;"—
The light in the lamp, with no oil to sustain it,
But flickers a while, and must suddenly sink;
And when it expires there is nought will regain it;
It goes out in darkness, and leaves but its stink.
O Christless professor, arouse thee, and hearken!
From Christ and His servants take faithful advice;
Go thou to the Savior ere judgment shall darken,
And purchase of Him without money or price.
Relinquish thy fancy of human perfection,
Think not that thou livest, when thou art but dead;

'Tis only in Christ, in His blest resurrection,
That thou canst have life, and confess Him as Head.
To Him then united, thy soul will be ready
To go forth with gladness the Bridegroom to meet;
In Him, then abiding, thy steps will be steady,
And thou shalt be longing thy Savior to greet;
But when He goes into the house for the wedding,
His own He takes with Him, and closes the door;
While those who're without will His judgment be dreading,
Which He on the faithless and guilty will pour.

T.

"For yet a little while, and He that Anil come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. 10:37.)

Shall I Ever Lose the Favor of God?

AN EXTRACT

"If God receives sinners, to what does He receive them? Is it a complete salvation they obtain, or are there conditions still to be met before the final goal is reached and there is complete security? On what, in short, does the ultimate salvation of the believer rest? This is a question which evidently needs answering before the soul can be completely satisfied and at peace. It is one thing to be now in the favor of God, and it is another thing to know I can never lose it. And the more I look at myself, the more I must be in dread of losing it.

"Moreover, there are those who will allow of a free present salvation, who will not allow of one that gives security absolutely for the future. With them the sinner may be saved without works; but the saint may not. The legalism shut out at one entrance gains admittance at another, and the result in either case is the same. Self-sufficiency is built up; self-distrust brought to despair; the work of Christ is practically displaced from its office of satisfying the soul, and the grace of God effectually denied.

"The Scripture speaks as decisively on this point as on any other. On justification by the blood of Christ, it builds the most confident assurance as to the future. It tells us that inasmuch as, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much MORE then, being now justified by His blood, WE SHALL BE SAVED from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, MUCH MORE; being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom. 5:8-10.)

Our Calling

1 Cor. 1:4, 9

"GOD is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." It is only necessary to put this verse which declares the fellowship into which God has called us with His Son, into connection with "the grace of God which is given us by Jesus Christ" in verse 4, to see how they act and react upon each other for our present blessing and the glory of Christ. Each rests on "the faithfulness of God" to Him and to us!

But I will quote a few texts for our consideration, which will bring into prominence the subject of a Christian's calling, that we may see how large a place "calling" has in the mind and ways of God; and possibly discover how very much it is left in the background as regards our communion with Him. Our salvation occupies us so exclusively, that we forget its connection with "calling," and therefore fail to see how great a Christian is by calling. The order in which it is put in Rom. 8 is important, "whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Passing by this instructive and Divine order, we shall find other parts of Scripture, which connect salvation and calling; for example, in 2 Tim. 1:9, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." We shall do well on all accounts to ponder such a full and precious text as this, and the verse that follows, that we may see the nature and character of the Christian's calling, established thus by purpose and by grace; and given us in Christ Jesus If we turn to the Hebrews, we shall learn further how we are personally recognized: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed him," &c.

The Scriptures first cited established our calling upon the fact that "God is faithful;" but Heb. 3 presents Christ to the holy brethren, in His faithfulness towards God and us (now that He is passed through the heavens) as the Apostle and High Priest of a heavenly calling; "for such an High Priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." The Christian's dignity thus flows from the double fact of the faithfulness of God, who is the Caller, and also from the Person and Office of our great High Priest, "who was faithful to Him that appointed him" over the "partakers of a heavenly calling." Peter may supply a further scripture to us on this great subject: "The God of all grace, who hath called us to His, eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish; strengthen, settle you." This text gives the additional fact, that it is the God of ALL grace who hath called us, and binds the suffering with the glory (as this apostle always does) as the way of our perfection, establish went, and settlement. The two things which Peter was unable to put together, where his Lord was on the earth (the sufferings and the glory), he is careful never to separate in his epistles, as the highway to present blessing, and eternal glory, " even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps. God is

faithful, who hath called us unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is likewise the subject of the Philippian epistle, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Here the practical power of our calling is seen in the entire separation of a Christian unto God, and unto Christ; in the enjoyment of a hope, which associates him with itself, in the heavens; and makes him forgetful of those things which are behind. "This one thing I do" is the secret by which the soul is kept true to its center, like a needle to the pole.

Another text in the Thessalonians may suffice to present our calling in some of the varied aspects by which we are instructed in the epistles by the Holy Ghost. The connection and effect of our calling upon our walk is most important for the believer, especially in a day of great weakness, when these two things are separated—"that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." The fellowship into which God has called us, with His Son, thus embraces what the Son is, and what He is set over; and therefore in this text "the kingdom of God and His glory" are brought to bear upon the soul, for Christ is over the kingdom. Where the heart responds to the power and blessedness of the calling, it is consciously attracted and attached by Him who calls, to the circle of His own delights into which He calls us by Jesus Christ. That which satisfies Him is what He associates us with, by calling, for the display of His own love towards us, and for the satisfaction of His dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for it is He, who is to "see of the travail of His own soul, and be satisfied." What must it be, that God has called us out into—and what must be the character of this fellowship with the Son of His love—when we are taught that the travail of Christ's soul is the measure which the Father adopts as the rule by which He will express His own delight in the work, by which He has been so glorified?

The Lord grant to us, that we may live more in the understanding and enjoyment of our calling, and that the eyes of our understanding being opened, we "may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

In conclusion, we may discover the practical power of the calling upon Abraham, when "the God of glory appeared to him, and said, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I will shew thee." He viewed himself in the light of this calling, and there was not one like him in the whole of Mesopotamia, which he left behind. He looked at himself in connection with the God of glory, who appeared to him; and in following God, he came to the place where God, and the glory, and Abraham, and his seed will be together. The calling was wondrous, and became a power in Abraham's soul, and he went out not knowing whither he went, nor much caring; for it was God who led him to what suited Himself. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

On Prayer

No. 2

THE confidence we should have as children of God is that our Heavenly Father knows better than we do, and that He seeks our profit. To ask, therefore, "according to His will," and not according to our will, is the unselfish path in which the Spirit leads. We sometimes "ask amiss," because self, in some shape or other, is our object, and not the Lord's glory; and no marvel if such prayers are not answered. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:3.) Who would wish such prayers to be answered? and yet it is well to watch our

hearts as to this. On the other hand, our relationship with God our Father forbids that anything should interfere with the freest actings of filial love. The Spirit, therefore, enjoins us to "be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to make our requests known unto God." (Phil. 4:6.) He does not here promise that all our requests shall be answered, but this Scripture does enjoin that outpouring of heart becoming a child to his heavenly Father.

After all, perhaps nothing so hinders answers to prayer as the condition of soul we may be in. Felt nearness to God must be connected with self-abasement. No flesh can glory in His presence. When Job was so unusually near to God that he said, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee," how did he feel? He added, "wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." When Isaiah was consciously in the presence of the glory of the Lord, we find him saying, "Woe is me for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Again, when the prophet Habakkuk, under divine teaching, contemplated more thoroughly the ways of God, he says, "When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones," &c. And so Daniel, the man greatly beloved, when he had a vision of the glory of the Lord, and heard His words, what was the effect? He says, "There remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of His words; and when I heard the voice of His words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground." But some of my Christian readers will say, "These were Old Testament saints who had not learned God as we have in the death and resurrection of His beloved Son, and had not the Spirit of adoption, and conscious knowledge of God as their Father." I know it. But I refer to these scriptures to show what man while in the body is, when brought into felt nearness to the infinitely holy God. Surely, He is not less Holy now than He ever was, though, in the brightness of that perfect holiness we know, for our joy and confidence, that Jesus has entered with His own blood; and that He is our life, righteousness, peace, and acceptance. We find the aged apostle John, when his eye for one moment rested upon the glorified Son of Man in the midst of the seven candlesticks, saying, "When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead." We know that the Lord soon lifted him up and comforted him; but I refer to it to show that in the presence of divine glory flesh must be abased, and God alone exalted.

To pursue a little further this part of the subject we are considering, let us look at Jacob. He was greatly troubled, full of fear, and rightly enough made the God of Abraham and of Isaac his refuge. His prayer, as recorded in Gen. 32, was humble, earnest, and supplicatory. But with this there was some reckoning upon his own policy. Faith in God he doubtless had, but he had confidence also that a present would appease Esau's wrath, and thus help to deliver him. It was therefore necessary that God should sharply exercise His servant before answering his prayer, so that he might give the glory to Him to whom alone it was due. Hence we read at the end of the chapter, that "Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled with him a man till the breaking of the day." Jacob needed his fancied strength and self-confidence to be broken down, so that he might feel his own weakness. Hence we see his thigh was put out of joint, and in this perfect helplessness he clung to the one who wrestled with him for blessing. He said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Thus he was consciously helpless, and clinging to another for blessing. He was then asked his name, for God wanted him to feel his vileness as well as wickedness. He therefore confesses that his name is Jacob—supplanter. Thus he is vile in his own eyes as well as weak. He confesses that

he is a supplanter, as well as helpless. And now God can abundantly honor him. "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a Prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed."

Now, what do we learn from all these instances, but that the most devoted saints, when in felt nearness to God, will be consciously weak, and unworthy, and that a sense of our helplessness and vileness—real self-abasement before God—is necessary in order that He should 'bless and honor us in answering our prayers. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." How pride must hinder answers to prayer. There is another reason why prayer is not more frequently answered. God has marked out the ground of approach worthy of Himself, and of the relationship His grace has found, viz., the name of His beloved Son. Five or six times in our Lord's last address to His disciples, He especially taught them to ask the Father in His name. There is no limit to blessing to those who come in His name. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:14.) The fact is that Jesus has so infinitely glorified God in His work on the cross, that He is righteously worthy of all blessing. There is nothing too much for God to do, or to give, because of the infinite worthiness of His beloved Son. How simple this is, and how encouraging! Vile and helpless in self, yet so pleading the all-worthy name of Jesus, as to have joyful answers to prayer.

He said to His disciples, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:24.) Saints of old were wont to approach God by a sacrifice; we bring the name of Him who offered Himself without spot to God—a sacrifice and offering of such infinite and eternal efficacy, that it never needed to be repeated.

When Samuel prayed for God's people Israel, we are told that he took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering; and no sooner had the savor of the offering gone up, then God thundered upon their enemies and delivered His people. Daniel was successful in prayer at the time of the evening oblation. Zechariah prayed to God, and was heard, while incense was being offered up. Elijah offered a bullock on the altar, when he presented prayer to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, which God immediately answered by fire from heaven. We cannot be too simple and earnest in pleading the name of the Lord Jesus in prayer.

"O plead His name, His precious name,

With boldness at the throne;

For all He is, and all He has,

Will surely be our own."

Not that the Father does not love us. Far from that. The Lord does not intercede to cause the Father to love us. Hence Jesus said, "I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." (John 16:26, 27.)

The Value of the Death of Christ

[EXTRACTED.]

IF we examine the value of the death of Christ, what do we find attached to it in Scripture?

Do I need redemption? We have redemption through His blood, an eternal redemption; for "neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12.) Do I need forgiveness? That redemption which I have through His blood is the forgiveness of sins-yea, without shedding of blood is no remission. (Heb. 9:22.) Do I need peace? He has made peace through the blood of His cross. (Col. 1:20.)

Do I desire to be dead to sin and have the flesh crucified with its affections and lusts? "I am crucified with Christ." " Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; for in that He died, He died unto, sin once, and in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." This is my deliverance also from the charge and burthen of the law which has dominion over a man as long as he lives. (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6.)

Do I feel the need of propitiation? Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood. The need of justification? I am justified by His blood. (Rom. 3:25; 5:9.) Would I have a part with Christ? He must die; for except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; if it die it brings forth much fruit. (John 12:24.)

The Shipwreck; or, "He Loved His Own."

MANY years ago, a gentleman, with his wife and little boy, went on a long voyage to a distant country, called Australia. The little boy was named Joseph, and on the voyage another child was born. They were to land at a place called Sydney, and were looking forward with the hope of reaching it very soon, when, by some accident, or through some mistake, suddenly, in the middle of the night, they were roused from their sleep by the striking of the ship upon a rock. The ship was broken, and the water slowly coming in; besides which it stuck fast upon the rock. The night was dark, but the water was calm, and the sailors found, that although they were among rocks, still it was possible to get on shore, by taking a few at a time in the ship's boats. However, the captain and passengers agreed that it would be better to wait for the daylight, lest in the darkness any should fall into the sea, and be drowned. So they waited, anxiously watching for the morning.

But what will you say when I tell you, that, just as the faintest gleam of light appeared in the east, the wind began to blow, the heavy dark clouds gathered over head, and beneath the sea began to swell, and the big waves rose up on all sides, dashing with fury against the poor disabled ship, and threatening to wash everyone over-board.

What could these poor people do? They had lost the calm hours of the night, when they might have reached the land; and now death stared them in the face, and a watery grave.

No boat could be launched on those angry waters, but the sailors thought of a way of escape. One bold man fastened a rope around his waist, and committing himself to the sea, swam off from the ship, fighting for his life, as wave after wave rose before him—sometimes buried him in their depths, and then bore him aloft on their crests. But exhausted, half dead, yet with a rope round his waist, he at last reached a low rock, on which he climbed, and from thence to another, until he was able to fasten the rope securely, beyond reach of the water.

Now then, there was a way of escape for any who would trust themselves to that rope. One after another of the sailors, putting the rope under his shoulder, or holding on to it as he swam; passed along by its help—swimming when he could, and holding on to it when a big wave washed over him—and so all the sailors got safe to land. One passenger did the same, and lived to tell the tale.

But what became of the gentleman, with his wife and children? He was a strong, brave man, and surely could have saved himself as the sailors did; and life is very dear to all of us. But there are some things dearer than life, and he loved his wife and children. He could not save himself, and leave them to perish! A very strong man could only just hold on to the rope by himself, and it was impossible to take his wife and little ones through that foaming sea. Besides, his wife was very weak, and the baby only a few days old. So he perished with them!

Did he perish? His body, with that of his wife and children, was buried in the deep, deep sea, but their spirits went to be with Christ, whom on earth even little Joseph had known and loved. The one passenger who was saved, said he last saw them standing on the wreck, calm and peaceful amidst the confusion, commending themselves, I feel sure, to Him who rules the waves, and who

counts the hairs of our heads.

I often think of that sad scene; and you will not wonder, when I tell you, that that gentleman was my own brother. And it reminds me of another tale, quite as true, and far more wonderful. You will perhaps guess what I mean, when I repeat these words, "Love is stronger than death. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." And again, those beautiful words, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." You know He was the Son of God, as well as the Son of Mary; and all the time He lived down here, He did always the things that pleased God. Would He not have been welcome in heaven at any moment, if He had pleased to leave this bad world, and go up to the bosom of His Father? And when Judas betrayed Him, and the chief priests and Pilate got Him into their hands, to nail Him to the tree, could He not have asked for more than twelve legions of angels, to put all His enemies to flight? Oh, yes; He had the power! but in His heart there was something He loved better than life. Like my poor brother, who would not swim to shore alone, leaving his wife and little ones to perish, so Christ knew that to save His own life, he must go to heaven alone. That, once entered in, the door would be forever shut against every poor sinner left down here—that if any were to be saved, it must be through His death—and that by dying He could, through death, bring any who believe on Him safe to His own blessed home.

So He willingly died. It was a cruel and a shameful death; and more than that, He had to bear the wrath of God for our sins, to save us from the judgment we deserved. But He bore it all, because of the great love He had for His own—yes, for men, women, little children who look up to Him now—and all because He did not want to go to heaven alone.

Oh, I hope when I go up to see His face—along with those dear ones, whose bodies were buried beneath the waves—I hope that YOU will be there to sing with me that song—

"Unto Him who loved us, and Washed us
from our sins in His own blood,
to Him be glory, forever and ever."

When we saw the sad tidings in the newspaper, we wrote to a friend in Sydney, asking him to find out the one passenger who was saved; and he told us this sad tale. He also went to the sea shore, where the ship was wrecked, and rowed off in a boat to the rocks and low-lands, where she struck; and there, washed up by the waves, he found two little shoes, which he buried in the sand.

One word more. My brother could only die with those He so dearly loved. But Jesus, in dying for His own, could bring them out of death, giving them eternal life; and none can pluck them out of His hand. For He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

O Jesus! to tell of Thy love,
Our souls shall for ever delight;
And join with the blessed above,
In praises by day and by night.
Wherever we follow Thee, Lord,

Admiring, adoring we see,
That love which was stronger than death
Flow out without limit, and free.
Descending from glory on high
With men Thy delight was to dwell,
Contented, our Surety to die,
By dying to save us from hell:
Enduring the grief and the shame,
And bearing our sin on the cross,
Oh, who would not boast of this love,
And count the world's glory but loss!
"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (John 13:1.)

Christ Jesus the Savior Is in Glory. Do You Know Him?

BELOVED READER, —God has visited this world, has manifested Himself in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a fact, and is of immense importance to you, whether you feel interested in it or not.

He came down from glory, not to get God to love the sinner, hut to declare the love that already existed in God's heart toward the sinner. It is written: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." (1 John 4:9.)

I call your attention to the fact, that the Son of God has been into this world. He laid aside His glory, and took upon Himself the fashion of a man, and was when here the most gracious and the most accessible of men.

He carried with Him that which lost man could get nowhere else, and was the only man that could ever stand upon this earth and say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) What an announcement was this to make in such a world of sin, sorrow, weariness, and want! But He had more to give than rest: for in Him was life. Yet the sorrowful testimony that He gave of those around Him was this: "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:40.)

This blessed One was hated without a cause. He was "the light of the world." And this did not suit man; for "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Hence they did not rest until they had got rid of this Jesus, so that they might go on undisturbed in their own paths of iniquity. A robber was preferable to Jesus, the Son of God! (John 18:40.) Their cry was, Away with Him! Crucify Him!

But God, in His own wondrous grace, made this crowning act of man's hatred against Himself to be the only way of salvation; for where man made this blessed One the martyr, there, upon Calvary's cross, God gave Him to be the victim. Thus the path of the Lord Jesus Christ shows me on the one side the fullest expression of man's hatred against God. (Acts 3:13-15.) While, on the other side, it shows me God's eternal hatred of sin, and His wonderful love toward the sinner. (2 Cor. 5:21.)

It was there, upon the cross, "that mercy and truth met together;" and it was there that "righteousness and peace kissed each other." (Psa. 85:10.)

Thus, when I think of the death of Christ, I am constrained to say, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5.)

It was upon the cross that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring those who believe in Him to God. (1 Peter 3:18.)

It was upon the cross that "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. 9:26.)

It was upon the cross that the Lord Jesus Christ endured God's wrath against sin, in order that the love which existed in God's heart might righteously flow out towards those who were "UNGODLY," "SINNERS," and "ENEMIES." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8.)

Every barrier that hindered the outflow of the love of God to the world has been removed. The precious blood of Jesus has answered every claim. And that same Jesus that died upon the cross now sits upon the throne in heavenly glory. God raised Him from among the dead, and, having exalted Him, has declared that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:10, 11; Psa. 72; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; Rev. 5:5.)

My desire is, to press home upon your soul the fact that the Savior is to-day in glory!

My question to you is, Do you know Him? It may be that you know a great deal about Him. But this is not what I mean. It is eternal life to know Him. It is written: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

Have to do with the Lord Jesus Christ you must; either now in saving grace, or presently in judgment! The dying thief had to do with Him when He hung upon the cross. Saul, His most determined enemy upon earth, had to do with Him when He was in heavenly glory—the same Jesus, but in different circumstances. The thief turned to the Savior on the cross, owned his sinful condition, and asked to be remembered in His coming kingdom. The Savior's answer to his cry was, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43.) Saul, on the other hand, on his way Damascus, endeavoring to wipe out the memory of Jesus from the earth, is met by that same Jesus in brightest glory!

How does the Lord meet this daring enemy, the chief of sinners? With this simple inquiry: "Saul, Saul, WHY persecutest thou ME?" (Acts 9) Could Saul tell Him why? No. But in the light of that glory, which was above the brightness of the sun, he fell to the ground and exclaimed,

"Who art thou, Lord?"

The answer 'was, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

Not one word of reproof fell from the Savior's lips. What a reception was this for Saul! His course on earth was changed. No longer the persecutor of the saints of God, but henceforth to be an ambassador for that Savior here, and a preacher of Him as glad tidings among the nations. (Gal. 1:16.) He announced what that Savior was in Himself as glad tidings to those around him.

You see, on the one hand, how a dying malefactor was received, and, on the other hand, how the proud, self-righteous enemy of Jesus was received.

Care you then, dear reader, for Him, the living, loving Savior in glory? Be assured of this: He cares for you, and desires your salvation. (2 Peter 3:9, 10.)

Gladly do I declare what He has done; for "He gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2); and God was satisfied and GLORIFIED with the work that He accomplished on the cross; for He crowned Him in heaven with glory and honor. (John 17; Heb. 2)

Let me also ask you, beloved reader, do you want rest, peace, righteousness, eternal life? All are found in that living Savior up there in glory! (Eph. 2:14; 1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 3:3.)

Be assured He is the only refuge for your immortal soul, and you will spend eternity either with Him in glory, or with the lost in hell!

To turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven, and to refuse present grace, is to ensure future judgment; for after death there is judgment. (Heb. 9:27.) And there will be no grace, no mercy, for the sinner when he stands before the "great white throne." (Rev. 20)

When the Savior was upon earth He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (or judgment); but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24.)

Thus the believer in Christ Jesus is one who will never come into judgment, because the Lord Jesus Christ bore the judgment for him (2 Cor. 5:21); and thus God is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. (Rom. 3:26.)

But, beloved reader, remember that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."(2 Thess. 1:7-9.)

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. BUT THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3:9, 10.)

Reader, where will you, be in that day?

"The more Thy glory strikes mine eyes,

The humbler I shall lie;

And while I sink, my joys shall rise

Immeasurably high."

“He Wist It Not”

THE believer has not only been delivered from the wrath of God, to which he was justly exposed, by the accomplished work of Jesus on the cross, but he is brought into the positive and present blessedness of partnership or fellowship with Him who is declared worthy of, or righteously entitled to, all glory, honor, riches, and blessing. Hence we read, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:9.) It is of immense importance that we clearly apprehend this. It is in Christ that God now beholds us. He says of us, "Ye are complete in Him." We are made one with Him by the Holy Ghost. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, and says of us, "As He is, so are we in this world." He calls us "children," "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ," and says, "Ye are not in the flesh" as we once were, miserable sinners in the first Adam, but "in Christ." This is very simple, but God would have us consciously take possession of and enjoy these amazing blessings of divine grace now by faith, which we shall in unclouded reality when Jesus comes. No calling or blessings could be higher, no dignity could be greater, no gifts richer or fuller, than the place and blessings God has given us in Christ. Well might an inspired apostle exclaim, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Making these blessings our own, and entering into the enjoyment of this fellowship with Jesus our Lord, is the true secret and power of practical godliness. No lower ground is the region spread out for our faith. The believer is supposed in scripture to walk by faith, not by sight—to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us. There must be this personal intercourse and acquaintance with the Lord Himself, if we would be like Him in our ways and walk. Most Christians long to be more like Christ, but how can it be effected except by occupation with Christ himself. Gazing upon Him, beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.

In Ex. 34, we find that "Moses' face shone"—it was radiant with glory, but "he wist it not." How was this? He was occupied with God, and not with himself. He had been in the mount with God. He had been in the brightness of divine glory, and it had made his face shine. We must know what it is to be in the presence of God if we would be really godly. Nothing else will produce it. Trafficking in mere Bible knowledge, with outward care for morality may be an imitation of it, but real, practical, Christ-like ways can only flow out of communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ; being in God's presence, where Jesus now is, by faith, and by the written word and Spirit having our minds permeated with God's thoughts, and our hearts under the transforming power of His love. Thus we shall be fruitful and godly. We may not be conscious that we are growing in grace and godliness, any more than Moses was aware that his face was shining so brightly; nevertheless, it will be so. God will always be with those who are with Him. "Them that honor Me, I will honor."

Look also at Stephen in Acts 7. We are told that "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Now mark, first, that when a man is full of the Holy Ghost, he looks up into heaven, and is taken up with that perfect man in the glory. The Lord Himself is the great attraction of his soul. Secondly, the result of being thus occupied with Christ is to become like Christ, so that you see Stephen with his latest breath praying for his cruel murderers, saying, "Lord Jesus, lay not this sin to their charge."

From these instances, can there be a doubt but that great practical results must be connected with the soul really entering upon and enjoying this fellowship with the Lord Jesus, into which divine grace has called us?

But scripture warns us also against getting off this blessed ground of fellowship with the Lord, and drawing back through unbelief. Samson's history stands remarkably in contrast with Moses' in this respect. A man of faith most surely, and God wrought wondrously with him by His Spirit, so that his name is among the mighty men of faith, as recorded by the Holy Ghost in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. He was a Nazarite too—standing in the place of separation with God. But, after all the victories of faith, he got careless and carnal. He trifled with the truth, until at length he thought very little of the true place of separation to God, which as a Nazarite, he occupied. Delilah so attracted and ensnared him, that he so in heart departed from God as to fall a prey to her bewitching devices. At length, through her, he lost the locks of Nazarite separation, and then the solemn confession comes out, that "he wist not that God had departed from him." (Judg. 16:20.) How peculiarly solemn this is! What searching lessons it reads us, and what earnest thrilling exhortations it carries to our hearts to abide in the Lord Jesus; that

"E'en as the branches to the vine,

Our souls should cling to Him."

We are told that Samson had gone out as at other times. Before this, whenever he had sought God, God had always been his helper; but now he was openly before all a common man—he had lost his Nazariteship; he was no longer a separated man unto God. That ground had been trifled with and lost, and "he wist not that God had departed from him." Now, mark what followed. He was unable any, longer to stand against the foe. He was taken captive, and then, his eyes were soon put out. He was bound with fetters of brass, and got so under the power of the ungodly that they made him grind in the prison-house, and then made sport of him. There was some recovery at last, but his end was destruction.

What a touching picture of the ways and wretched experience of a soul that has got away from the Lord. Happy to know that the word is still true that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9.) May we, dear Christian readers, be kept in our only safe place of real felt weakness and self-abhorrence, clinging to Him who said "Abide in me."

O Lamb of God, still keep me

Close to thy pierced side;

'Tie only there in safety

And peace I can abide;
What foes and snares surround me,
What lusts and fears within;
Thy grace that sought and found me,
Alone can keep me clean.
'Tis only in Thee hiding,
I feel myself secure;
Only in Thee abiding,
The conflict can endure;
Thine arm the victory gaineth
O'er every hateful foe,
Thy love my heart sustaineth,
In all its cares and woe.

Two Valuable Rules for Christians

AN EXTRACT

THE word of God affords us two valuable rules for all our actions; and if we could set them always before our eyes, I believe we should seldom be at a loss as to the conduct we ought to pursue. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17.) Let us then always ask ourselves, before we set about any study or employment, or enter into any company, "Am I doing this ' to the glory of God?' Is it my sole, or at least my principal, motive? Can I do it ' in the name of the Lord Jesus?' Can I boldly say it is such an action as He would approve of? And can I look up to Him all' the time I am doing it for His sanction and blessing?"... From the moment we take refuge at the cross of Jesus, and are "washed from our sins in His own blood," from that happy moment we are no longer our own, and must make it our business to "glorify God in our body and spirit, which are God's." This seems to me to be the great and marked distinction between the Christian and the worldling. The one lives to himself; the other "to Him who died for him, and rose again." The one consults his own pleasure, ease, and safety, leans to his own understanding, and seeks his own glory. The other prays that his will may be quite swallowed up in the will of Jesus, "ceases from his own wisdom," and makes "Christ his wisdom." He no longer receives "the honor that cometh from men," but desires that Christ, the author of all good things, may have all the glory of them. His fleshly nature, or, as St. Paul calls it, the old man, strives hard against this, and would lead him to please and honor himself again; and this is the great conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, which makes the Christian life to be so truly called a warfare. The conflict has already begun in you, my dearest friend, and will never cease till death takes you from sense and self to where you shall see Jesus as He is, and wonder that you could ever prefer anything to Him. No wonder you find it a hard and strange conflict. Parting with self-seeking, self-honoring, self-righteousness, is far more painful than cutting off a right hand, or plucking out a right eye. "With man, indeed, this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Taking this consideration with us, then, that Christ—not self—is the end of all our actions, and "whether we eat or drink," or speak, go in or out, or are alone, or in company, engaged in study or recreation, we must "do all to the glory of God," and "in the name of the Lord Jesus"—I think it will give us a very different view of our duty as to worldly company and worldly employments from any that worldly wisdom or policy can give us And now, my dearest friend, I have proposed many privations to you; and what have I to offer you in return? Nothing but the love of Jesus; nay, this is yours already; for if you are enabled to give these things up, it will be not that He may love you, but because He has loved you.... Let us cast off the spirit of bondage, and not come to God as slaves, who must serve Him, but as His redeemed children, who love to serve Him, and who find His service perfect freedom. Let us pray that more of the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts.... It is but a little ray of this love that as yet has warmed my heart, yet I can tell you, dearest and most beloved friend, that it is worth renouncing ten thousand worlds for. The Lord Jesus has sometimes drawn near to me with such unspeakable sweetness, that I have

thought all the lovely relations of life—father, husband, friend—had no beauty in them, except as they served to shadow forth the immense love of our reconciled God in Him, and the near and intimate communion to which He admits His chosen and redeemed people. Oh, my friend, He has chosen you. What a wonder of love is here! He has redeemed you at the price of His own precious blood "from this evil world." Will you linger in it any longer? God forbid! May the Spirit of God "fill you with such joy and peace in believing" as may make the world and the things of it appear to you in their true light. Remember, this is not your home. We are strangers and pilgrims here. Let not the world see that the joys of the love of Christ and communion with Him are not enough to occupy us, without having recourse to the many vain and trifling ways they have invented of killing time and driving eternity out of their thoughts.... I cannot but remind you that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution." Not perhaps open persecution now; but ridicule, dislike, sneering, either open or secret, must be your lot, if you determine to be "not conformed to this world." We must not think it hard, or be angry, or disheartened, if these things come upon us, for our Master was a scorn and derision to all around Him.

"STRIVE to be dead to this world, and to your will and lusts. Let Christ have a commanding power and a king's throne in you. Walk with Christ, howbeit the world should take the hide off your face. I promise you that Christ will win the field. Your pastors cause you to err. Except you see Christ's word, go not one foot with them."—Samuel Rutherford.

The Royal Standard

“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”

A GREAT thing, Lord, I ask—a very great thing,
Like to the standard after which I ask it;
It is, that Thou wouldst grant me—not according
To my deservings, Lord, for these are vileness,
Nor aught that in myself I ever felt or thought,
Or in Thy saints have seen, or from my teachers learnt,
Nor even yet as “God is rich in mercy,”
For that I have, but as He’s rich in glory;
That is the standard now; by that I beg.
What more can I—what more can creature crave?
For what of all Thine excellence most various,
Wisdom, love, truth, or power, is not found here?
The very wealth of Thy whole glorious being,
Thou, the all-glorious One! Such is the standard,
And, as the standard, so is my request
Most high and various yet is its burden one:
Even that my Lord and Savior in my heart
May make abode, and never more go out.
That He is in me, Lord, I am not doubting,
And many a year has been, and I in Him;
But in my heart, that He may there abide;
That is the panting. Inside my inmost heart,
As bridegroom in his bride’s, or child in mother’s,
And each and all affections that in me

Are strongest, tenderest, may about Him twine,
That I may know, and feel, and never have to doubt
He that in God's bosom dwells in my heart dwells
God's Christ, my Jesus, in my heart of hearts;
There dwells He now; no more so far away,
To seek, and find, and fetch, as once so often:
But in me staying, His own loved and loving self;
So that my heart's affections, with great gladness,
Like eager, duteous maids, may wait upon Him;
And thus, whichever way I look within myself,
There I may see Jesus, Jesus, always Jesus;
And He may fire me, melt me, and constrain,
So that His love shall be my joy, my power, my life;
And as that house was filled with odor of the ointment,
E'en so may my whole soul of Jesus savor,
And I that love may know which passeth knowledge,
And knowing it, may show how much we one another love,
First, Jesus me (even as the Father Him)
Seeking that His own joy may be my joy,
And that the glory given to Him may be mine too,
Even as the curse, my due, went all to Him,
When loving me, Himself for me He gave.
Then, showing thus how much by Him I'm loved,
I would both greatly love and show that too;
For both are justly His, even to the end
Of my capacity of mind, and heart, and will.
But oh! a far off Christ I cannot bear
A Christ believed in, that had saved my soul,
Died for my sin, and now to heaven has gone,

Sent down His Spirit, and me His member made,
This, and this only known, I cannot bear;
For so unfit it seems that He should be so much
And yet not more-my all, and yet not "ALL IN ALL"
Unfit that I should have so many Christless thoughts,
So many feelings kindled at other fires,
By other fuel fed than Christ's own love.
I cannot bear it Lord. Oh! take this heart—
This heart so empty, wintry, and oppressed.
See, it stands open. Enter it who may,
Yet Thou alone art welcome. Jesus, come
And take possession, for it is Thine own;
It waits, it pants, it breaks for only Thee.
Come, then, and dwell herein, as well Thou canst.
I say no more. Thou understand'st it all.
Now grant it, O my God, according to that standard-
That highest, best of measures, "THE RICHES OF THY GLORY."

“The Kindness of God”

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON 2 SAM. 9

IN this chapter there occurs a very remarkable sentence. It is this: "The kindness of God." David enquired, saying, "Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" (v. 3.) He wanted an object on which to display this kindness—an unworthy object, an offender, an enemy; for it is such that divine kindness meets, according to the gospel of the grace of God. Hence we read in Titus that "we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us... that being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Again, in Ephesians we read, "But God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins... by grace ye are saved." Now I would ask, if you all know the meaning of grace? for the kindness of God saves us in the way of grace. Grace means something more than love. God loves angels, that is not grace. God loves sinners when dead in sins, altogether bad, and saves them, that is grace. God, therefore, so to speak, needs a sinful creature, a ruined, incurably bad sinner on whom to display His grace. It is the grace of God that melts and wins man's heart. Pure and spotless angels may see God acting in grace to save man, but they have not tasted it for themselves. When an angel sins he is consigned in chains to everlasting darkness; but unclean, filthy men have the gospel of God's grace preached to them, which brings salvation to whosoever believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the amazing kindness of God.

Need I call attention to the fact that man has sinned, got away from God, and, as we constantly find, hates God, despises Christ, refuses the mercy and kindness of God in salvation, and thus deserves to be banished from God's presence for ever. Not one of us could stand before God for one moment on the best things we have ever done, "for all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Man has shown his hatred and antagonism to God in rejecting and crucifying His beloved Son. "Ah," say you, "men that acted so wickedly as to mock and scourge Him, to drive the nails into His holy hands and feet, to cry out, 'Crucify Him, Crucify Him; Away with Him, Away with Him; Not this man, but Barabbas,' deserve to perish." Such, you say, are hell-deserving sinners. But you forget, perhaps, that we all have the same evil principles in our hearts, and in some way or other have manifested the same hatred to and rejection of Christ. So that another has said—

“The soldier pierced His side, 'tis true,

But we have pierced Him through and through.”

All who have not protested against the world's rejection of Christ are certainly equally guilty, but instead of God opening the earth and swallowing us all up, He proclaims to all forgiveness of sins and justification by the blood of the cross. This is grace. It is free, unmerited love to the worst of objects. The cross of Christ is the public manifestation and divine measure of "the kindness of

God." Thus the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men. It is a solemn thought, but what many are about is refusing eternal life and glory as God's free gift.

David wanted to shew "the kindness of God" to the house of Saul. Saul was David's enemy, and Saul was also rejected by God, under His condemnation for sinning against Him. But mark, there is a double aspect in this kindness, he not only pardoned this uncomely offspring of his chiefest enemy, but brought him into the place of nearness and fellowship with himself. We are told four times in this short chapter that he should eat bread at the king's table as one of the king's sons.

God loved man when dead in sins-morally loathsome and unclean; yea, He so loved the world, and that not only to cleanse the believer from sin by the atoning blood of His beloved Son, but to bring him into nearness and relationship with himself, for nothing less could satisfy the heart of God. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," and elsewhere we are told, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.... Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Thus the grace of God has met us in our need and ruin, and brought us nigh to Himself in Christ in heavenly places, and that too in the blessed relationship of children, so forcibly illustrated by David, to eat bread at the king's table as one of the king's sons.

Now observe how this "kindness of God" affected Mephibosheth's heart. Mephibosheth was a cripple, lame in both his feet, having nothing naturally to recommend him, but was an object peculiarly for pity and kindness. The king sent for him. How could it be, thought he, that the king should take any notice of such a poor, needy, worthless one? This grace so humbled him, that when brought into the king's presence he fell on his face and did reverence. And when the king assured him of his loving purposes towards him, he was still more humbled, so that he bowed himself and said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (v. 8.)

Thus we see Mephibosheth called by David, reconciled, blessed, and brought into the king's house, and set at the king's table, in all the happiness and honor belonging to one of the king's sons. Surely this is "the kindness of God." The cripple's feet are hidden under the king's table, and joy and gladness fill his soul while partaking of the king's bounty and love.

The king's kindness went after its object. He sent for the lame Mephibosheth. The royal message reached him. Did he reply, I am afraid to go into the king's presence? It is too good to be true. Must I not do something for it? Must I not get better first, and the like? No. He received the king's word in all simplicity, and gladly obeyed the welcome news. So the gospel now. It announces God's grace. It bids the loathsome, filthy, unclean sinner to come into God's presence. It is this men need, to be reconciled to God, to be happy in His blessed, and infinitely holy presence, and there and there alone is reconciliation, and eternal salvation known. Is not Christ there? Is not the mercy-seat there? Does not the blood speak there? Does not the heart of Jesus still cry from thence, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out!" Oh, it is when the sinner sees how loving and gracious God is to him in Christ, that he is attracted into the presence of God, is broken and melted under a sense of his utter unworthiness, and bows and worships with reverence and godly fear. And as David said, "Fear not" to this trembling child of Saul, lame in both his feet, so God's perfect love in Christ removes all fear that hath torment, and brings the soul to find not only peace but joy too in the presence of the God of all grace.

But this blest and happy man had to do with an adversary during the king's absence, who was both an accuser and deceiver. It was while the king was thought little of, and when most were despising and rejecting him, that Mephibosheth was thus tried; but his heart was faithfully set on the king all through his absence. How could he but love one who had so loved him. His sympathies then were with the king. Ziba, however, went into the king's presence, and accused Mephibosheth of caring more for Saul's things than for David's; like Satan, who insinuated that Job cared more for God's gifts than for God. "Doth Jot fear God for nought?" So the believer now has to watch against the wiles of Satan, to quench his fiery darts, and to know that he is the accuser of the brethren before God day and night. (Rev. 12:10.) The flesh, and Satan, and the world seek to oppose his progress, and to misrepresent him. (2 Sam. 16:3.)

The time, however, came when the king returned, and then truth came to light. The faithfulness of this one who had partaken of "the kindness of God" was made manifest, and the falsehood of his accuser was made plain. It then turned out that Mephibosheth's heart had been in such true sympathy with the king during the period of his rejection, that when he joyfully went forth to meet him, it was made clear that "he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes from the day the king departed until the day that he came again in peace." (2 Sam. 19:24-30.) Nor was this all. In the king's presence this faithful one could boldly say, in answer to the king's question, "Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? My Lord, O King, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass that I may ride thereon, and go to the king, because thy servant is lame. And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God; do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king; yet did thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right, therefore, have I to cry any more unto the king?" And this is not all; for when the king's sentence was that the land should be divided between him and Ziba, it only gave further opportunity for the true faithfulness of Mephibosheth to his royal friend and lover to come forth. He declines, therefore, the gifts, because he has got the giver. Everything can now go because his heart had an object that more than filled it. "Let him take all," said Mephibosheth, "forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house."

Now I ask, can anything more vividly and touchingly set forth the true ground of peace, the trial by the way, and the judgment seat of Christ, than this brief narrative? First: Is not "the kindness of God" the alone ground of peace, as manifested in the redemption-work of Christ, and the new position and relationship God has brought the believer into in Him risen and ascended? Then, as to the trials by the way. Are not betrayal, slander, deceit, and false accusation, sooner or later, the experience of most of God's faithful ones? And what then is the relief? Is it not that the Lord Jesus, the true David, now rejected, and thought so little of, will come again from heaven, and Himself then be the everlasting solace of our hearts which will never more be grieved. It is Himself for whom we wait, it is the Lord Himself who will descend from heaven with a shout, and then we shall assuredly find that however rich and blessed His gifts have been, yet "Greater far than all beside, HE, HE HIMSELF IS thine."

And, thirdly, every perplexity will be unraveled then, every hidden thing brought to light. Real faithfulness to Christ, thought as little of now, it may be, as at the time when Mephibosheth neglected to dress his feet and trim his beard, will then shine forth in brightest luster, because it is the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, the fruit of divine grace. Then every false accusation will

be made manifest, every untrue insinuation cleared. But, above all, we shall be "forever with the Lord."

Waiting for God's Son From Heaven

WE are told that the Thessalonian believers "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." This is very blessed. God looks not only for the ready hand and willing foot, but also for the patient hope in our souls, and these saints were taught by the Holy Ghost to wait for Christ. Many cannot enter into it, because they know not the certainty of their salvation. Unable to rejoice in being already delivered from the wrath to come, how can they welcome the sound of the Savior's second coming? The Thessalonian believers knew, through the gospel Paul preached, that they were delivered from the coming wrath; and, having no doubt of their eternal salvation, they could happily wait for the return of the Son of God from heaven. They had no dread, but anticipated it with joy and gladness. They did not wait for the world's conversion, nor for the reconstruction of the Roman Empire, nor for the restoration of the Jews to their own land, nor for any other earthly events; but, as saved ones, they served the living and true God, and waited for His Son from heaven. This was their hope. They knew of no happiness, no heaven, no glory, apart from the person of Jesus the Son of God. He was all their desire, as well as all their salvation. The Savior's promise to His disciples, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," was very precious to their souls. They therefore hoped for Christ—to see Him, to be with Him, and be like Him. Possibly they might die before Jesus came, but it was not death they looked for, but Christ—to be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This is the true and blessed hope—the comforting, purifying, soul-reviving hope of the gospel, and this was their posture of soul. Their spiritual energies flowed outward in faith and love in the service of God, and upward in blessed expectation of His Son from heaven. Faith, love, and hope were thus kept in lively exercise, the true and blessed effects of the gospel they had received.

And the believer is still called to wait for God's Son from heaven. Many centuries have passed since these dear Thessalonian saints thus honored the Lord Jesus, and He has not come yet; but it is still true that "in a little while He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

The Saint Now

AN EXTRACT

THE saint now has to do with a Savior who is in heaven; and hence, through the Spirit, constituted heavenly in tastes and objects, while empowered to fill in a superior manner every claim and relationship appointed by God for the earthly man. The saint's blessing and position now is determined by the Second man. If Christ were on the earth, ruling in His might here, the man of the earth would be maintained here, as God had appointed, and this will be fully exhibited in the millennium. The man will live here in the enjoyment of every earthly blessing; nothing to mar the ordering and favor of God and man; and he himself kept through grace in accordance with the law, which defines the course and walk of a man on earth. The fact of Christ's absence involves an entirely different position for the saint now. He is not where Christ is, and Christ is not where he is; he is not of earth, but on earth; he is of Christ in heaven, but he is not in heaven. It is anomalous to find a saint where the Lord is refused, and hence possible only to faith to apprehend his true status in consequence. It is so anomalous and strange that practically souls go back to the dispensation before the coming of Christ, or, more properly speaking, to His first advent. They own His coming into the world as the Savior, and they prolong, as it were, that period indefinitely. They do not see His rejection, and while they own His death sacrificially, they adhere to the former dispensation, only adding to it the sacrifice of Christ. Now this pre-supposes the state of man to be just the same as before the death of Christ.

In current theology two things are thus really overlooked; first, that the trial of the first man is over on the cross, and an entirely new man brought in; and secondly, the fact of Christ's rejection. Now without seeing both, there can be no comprehending the status of the saint of this period.

The first point to be settled is, whether the First man is still under trial. Is God seeking or using any methods, with the view of testing man's ability to do anything for himself? Has it not been proved that the old bottles cannot hold new wine, and that there is no competence in the first man to retain, or to turn to good account, the favors and ordinance of God? Man has failed in his own condition and in relation to God, either to enjoy and secure to himself the blessings of earth, or to revere God through means of the imposing temple ritual. In the one case the wine is out; in the other, the house of God becomes a den of thieves. (See John 2)

But now there has been an atonement in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ for the man who has failed; and as the atonement has been provided by God for man, it testifies of the entire inability of man to do anything for himself; and as it is in God's hand only, He does not restore that which had ever proved itself unworthy and incompetent; but He introduces, Christ risen from the dead, an entirely new man. If man, since the sacrifice, is still under trial, one consequence or another must ensue: the trial must either be successful or unsuccessful. If successful—if man answers to the trial—then he is sinless; if unsuccessful, then there must be another sacrifice; for if man is under trial again and fails, there must be another atonement, or he is lost. Now to escape this dilemma there are in the present day two systems of theology; one (the Roman) which

maintains that the sacrifice or mass is a continual one; and hence there is no room for seeing that there is an end of the old man judicially in the cross, or that the new has come in and is before God in His Son, risen from the dead. The first man is looked at as still the one under trial. The other (Protestantism set on foot by the Reformers) admits that the sacrifice is one and sufficient, but with no consistency; for they practically neither own that the trial of the first man is over in the cross, nor Christ's rejection from the earth. Hence the law is their rule of life, and the believer seeks a position on earth as if Christ were reigning. They call the sacrifice of Christ a full and sufficient atonement, but they do not see it as brought in by God in His love, when the first man was proved utterly worthless; or that the believer is risen with Christ, in whom and from whom he receives a new life. The last Adam is a life-giving spirit, and therefore everything for the saint now is determined by the position of Christ the Second man.

Nothing is more evident than that the atonement being provided by God for that which has been proved thoroughly worthless, and unfit for Himself, He does not restore it: He judged it on the cross of His Son, and, in Him risen, receives every returning prodigal in a new nature and life. To sum up, Christ's position in heaven determines ours. He is where we are not. We are where God's Son has been refused. We are surrounded by man who refused Him, and who is no longer under trial, because God has brought in a new man in His Son, who is in heaven. Hence the status of the saint now is heavenly, united to Christ in heaven, by the Holy Ghost sent down; through grace he acquits himself in a superior way, in every duty, incumbent on the first man, as God has appointed; but he has no link or place here, as the millennial saint will have; for then Christ will be reigning here, and the millennial saint will be where He reigns, instead of, as now, where He is refused.

"Dwellers on Earth"

REVELATION 3:10

How sad will it be, in the day of the Lord,
For those bound to earth, as with fetters and cord;
Whose range is confin'd to this globe and its girth,
Who're strangers to heaven, and "dwellers on earth."
The tree that most firmly is fix'd in the ground,
And, fed by its moisture, with glory is crown'd,
Will suffer the keenest from drought and from dearth,
And so, in the judgments, with "dwellers on earth."
The kindred of Cain, far away from the Lord
Their cities have built, where their names they record;
In science they've skill, they have music and mirth,
And spread like a bay-tree, these "dwellers on earth."
But soon "the great trouble" shall come on the world,
And judgments most fearful on men shall be hurl'd,
And there shall be wars, desolation, and dearth;
When anguish shall seize all the "dwellers on earth."
Delusions and lies will by them be believed,
For, blinded by Satan, by him they're deceived:
Ah, what will their Babels and buildings be worth,
When they shall fall with them, as "dwellers on earth!"
But those whose foundation is Jesus, the Lord,
For loss in this world have a blessed reward;
Partakers by faith of the heavenly birth,
Their home is in heaven, and not upon earth.
O ye who are building for blessing below,

Your fabric will fall, and o'er whelm you in woe;
But, resting on Christ, on His work and His worth,
The doom you'll escape of the "dwellers on earth."

Titus

THERE would be a great deficiency in Our knowledge of the constitution of the early churches were it not for the epistles to Timothy and Titus. It was the absolute impracticability in which Paul found himself personally to overlook the numerous churches which were springing up throughout the Roman Empire, that obliged him to delegate his authority, more especially to two men—the one Timothy, very young when his career began, the other Titus, a Greek, possibly rather older; and the Holy Ghost in indicting these letters by the hand of the apostle, has left us a chart for our own guidance. It is not the purpose of this paper to trace the misuse which the professing church has made of these letters, in setting up a hierarchy which, absorbing into itself both office and gift, restrains the free action of the Holy Ghost in the members of Christ; but only to give an outline of the labors of these men in connection with the apostle of the Gentiles. This much, however, may be said, that both Timothy and Titus were men of their own order (creations, one might say, of the apostle Paul himself) who had no successors, at all events no power of naming them; their powers, as those of every delegate, reverting back when their mission was terminated to him who employed them. What a world of difficulties would have been avoided, if to questions of ordination, succession, &c. we were content to give the answer, that whatever the apostle employed these men to do, we cannot find them now, any more than we can find an apostle. We may and ought to own an elder, or a Titus when we see him, rendering thanks to God for the gift, but we cannot find an apostle to ordain him.

Titus was, it appears, a convert of the apostle, and one of his earliest associates, for he accompanied him to the council at Jerusalem, when he went there with Barnabas. (Gal. 2:1.) Although most trustworthy and reliable, and having, as we learn from 2 Corinthians, been thoroughly imbued with the mind of Paul, and still more of Christ Himself, conscientious and painstaking (2 Cor. 7. 8.), yet he never seems to have possessed that place in the heart of Paul which belonged to Timothy, who was thoroughly identified with him. "I have no man likeminded with Timothy." The probability was that there was wanting in him that soul-affinity for Paul which Timothy had. It is certain that just before his martyrdom he allowed, willingly or unwillingly, Titus to depart to Galatia (2 Tim. 4:10), whilst his poor heart was mourning over Timothy's absence, and begging him to return. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. Do thy diligence to come before winter." (2 Tim. 4:9, 21.)

Nor in the affairs of the church does Titus appear so high in office, if such a term be allowed. Although a delegate of the apostle, and empowered to ordain elders, according to the several characteristics marked out for him, he never occupied quite the same ground with Timothy. Thus we have no injunction to Titus, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." (1 Tim. 5:22.) There is no "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (1 Tim. 4:14.)

And no "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." (2 Tim. 1:6.) In general, Paul's manner in writing to Timothy takes a wider sweep,

as if to one occupying a larger space in his thoughts. Titus seems to have been thoroughly trusted in his line, but his sphere was more limited, whether that one apostle, when he wrote, was not himself fully aware of his own powers, or from the caliber of Titus being less weighty than that of Timothy. On such matters we must speak with caution. In the instructions to both, there is a deep sense of the corruption abiding in man after he has been taken up by the grace of God—a corruption which requires the vigilant eye of those raised up in spirit, as those men were, above the common level of Christians. An habitual walk with God, the avoidance of every custom or habit which a discerning worldly eye could cavil at is demanded on the part of those who are to have the oversight, much more must the positive godly virtues be cultivated, and of course were to be found in such as Titus who was to judge of their possession by others.

As to the recorded events in Titus' life, we meet with him first as accompanying Paul to Jerusalem on his third visit upon the question of circumcision. "And took Titus with me." (Gal. 2:1.) By this mention he seems, when Paul wrote, to have been known personally to the Galatians. This was at least fourteen years after the apostle's conversion. Subsequently we know he made two visits to Corinth entirely to Paul's satisfaction, the one as his medium of communication with the Corinthians, during Paul's hesitancy about going there in person (2 Cor. 2. 7. 8.); the other in the matter of a collection for the Jewish poor. Thirdly, we have an epistle addressed to him in Crete. Fourthly and lastly, a notice in 2 Timothy that he had left Rome for Dalmatia, not like Demas as a forsaker of Paul, so we hope, but on the Lord's service.

Although it can be shown by induction that he was often in company with the apostle, yet his name was never, as was the case with Timothy, conjoined in any address to the churches.

It is universally conceded that the Acts of the Apostles contain only the great landmarks of either Peter's or Paul's journeys. The filling up of the coast line is left to us, not devoid of healthy action in regard to study of the men themselves whose fortunes we follow, but it must be allowed that our conclusions have often only the value of a surmise. One thing may be said with reference to these travels, written, as they were by Luke, that whenever he was present with the apostle (and we can generally discover when he was) there is much more detail than when he was absent, and these times of non-detail are those into which the tracers of the life of Paul usually trace the journeys which he took as known to us only by his letters.

Perhaps of all the epistles that which has given rise to most speculation is this to Titus; some have put it very early, others very late. Let us try all the places—gaps, as we call them, in Paul's life—and see if we can place it. There is no notice of any voyage to Crete, or any coming in sight of it, except during his last, in the course of which he was shipwrecked at Malta; but the words, "For this cause left I thee" (καταλιπεν) in Crete, demand for himself a stay of some length there, which certainly could not have been at that time. Suppose we try the interval between our apostle's return from Jerusalem about the circumcision question, and his alienation from Barnabas. (Acts 15) Is there room to slip in such a voyage? Hardly. Again, when he had chosen Silas, and "went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches." (Acts 15) It is possible, but not very probable, that he might have run across to Crete and left Titus there, always remembering that we have him upon the scene after Barnabas earlier than any of the others. In so far as this the time would do; especially, too, as it accounts for the absence of Titus at a very critical period. But there is a weighty objection. Apollos is mentioned as to come to Crete. Now, as Paul did not know

Apollos until after (Acts 19:1), and as he was with him when he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:12), we should have a lapse of five years between the time of his leaving Titus in Crete, and the writing of the letter to the Corinthians. Now such a period would be too long in those early days for the stay of so eminent a servant in one place, to say nothing of the mention of Apollos as recognizing some acquaintance between him and Titus, which could not have been the case upon our present supposition. Tychicus is also mentioned, who otherwise comes late upon the scene. (Comp. Acts 20:14). And Nicopolis, a place in Europe, would seem as if the regions in which the apostle was residing were well known. We have done, then, with this supposition.

Another unaccounted interval might be found in Acts 18:21, 22, where Paul sails from Ephesus for Cesarea. On this voyage he might easily have taken Crete on his way, and something is to be said in its favour, inasmuch as the three oldest uncials have not in v. 21 the clause, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh at Jerusalem." If this clause does not stand, his movements would not be hurried to be in time for a feast, and he might have sojourned a time in Crete and left Titus there; "when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up and saluted the church;" happening of course after his return from that island. Titus was back again at Nicopolis in time to do the Lord's work in Corinth for the apostle. Luke appears to have been absent all through Acts 18,19, and hence the narrative is conducted in the third person singular, instead of in the first person plural. Supposing all this true, Titus met Paul at Nicopolis, between the writing of the first and second Corinthians. Paul from Nicopolis goes into Asia, hoping at Troas to meet Titus on his return from Corinth; but not doing so, hastens after him into Macedonia. Apollos meanwhile, unwilling perhaps to be made a center at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:12), goes to Crete before Titus leaves it, carrying possibly the letter itself; and Paul on receiving good accounts from Titus writes his second letter, and soon after makes his third visit to the Corinthians. This supposition, the best we can find, is, it must be allowed, a hazard upon whether a certain clause in Acts 18:21 stands or not. We now arrive at a last and very convenient supposition, as it has few or no puzzling difficulties to contend with, viz., that the epistle was written after a release which Paul had from the prison at Rome. Now as chronologists make an interval of six years between his release and his martyrdom, it is possible that he may have gone any number of journeys. On this point we are entirely at sea. He might have quitted Rome, left Titus in Crete, wintered either at Nicopolis or of Epirus or of Macedonia, and Titus subsequently have been found at Rome with the apostle. So also Tychicus (3:12) may have relieved him, and still have had time to rejoin the apostle, and afterwards have been sent to Ephesus. (2 Tim. 4:12.) The light which the epistle itself sheds is all against so late a date being assigned to it. Its contents do not bear upon subjects that must have occupied the apostle's mind after his release. Although there are complaints against "unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision," yet there seems to be no bewailing of a wide and deep-rooted deflection from the truth, such as we find in 2 Timothy, or even in those epistles which confessedly were written during his earlier imprisonment. We tend, then, to the view that the epistle was not written after a release from Rome, but most probably after a first visit of Paul to Corinth, or, at all events, after the writing of first Corinthians.

WE only really enjoy our blessings "in Christ" as we enter practically into "the fellowship of His sufferings."

The Rod That Budded

Notes of an Address on Num. 17

OUR Lord tells us that Moses wrote of Him, and after His resurrection, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto His disciples the things concerning Himself. We have then a divine warrant for expecting to find Christ presented to us in the books of Moses. It may be in dim shadows or types, but, like the other Scriptures, we may be sure that they testify of Christ.

In the New Testament, we find that our Lord took up some of the commonest incidents of life to illustrate the profoundest truths. A woman mending a garment, a marriage feast, a sower casting in the seed, or even the act of putting wine into bottles, and various other occurrences, were used by our Lord to convey instruction to His hearers as to some of the deep things of God, In the Old Testament also, the simplest illustrations abound. The chapter we read is about a lot of dry sticks, and in it God shows us how He would cause to cease the murmurings of the people of Israel from Him.

The account of the murmurers is brought before us in the previous chapter. Korah and his confederates had set up their own opinions about the things of God, and despised God's order of priesthood, for which the most solemn judgment had been executed upon them. We read that " the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods; they, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation." (16:32, 33.) Then, in the 41st verse, we find that all the congregation murmured, and God came out in such terrible judgment that fourteen thousand and seven hundred were at once destroyed, and the plague was stayed only by Aaron, the high priest, running in between the living and the dead with a censor of incense; which prefigured the infinite value of the offering of the Lord Jesus. This is followed by the 17th chapter, which shews, as I have said, the way in which God would make the murmuring to cease from Him.

Without entering further into the exposition of these chapters as they stand in connection with the people of Israel, my purpose is to show how simply and blessedly this rod that budded illustrates the grace of God; His mercy to men in guilt and ruin, and the place of wondrous blessing to which He has brought the believer in Christ risen and glorified. This rod only had life, fruitfulness, and glory connected with it.

Except the rod belonging to the priest, all were dead. When laid up before the Lord, brought into His presence, there was no sign of life; nothing but death was there. So God describes men as "dead in trespasses and in sins," and that we are "all by nature children of wrath even as others." We are then sinners practically, doing nothing but evil in God's sight, and having a bad nature. But the rod that so beautifully bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds, had been dead, was laid before the Lord as dead, which sets before us the wondrous mystery of the Lord's death. That blessed One who is now alive again, and that for evermore, was dead; He was numbered with the

transgressors, bare the sins of many, and poured out His soul unto death. It is the death of the holy Son of God—even the death of the cross—that is the foundation of all our hopes. In this way God has graciously met our case, and Christ has glorified God about our sins; the claims of God's infinitely holy throne have been met, His divine righteousness established, and the ungodly justified in the way of faith. The two things which we needed have been accomplished for us by the death of Jesus—God's judgment of our transgressions, and condemnation of "sin in the flesh," our bad nature. We were exposed to the condemnation of God for both—both were met for us by Christ. Through Him we have full deliverance; eternal redemption has been accomplished. Christ bare our sins in His own body on the tree; there He suffered for sins; and by His death and blood-shedding He purged our sins. Then, too, our "old man"—the evil nature, the thing that did the sins—was crucified with Christ. Thus, not only have our sins been judged, but our evil nature our old man—has been judged, condemned, and crucified with Christ. (See Rom. 6:6; Gal. 3:20.)

Thus we are taught not only that Christ suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God, but that He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Observe, then, that the infinitely holy Son of God was made sin for us, stood in our room as our substitute, and, in Him crucified, God judged every atom of our evil nature, as well as judged our sins, thus blotting out our transgressions, and delivering us in judgment from that evil nature that has so often made us cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Hence we are not only told, "Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more," but that "our old man is crucified with Christ." "Ye are dead, or have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." How blessed this is!

But there is far more here. The dead rod budded, and blossomed, and yielded almonds. So Christ rose from the dead, and ascended up into glory. Having so completely satisfied the Divine claims, He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and is now the source of life, fruit-bearing, and glory to all the redeemed. And surely the object of the death of Christ was to bring us to God, not only to free us from all condemnation, but to bring us into positive nearness and blessing before God. This is done by God giving us a place in Christ—life, standing, righteousness, and glory in Him. It is life then, a new-creation life and nature, a risen life, that God gives us who believe in Christ. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." A man, then, must be connected with the Son of God to have life. Have whatever he may, if he has not Christ, he has not life. Oh, my dear friends, what are you trusting in? Is it Christ crucified, risen, and glorified? Religion cannot give you life. Ordinances cannot give you life. You cannot obtain eternal life by your doings. Your feelings can never give you life. Oh, no. Christ alone is "the life," and the eternal life God gives is in His Son. We are therefore told that as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God;" not to those who received creeds, or doctrines merely, but to those who received Him. Oh, my friends, this is a vital point. I beseech you make no mistake, for "he that hath the Son of God hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Nothing can be plainer or more decisive. The rod that budded was the only one that life, fruitfulness, and glory were connected with.

But further, having received Christ, you have life. You are in the new creation; you are regarded no longer by God as standing in the flesh, but as complete in Christ. Though you feel the flesh, its lusts and affections in you, "you are not in the flesh." Though you may sin, you are no longer a miserable sinner, but a child of God, though it may be in some respects a naughty or disobedient child. Having life in Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost, you have power, and God looks for fruit.

You are united to Him who is raised from the dead that you should bring forth fruit unto God. Well, it is having to do with Christ in glory, drawing from Him, abiding in Him, that we bear fruit. Apart from Him we can do nothing. How absolutely necessary then it is for a child of God to be in living personal connection with the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to bear fruit to God. The power that works now in us is the same power which raised up Christ from the dead, so that the believer can most truly say, "I have strength for all things in Him that gives me power."

As to glory, Jesus will share with us the glory He has merited. "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." For this we wait. Being now in Christ, on the other side of death and judgment, accepted in Him, having life, righteousness, and nearness to God in Him, we wait for Him to descend from heaven to catch us up to meet Him in the air, and so to be forever with the Lord. Then it will be seen that we are all the fruit of His suffering and death, and that God has made Christ to be unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Lastly, observe that in the ninth verse all the rods were brought out unto all the children of Israel. This wondrous mystery of death and life was to be published, so that every man by taking his rod might be made to know his personal connection with life or death. Aaron's blooming rod of glory and beauty was to be laid up before the Lord for a token against the rebels, and to quite take away their murmurings before Him, who could afterwards say, He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel. (chap. 23:21.) The people then cried out, "We die, we perish, we all perish;" but do not you dear friends, be unbelieving, for God delights to save, and declares that He will save to the uttermost all that come unto Him by Christ. Come then, dear friend, come now to God through, Christ, and you will be safe from the coming wrath.

The moment a sinner believes,
And trusts in the crucified Lord,
Forgiveness at once he receives,
Salvation in full through His blood.

Have You Found Rest in the Lord Jesus?

AN EXTRACT

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. 11:28.

HEAR the gracious words of the Son of God—of the only One who could use such language without falsehood or presumption—of the One who can use it because "all things are committed to Him in heaven and in earth." The words are addressed to all who are conscious of the burden of sin, and who are laboring to get rid of it. If they are not addressed to all mankind, it is because some do not need the rest spoken of; through divine mercy they have already found it—they have got rest in the Lord Jesus—they have found peace in believing.

But there is another class not addressed in this passage, who are in a very different condition. They are in the enjoyment of a delusive rest—a false peace. They are rocked to lullaby in the arms of Satan; they are sleeping on the margin of the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. They are feasting themselves, like Job's family; in a house which is ready to fall upon them. They are eating and drinking and making merry, in a vessel which has sprung a leak, and is presently to sink. They are unconcerned for themselves, though angels are ready to weep over them. They feel no burden, and yet all the weight of their unpardoned sin rests upon them. The heavens appear bright above them; and yet the wrath of God, like a dark thunder-cloud hangs over them.

Those to whom the Lord's gracious invitation is addressed are conscious of their condition, and this consciousness makes them wretched. Like the pilgrim described by Bunyan, they carry a heavy burden, of which they are most anxious to be relieved. They are conscience-stricken. The sense of unpardoned sin is intolerable to them. It is true they have not as yet taken a right way to get rid of their burden; the course they are taking only aggravates their condition. It is bad enough to be heavy laden; but to labor beneath such a burden can only make matters worse. To do so can only increase the sense of it; and hence Satan often becomes the tormentor of those whom God has stricken. The voice of the Lord has awakened them from their perilous dream of safety. They no longer listen to the cry of "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." They have discovered that they are sinners and amenable to the righteous judgment of God. The enemy, finding it vain to attempt any longer to blind their eyes to their sin and danger, comes and offers his services to help them off with their burden. For this end he sets them upon keeping the law—that law by which the sinner is convicted—that law by which "no man living can be justified"—that law which stops the sinner's mouth when he would plead innocence or extenuate his offence—that law "by which is the knowledge of sin"—that law which "entered that the offence might abound"—that law which curses all "who continue not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Yet in spite of all that the word of God says, as to the hopelessness of the attempt, Satan succeeds in persuading untold numbers of convicted sinners to seek this mode of justification. To repeat the folly which ended in bitter disappointment in the case of Israel, of "going about to establish their own righteousness," instead of "submitting to the righteousness of God."

And though many, through divine mercy, escape from this second snare of Satan, yet it is to be feared that myriads perish in the fruitless attempt to do what God, in so many parts of His blessed word, has pronounced impossible.

Heavy-laden sinner,—the first step, then, towards the rest of conscience, which Jesus offers to thee, and which thou so much desirest to obtain—the rest of conscience which proceeds from the knowledge of pardoned sin—is to give over working for it.

If thou doubtst the truth of what I say, listen to a few of the many statements of the word of God on the matter: "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His."(Heb. 4:10.)

"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."—(Rom. 4:5, 6.)

"For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."—(Gal. 2:16.)

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith."—(Gal. 3:11.)

These Scriptures, then, make it plain that thy labor—thy zealous but fruitless attempts to keep the law, are the very things which, instead of aiding thee in the attainment of the object of thy desires, hinder the success of thy efforts to obtain that righteousness of which "the effect is quietness and assurance for ever."

It is said of a person unable to swim, and who has accidentally fallen into deep water, that if he would be quiet, the water would probably bear him up until succor came: that it is his struggles, in short, which render his case desperate. Even so it is with thy vain efforts to be thine own Savior; they prevent thee from availing thyself of the kind and powerful aid of that great Deliverer who came from heaven to earth to rescue thee from sin and death. Jesus says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest;" and in another place, "Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out." But thou hast hitherto obeyed the promptings of "thy evil heart of unbelief," aided by the power of Satan, and refused to obey His call. Thy "dead works" are the witnesses of thy unbelief and disobedience. If thou couldst thus obtain a well-grounded peace, Christ would have died in vain. And thus thy effort is not only a hopeless one, but grossly dishonoring to the blessed God who "sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him," as well as to that gracious Savior "who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

Jesus says, "I will give you rest;" but thy works are the witnesses of the pride of thy heart, which would rather receive wages than a gift. They are an attempt to earn that which is offered to thee for nothing—to buy that which as "a Prince" Jesus has power and as "a Savior" has grace to bestow; having, as "the Holy and the Just One," earned the power to do so by the sacrifice of His own life.

Thy vain effort to "attain to the law of righteousness" "by the works of the law," is a proof of thy utter ignorance both of the holiness of God and of the evil of thine own heart. If it were not so, thou wouldst not think of purchasing that peace, which is the work of righteousness, by bringing to God the worthless produce of such a barren, yea, such an accursed soil. If thou hadst had right thoughts of God and of thy own nature, thou wouldst not have taken "the way of Cain," and offered

to the Searcher of hearts the fruit of that on which the sentence of death has passed. If thou continuest this course, with thy back on the cross, and thine eyes turned in upon thyself, as thy work so will thy disappointment be, like that of him of whom it is recorded, that "he was very wrath, and his countenance fell," when God had not respect unto his offering.

Thou wilt never thus render thyself acceptable to God; thou wilt never thus obtain the "rest" which Jesus offers to the heavy-laden sinner. And if thou dost not get rest in Jesus now, how canst thou hope for the rest that remaineth for the people of God?

Take, then, poor needy one, that rest which it rejoices the heart of the Savior to bestow. It is well for thee that that which He has purchased for thee with His own precious blood, He gives thee "without money and without price." Whatever thou mayest have heretofore supposed, thou hast, as we have just seen, "no money" that will not be found utterly base and worthless when tried in the fire of God's holiness, however it may pass current with short-sighted and sinful man.

Bankrupt as thou art by nature, yet "open thy mouth wide and God will fill it." He will enrich thee with "durable riches" out of His own treasury. "Beggar" as thou art, away from Christ, yet coming to Him thou shalt be "taken from the dunghill, thou shalt be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of glory."

Leave off thy fruitless and sinful labor, and come to Jesus, and thou shalt find that thy heavy load has fallen from off thy back; nay, that though thou wast in thy blindness and unbelief thought it thine, it was borne by Him when on the cross, and left in His grave when "He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father."

Eternal Life

(As taught in John 1.-6)

No doctrine is divinely learnt that is not learnt in its connection with our blessed Lord and His love and glory. No knowledge of truth that is held by the believer is sanctifying, unless it is the means of exalting, and glorifying, and endearing the Savior to the heart. Every truth in Scripture is revealed in its connection with the one and blessed center of all God's purposes—the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit in the prophets is the Spirit of Christ, as Peter teaches us; and Jesus appeals to God's written word as His great witness, saying to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." These truths press themselves upon one in searching the early chapters of John's gospel as to the blessed truth of eternal life. The gospel opens' by showing the believer the One in whom this life is. The reader is at once in the presence of his divine Savior. There, before the world was, is the Word of God, the divine and eternal One, who as God made all things, and was before all things which He made. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." No cold doctrine of a believer's security, but a living and divine person, who is the source of the life which afterwards He gives us as man. And here we learn, that when He made man He made him a being capable of relationship with this life; so that the life is the light of men, a life suited to man according to eternal counsels.

In the third chapter we have passed from eternity to time, and from the glories of the Word of God, Creator of all things, to the Son of man on earth, who has come down from the glory to die a Substitute for men. "The Son of man," says the blessed Lord to Nicodemus, "must be lifted up." He has come down to open heaven for men, and for sinners; and having told Nicodemus what must be, as regards fallen man, if any see God's kingdom—they must be born anew—He now speaks of what must be if He is to give His life to the sinner—He must take man's death, and all its consequences, upon Him to give men eternal life. For' though by creation this life was the light of men, sin had brought man under the penalty of death eternal, and he must perish unless the Son of man should become the Substitute by being lifted up in the sinner's stead. Oh how willingly did He, who alone could stand in such a breach as this, give Himself up to meet all God's holy and righteous claims as to sin, that whosoever "believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. But Jesus leads us to the love of God, and presents Himself as the gift of God's love, that we might know the blessed truth, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We are in the presence of the Savior in this third chapter; and in His gift of eternal life to us who believe are secured the abiding favor of God, and the deliverance from all penalty. "He that believeth on Him is not judged" (as the word should be), and the wrath of God does not abide on him. He is, in the favor of God, accepted in Christ, and possesses the life to which no judgment is attached.

In John 4 the teaching goes further. There we read of the gift of the Holy Spirit—Jesus' gift to poor thirsty souls—a well of living and thirst-quenching water, which is in the believer springing up unto eternal life. Here we are entering into the joys of our reconciliation; we are empowered of God to

delight in Him, and to rise to the fount whence our blessings flow down; our communion is in eternal life, and we can thus worship the Father, with whom was that eternal life which has been manifested to us, so that our joy should be full; and thus, as our Lord says, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

In the fifth chapter we have another aspect of this glorious truth. We are here in the presence of the Son of God, who works in grace beyond the narrow limits of ordinances. He gives life to dead souls, to those who, besides lying under the sentence of death, as in the third chapter, ready to perish, and the wrath of God abiding on them, are even now spiritually dead and alienated from the life of God. Here the glory of God's dear Son shines out in carrying out His Father's grace, who had wrought in all the Old Testament saints, from Abel downwards. He, the Father's Son, gives life, and quickens the dead. Thus are we now possessors of a life that has called us out from among our fellows, who are under death and judgment. In hearing Jesus' word, and believing on Him that sent Him, we have everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but have passed from the region of death unto life. Here we stand on resurrection ground, and only wait to hear His voice, which shall quicken or change our mortal bodies, to introduce us into the full fruition of life in the resurrection of life.

Let us turn now to the sixth chapter, and we shall see Jesus, the humbled Son of man, whose body was broken, and whose blood was shed, that we might have through Him the daily and hourly food of our newborn souls until that day when, as He says, there "I will raise him up at the last day." What more can our souls need? what more could He say to endear Himself to our souls? In eternity we see Him God over all, blessed forever, the possessor of life, which is our light. In our sins, under God's wrath, ready to perish, we see Him become a man lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, to give us life and salvation, and further separating us to His own divine joys, making us capable by the Spirit of rising to the sphere of that eternal life in the Father's presence, and putting us in the place of life, leaving forever behind death and judgment; and then, till our bodies share this fullness of life, victorious over sin and death, He becomes our meat and our drink, and we dwell in Him and He in us, who has not only died for us, but who has ascended for us as man, where He was before as God, that He may raise us up to be with Him at the last day, even at His ever-nearing advent. Oh, by His free and changeless love to yield ourselves to Him, that we who live should no more live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and arose again

On Prayer

No. 3

IT is very interesting to notice the prominence given to prayer by the Holy Ghost in the Epistles. The immense importance of prayer, its simple, definite, and direct character, and the blessed results to be expected, are alike strikingly set forth.

In the first chapter of Romans, Paul not only speaks of mentioning them always in his prayers, but that he definitely made this request, that he might by the will of God, be made a blessing and a comfort to them, and be comforted also by their faith (v. 10-12.) In the fifteenth chapter, he beseeches them for the Lord Jesus' sake to pray also that he might come unto them by the will of God, and may with them be refreshed; and he also desires that they may be so earnest, as to

strive together with him in prayer for two other things, which are most distinctly and definitely named, viz., that he might be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that his service which he had for Jerusalem might be accepted by the saints (v. 30-32.)

In the first epistle to the Corinthians, we have little said as to prayer, further than it should be in the spirit and intelligent—"I will pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also;" the main object of the epistle being to correct the disorders of the assembly, and to give fresh instructions on the subject. It is true that saints giving themselves to prayer and fasting is enjoined to guard from the temptation of Satan—a most important principle.

In the second epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle again shews how much he valued the help of saints in prayer. "Ye also helping together by prayer for us." (ch. 1:11.) He prayed for them, "that they might do no evil." (13:7.)

In Galatians, we have nothing about prayer, the object of the Holy Ghost being to rebuke in the sternest way the attempts to undermine the gospel of the grace of God by adding something to it, thus giving the flesh importance, instead of holding to its entire judgment unto death in the cross of Christ—the crucifixion of the old man. It was not the place, therefore, to expect the subject of prayer to be introduced. Very different indeed is the epistle to the Ephesians, for he is there contemplating God in His grace, eternal counsels, and ways towards us, when dead in sins, in and through Christ Jesus. The sense of this upon his heart necessarily bowed him before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer and thanksgiving for them. His prayer in the first chapter is that they might have the knowledge of God's grace and power toward them in Christ risen and ascended, as well as the hope of His calling.

In the third chapter, the contemplation of the unsearchable riches of Christ brought out in the mystery now made known, of the body the Church, so bowed him again before the Father, that he prays that, not according to His rich mercy, but according to the riches of His glory, they may be so strengthened by the Spirit as to so enjoy Christ that He may dwell in their hearts by faith, &c. At the close of the epistle when he thinks how Satan opposes the saints, and tries to hinder their standing in the new place God has brought them into in heavenly places in Christ, the apostle most earnestly urges the saints to habitual and continual dealing with God in prayer, and that not for themselves only but for every member of the body, and for the gospel too. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, &c. (ch. 6:18, 19.)

In Philippians where the prominent subject' is devotedness, we might expect something, about prayer, and so there is. In chapter 1:4, Paul assures their hearts that he makes request for them with joy always and in every prayer; and in the 19th verse he counts also upon their prayers. He told them that he prayed de finitely for two things; 1st, "That their love may abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;" 2nd, "That they may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (v. 9-11.) In the fourth chapter, the saints are enjoined to pray about everything, as one of the necessary ways of enjoying the peace of God. So free is the child of God to feel in the presence of his heavenly Father, that he is to keep back nothing, but make known his requests to God. God does not say He will answer every request, but it is clearly His will that we should tell

them out before God. "In everything (great matters, or very small, as we call them) by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (ch. 4:6, 7.)

The Doctrine of Christianity

THE doctrine of Christianity is, that Christ gave Himself, offered Himself, was willing to suffer to make good His Father's righteousness and glory, and to redeem guilty and fallen men.... Sin dishonored God in the sight of the whole universe. His holiness, His truth, His justice, His majesty, all were compromised; and the simple exercise of love to the guilty would have been acquiescence in the evil, frightful disorder in the universe. Christ willingly gives Himself that God may be perfectly glorified. On the cross all that God is is perfectly and infinitely glorified, and so is Christ in the highest way. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." God's majesty is vindicated. What could have so done it? His just judgment against sin is shown—His perfect love to the guilty is displayed in a higher manner than could be otherwise conceived—his truth, which pronounced death against sin, established in the highest way.

In the garden Satan had persuaded man that God was not good, had kept back this wisdom-bearing fruit lest man should be like Himself: he had persuaded man that He was not truth, that man would not die, God would not execute judgment.

Had God executed it simply against man, there was no love; had He not, there was no truth nor righteousness. But Christ gives Himself up an offering for sin. God does execute judgment in a way, amazingly conspicuous in its moral character, so that angels desire to look into it. His truth is displayed, His majesty vindicated, His perfect love exercised, and that in a way far surpassing all moral thought of ours. If we say, But He gave another to the suffering; no doubt it is love to me; but how love and justice to Him given? I answer, He (Christ) gave Himself in the same love, and it is His highest glory, that in which a motive-bond of love has its source even between Him and the Father. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." Here, too, death, and the power of death, and he who had it, were overcome, to the divine glory, and our perfect comfort; so that death has wholly lost its sting.—An Extract.

"Condemned Already," or "Not Condemned."

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."—JOHN 3:18.

PLAINNESS and decision characterized the Savior's ministry. Perfect simplicity, and unmistakable clearness marked His discourses, while they were most profound in the depth of wisdom and truth which they set forth. Though His language was often so personal, pointed, and brought home to the souls of those whom He addressed, yet no one could excuse himself on the ground of its not being intelligible. He was indeed the Faithful Witness, faithful to God and faithful to men. He had just before said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again;" and when this man of the Pharisees enquired "How can these things be?" in reply, the Lord presented to him the divinely-written narrative of the serpent of brass which Moses lifted up, as the immediate cause of life to bitten, dying Israelites, and applied it as typical of His own work on the cross, by adding, "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And to skew that God Himself is the source of all this He added, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Nothing can be clearer than that God looks at each person now as either "condemned already," or as "not condemned." It is therefore of vital importance that the reader should enquire, as in God's presence, to which of these two classes he at this moment belongs.

Let it be remembered, that God's dealing with men now is not on the principle of probation. Man has been put to the test, both "without law" and "under law," and has proved himself to be utterly and incurably bad. "Without law," man became a god-maker, and creature-worshipper—"he worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator;" and "under law," he became an idolater; and at last the murderer of the Holy Son of God, whom he hated, without a cause. God has therefore now concluded all under sin, under both its guilt and power, condemned already, only awaiting the executioner to carry out the awful sentence. The last thing that could be done for man was God's sending His own Son. But they said, "This is the heir, come let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance. And they caught Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him." The next thing, therefore, must be a certain, fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversaries. No marvel then that it is written, "He that believeth not is condemned already."

Meanwhile, however, before the coming wrath, God is longsuffering, preaching peace and bringing salvation to the vilest of sinners, because the claims of His infinitely holy and righteous throne have been met by the atoning work of Jesus. That sacrifice was so satisfying to God, and so infinitely meritorious in His sight, that He can righteously and justly save to the uttermost all who come unto Him by Christ. God is therefore now publishing this full deliverance from all

condemnation and coming wrath, to every one who believes. The present is therefore a moment of eternal importance, a time of securing eternal life, or of madly rushing on to eternal destruction. It is then a simple question with souls of having received Christ as their Savior whom God has sent, or not. God now speaks to men lovingly, faithfully, beseechingly, about being reconciled to Him by the death of His Son. We now know God as in and through Christ. Hence it is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. And so sufficient is the sacrifice of Jesus to meet all the requirements of divine justice and holiness, and to meet also the need of the sinner, that God can now say, through His servants, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (the Lord Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38, 39.) The believer then is at this time so completely delivered from condemnation and coming wrath as to be "justified from all things." Precious consolation; all of God, and all through Christ. Believers are justified persons. The whole question of sin, and its connection with judgment and wrath having been so met for them by Christ in the death of the cross, that "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." How can there be, if God has already judged everything that could be judged both as to our nature and ways, in the person of His beloved Son? God therefore speaks of us as "justified from all things," and being now justified by the blood of Christ. (Rom. 5:9.)

If then men neglect this great salvation, come not to the Lord Jesus for salvation, receive Him not as theme Savior whom God hath sent; if persons are hesitating to believe on Him for salvation, no marvel that it is said, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." How could it be otherwise?

Dear reader, have you believed to the saving of your soul? Why not? Do you not see from this Scripture that your only way of escape from coming' wrath is to believe on Him whom God hath sent? Take refuge then at once in the open arms of this sinner-loving Savior! Trust only in Him! Rest in God's word about Christ; Build on no other foundation than this Rock of Ages! Oh! flee to Him, for there is salvation in no other! Do, dear reader, hearken to Him who said "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O yes! only trust Him! Come now, come as you are, in all your rags of sin and filth, not waiting another moment, not thinking of doing anything, or altering, or improving, or reforming first; oh no, but just as you are, come to that blessed Jesus who died for sinners, who is now in heaven at God's right hand, and He will give you rest—present and eternal rest.

Look then, dear reader, to Him, and believe on Him, whose loving heart still delights to save the lost, and who still says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

"Welcome, all by sin oppress'd,
Welcome to the Savior's breast;
Nothing brought Him from above,
Nothing but redeeming love."

Man

"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. 8:7-8.

LIE incorrigibility of man under all persuasions becomes the ground of the necessity, and the vindication of the righteousness of God's judgment.

Isaiah says, "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more." And Jeremiah had to say of the generation in his day, "Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved;" and again, "I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" Are we then to wonder that the sword of the Chaldean entered the land?

The generation in the day of Christ was tested in every way. John mourned; the Son of man piped; but, there was neither lamentation nor dancing. In His own person, the Lord assayed Israel in every way, according to their own prophets. He came as the Bethlehemite, according to Micah, but they sought His life. (Matt. 2) He came as the light from the land of Zebulun and Nephthalim, according to Isaiah, but He was challenged instead of followed. (Matt. 4) He came as the King meek and lowly, according to Zechariah, but they "received Him not." (Matt. 21)

Then in the three parables which the Lord delivers at the close of these testings of Israel (see Matt. 21, 22), I mean those of the two sons, the husbandman of the vineyard, and the marriage of the king's son, He convicts His people under the law, under the ministry of John, and under grace.

Are we not, therefore, prepared to see the Master rise up to shut to the door? The need of sovereign grace, as well as the vindication of judgment, is made to appear. "Except the Lord of Sabbath had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom." Man is past moral correction. He is incorrigible and incurable. It has been said of him, "Man is prone to evil, and this arises from the impotency of his will, which, when it turns to evil, is rather passive than active. Through the grace of Christ alone is it free." Very just. Not only has man fallen from God and become a sinner, but he is the bondman of sin. Having been overcome of Satan, he has been brought into bondage to Him. (2 Peter 2) He is "sold under sin." (Rom. 7)

And this state of incurableness and incorrigibility has had a constant illustration in the book of God from the beginning to the end. Man has shown himself to be in full bondage to sin, so that he will go in the way of it, in defiance of every argument, and every influence which may be used with him.

It is solemn to look at this; but it has its profit for us to do so. We can be at no difficulty to trace a line of these illustrations all through scripture.

Cain went on with the desperate purposes of his heart, though the Lord came and personally pleaded with him to turn from his purpose. (Gen. 4)

Nimrod made Babel the center of his empire, though God's judgment had just before so awfully signalized that place. (Gen. 10)

Pharaoh repented not to yield himself under God's hand, though that hand had given witness after witness of its supremacy, and that it was vain to kick against the pricks. (Ex. 1-14)

Amalek fought with Israel, though the glory in the pillar, and the water from the rock were before him the witnesses of God's wondrous majesty and power. (Ex. 17)

Israel murmured and rebelled again and again in the midst of divine marvels and mercies, which spoke to them of love and almightiness. (Numbers.)

Nebuchadnezzar exalted himself after so many witnesses of God's power, and so many gracious, softened movements of his own heart. (Dan. 4:30.)

Judas betrayed the Lord after years of converse with Him. (Matt. 26)

The High Priest invented a lie in the face of a rent wall; the Roman soldiers consented to that lie in the face of a rent tomb. (Matt. 28)

The Jews stoned Stephen, though his face was shining, under their eye, like the face of an angel. (Acts 7)

There are among the samples or instances of the fact that man by nature is under bondage to sin, and that no moral influence is powerful enough to work his deliverance. The creature that has proved itself able to withstand such arguments and persuasions as these cases exhibit, has proved itself to be beyond the reach of all moral influence. Hell itself could not cure him or deter him....

The Apocalypse closing the book of God, closes also this testimony against man. There in the face of the most awful judgments, executed again and again, man refuses to repent, going the rather to ripen his iniquity, like Pharaoh of old, upon whom plague after plague spent themselves in vain. And thus we may say, this book of the Apocalypse (which is eminently a book of divine judgments, judgments not on Israel only, but on the whole world) is the vindication or justification, as well as the history, of judgment. We read there of judgments, but we learn at the same time the necessity and demand for judgment; for the incorrigibility of man, the desperate hardness of his heart, is fully exposed again. It is Pharaoh refusing to repent, Amalek defying and insulting the glory, or man, as well as Israel, saying, "Where is the God of judgment?" Man is found to be the same from first to last. The Ethiopian has not changed his skin, nor the leopard his spots.

Are we then, I still ask, to wonder that the Lord's hand is still stretched out? that seals, trumpets, and vials have still to usher forth the judgments of God, and that the sword of Him who sits upon the white horse has still to do its work of death?

Judgment is God's strange work, but it is His needed work likewise. "Is there not a cause?" we may surely say, when we have looked at these cases, and read the history of the trial of man's heart from the beginning to the end of it. And I am sure it is well for the soul to hold this fast—this truth about man and his incorrigibility in remembrance; for, as I have been observing, it so justifies the thought of divine judgment, and so tells us of the necessity of sovereign grace, and the

interference of divine power.

Judgments are to introduce the kingdom. The earth is to be conducted into a scene of glory, by the taking out of it all that offends and does iniquity. For as grace has been despised, and the Lord who made the world been disowned and cast out of the world, judgment must clear it ere it can be the scene of His glory and joy. But "the Lord is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." J. G. B.

On Prayer

No. 4

In the epistle to the Colossian saints, the apostle assures them that he was praying always for them (chap. 1:3), and details some of the points he brought before God on their behalf. As usual, they are most definite, pointed, and brief. (1.) For knowledge of God's will being wisely and spiritually entered into, in order (2) 'to walk worthy of the Lord; (3) to be strengthened with all might according to the power of the glory; (4) that they might be giving thanks to the Father for having made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. (Chap. 1:9-12.) He exhorts them also to continue in prayer, to watch in the same with thanksgiving, and to pray also for him and others, particularly as regards the ministry of the word. Moreover, before concluding this short epistle, he refers to one who labored fervently in prayer for them. "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." (Chap. 4:12.)

In the 'Thessalonian epistles, the apostle says that he made mention of them in his prayers, and that he continually and definitely asked, first, that God would count them worthy of this calling, and secondly, that He would fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified, &c. (1 Thess. 1:3. and 2 Thess. 1:11.) He enjoins them also so to cultivate the habit of prayer, as to "pray without ceasing," and in both epistles asks their prayers for himself and fellow-servants, especially that "the word of the Lord might have free course, and be glorified."

In Paul's first epistle to Timothy, so important is the subject of prayer to his own soul, that he exhorts, first of all, that prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all in authority, &c., because it is good and acceptable in the sight of God and our Savior. He adds, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." (Chap. 2:1-8.) He mentions also as one mark of a "widow indeed," that she "continueth in supplications and prayers night and day." He declares that food is "sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

In the second epistle to Timothy, we find Paul assuring him that he remembered him in his prayers without ceasing night and day. Let us think of this —continually mentioning in prayer by name persons night and day. He prays also most definitely for the house of Onesiphorus, and that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.

In Titus there is no direct reference to prayer, though it is a most practical epistle; not only does it correct various disorders then manifest, but most urgently enjoins godliness.

In the brief letter to Philemon, prayer is twice brought before us,—1st, in the apostle's assurance to Philemon that he always made mention of him in prayer, and 2nd, that he counted that through his prayers he would be sent to tarry with him (v. 4, 22).

In Hebrews we have the strong crying, supplications, and tears of our Lord, referred to in the fifth chapter; and in the last chapter the apostle so values prayer, that he hopes he may, through their prayers, be restored the sooner (v. 8). This Scripture skews how graciously God owns the prayers of those whom He has put into the place of intercession for, others, both by relationship and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

James, in his last chapter, gives us quite a treatise on prayer. He insists on the prevalent power of the prayer of one fervent soul, and names Elijah as an example, who was a man of like passions with ourselves. He enjoins us to pray for one another touching our faults; that the afflicted should give themselves to prayer; that in bodily sickness the elders should be sent for to pray over such, because the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and even if he have committed sins' they shall be forgiven him. The statements in the 4th chapter, "Ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts," are very striking and solemn.

In Peter's first epistle, saints are enjoined to "watch unto prayer." They are reminded that God's "ears are open to their prayers," and husbands and wives are exhorted to so dwell together "as heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered." In the second epistle, the exhortations are more to pursue practical godliness in general with "all diligence."

John's epistles rather suppose those he addresses to be, praying people than give much instruction on the subject. In chap. v. of 1st epistle, speaking of "a sin unto death" (as, for instance in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, when discipline unto death should take its course), he says, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say he shall pray for it."

In the 3rd epistle he says; "I will (or I pray) that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

Jude introduces the subject of prayer most pointedly. Looking as he does at the failure and ruin of the church, and its going on to apostasy and judgment, he contemplates some faithful ones standing outside, and characterized not only as being praying people, but as "praying in the Holy Ghost."

In the Revelation we read of the prayers of saints in the 5th chapter, and of incense offered with the prayers of saints in the 8th chapter. The book concludes with the Spirit and the bride crying, Come, Lord Jesus.

This brief glance at the apostolic writings furnishes us with abundant evidence of the high and important place that prayer and supplication held in former times. No doubt that intellectualism prefers theological research; but a heart taught of God not only feels its own need and poverty, but instinctively cries to God for itself, as well as cheerfully makes intercession for others. When this is lacking there must be serious soul-defect. We are all, no doubt, too much in the company of others, and too little alone with God. It is easy for most Christians to talk in the social circle; but often with what result? When we are really enjoying the Lord's presence, loving His truth, taken up

therefore with His counsels, joys, and interests, we are not only drawn out in worship, but have a full tide of prayer for others; for the same blessed Spirit who takes of the things of Christ and shows unto us, also gives us access by Christ unto the Father, and teaches us how to pray and what to pray for. Let the Christian reader ponder these things, and be assured that if secret prayer for himself and others be not the daily habit of his life, it is time to search and consider before the Lord why it is not.

“There is an eye that never sleeps

Beneath the wing of night;

There is an ear that never shuts,

When sink the beams of light.

“There is an arm that never tires,

When human strength gives way;

There is a love that never fails,

When earthly loves decay.

“That eye is fix'd on seraph throngs,

That arm upholds the sky;

That ear is fill'd with heavenly songs,

That love is throned on high.

“But there 's a POWER which faith can wield,

When mortal aid is vain;

That eye, that arm, that love to reach,

That listening ear to gain.

“That power is prayer, which soars on high,

Through Jesus, to the throne,

And moves the hand, which moves the world,

To bring deliverance down.”

Grace and Truth

WE are told that "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) Both were perfectly blended in Him. It was not simply truth, though He was "the truth," but "grace and truth;" not merely grace, though the people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth," but "grace and truth." He was the perfect expression of both. John says, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." To hold and manifest both grace and truth in their perfect harmony should be the Christian's aim. Men in the flesh may sometimes plead for grace, or acting charitably, as they call it; or, at other times, most tenaciously stand for the sternest righteousness, and the authority of the letter of scripture; but standing for both grace and truth, as perfectly manifested by Christ Himself, marks His true follower.

The constant tendency of us all is to get off the divine balance, and to be stern when we ought to be gracious, and gracious when, perhaps, gentle reproof would be the Lord's mind. An unwatchful soul, who is not drawing constantly from Christ, will fail in one or other of these ways. What can be more contrary to the Lord's mind than to find one earnestly contending for truth, when his own ways are not commonly honest to his fellowmen; on the other hand, to hear another contending for, love at the most manifest compromise of the revealed will of God, how shocking! And yet both these types abound in the Christianity around about us. Hence the need of constant intercourse and communion with the Lord, occupation with His thoughts, being in the full current of His mind; for "severed from Him we can do nothing." We may be assured that neither the severity of some, nor the modern charity of others have any alliance to the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. He was most decided and firm as to the truth, but prayed for His haters and murderers when on the cross. His patient and unabated love to His own when in the world was most touching, yet it was never maintained at the expense of truth. So it should be with us, for brotherly love might be little more than the mere workings of nature, if it were sustained by the compromise of divine truth. There is great need in the present day of laying this matter solemnly to heart. The root of the apostasy is traced by Jude to men creeping in unawares—ungodly men, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness; that is, they contended for holding the doctrines of grace, and being loose, doing their own will—holding grace at the sacrifice of truth. Again we are told that the "strong delusion" is coming upon men, as sent judicially by God, not because they had no Bible knowledge, but because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. Observe, that the people who contended for the grace of God with liberty to self-willedness, are called "ungodly men;" and at the end, those upon whom God will judicially send strong delusion, that they all might be damned, are designated as not loving the truth. The two elements of Christianity are, knowing Christ as Savior, and owning Him as Lord. Mere profession accepts nominally the former, and practically refuses the latter. When Saul of Tarsus knew it was Jesus of Nazareth who appeared to him, he at once exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

To insist on persons working in Christ's service before they know Him as Savior, is legalism, which genders bondage and despondency, or puffs up with pride. To contend for the doctrines of grace apart from practical obedience to the Lord's will is, as we have seen, ungodliness. One of the

greatest dangers in the present day is the attempt to connect the most blessed doctrines of grace—the heavenly calling, union with Christ, &c., with a low walk. The Lord alone is able to keep us from falling.

May all who know the Lord Jesus be occupied more and more with Him, so that He may be glorified by us and in us!

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