



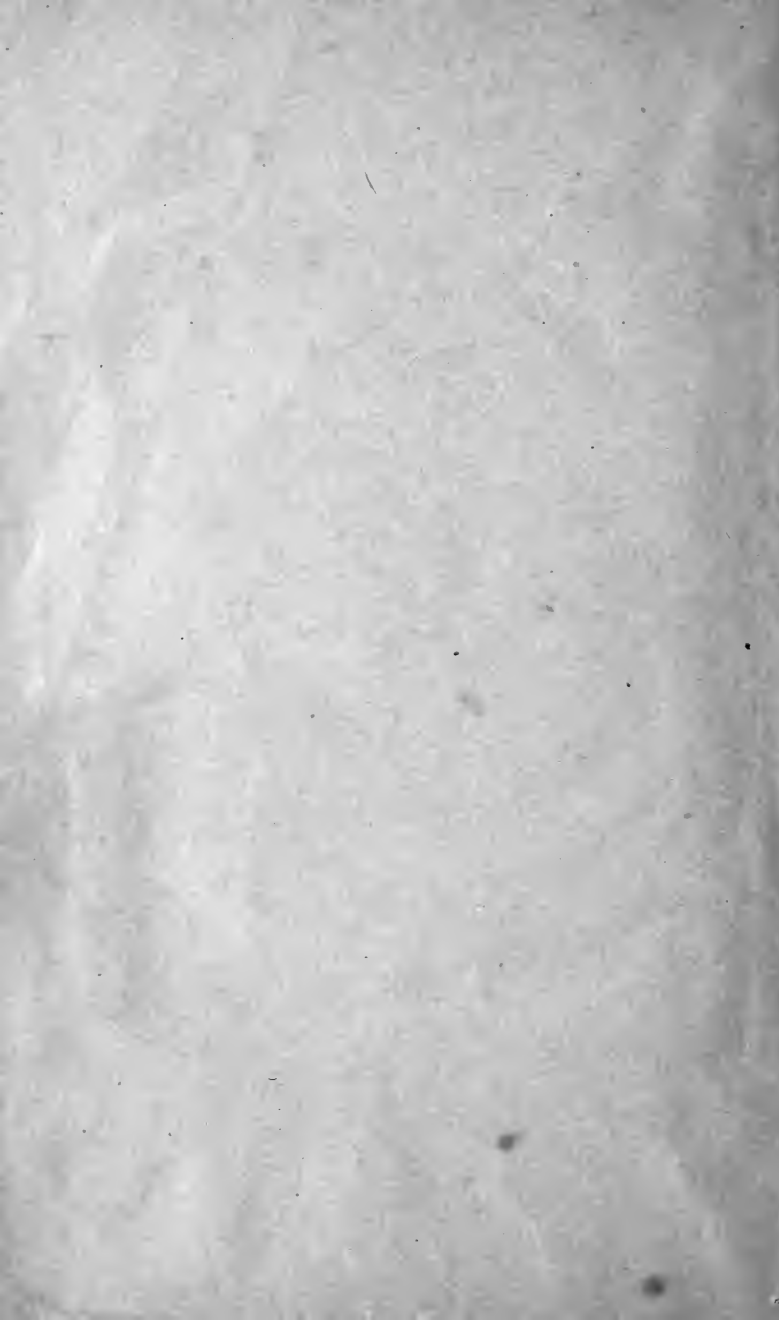
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Fraternally yours  
James W. Hill



THE  
NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE  
(M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH)

PULPIT.

BY THE REV. JAMES W. HILL.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE REV. J. W. P. MCKENZIE, D.D.,  
Late President of McKenzie College.

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*“We also believe, and therefore speak.”*

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NASHVILLE, TENN.:  
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1880.

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*TO THE MEMORY*

*Of My Sainted Mother,*

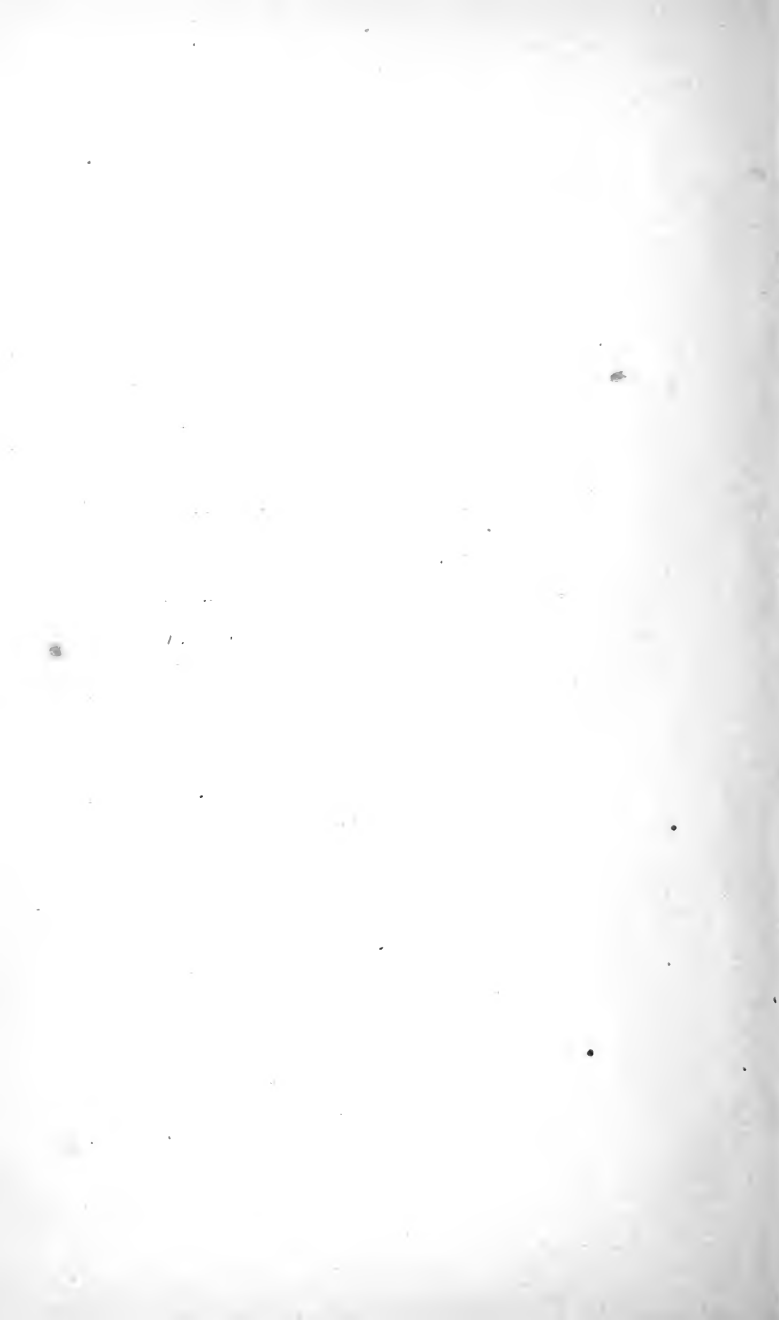
*MRS. S. L. HILL,*

*Whose Pious Walk and Godly Conversation*

*LED ME TO THE CROSS OF CHRIST,*

*This Volume is Tenderly Dedicated.*

*THE AUTHOR.*



## P R E F A C E .

---

"THE philosophy of preface," says Bishop Marvin, "is very simple;" but I am somewhat at a loss to know how to proceed with mine, I must confess. Were the contents my own production, I could fill a respectable space in the Preface with "apologies" and entreaties, and blushing hope that I should be pardoned for ever writing a single line of it. But I hardly presume the contributors to this book would appreciate that kind of an introduction, nor do I think it at all necessary. The *size* of the book may need an apology, and the best thing I can offer in that line is, that it is the best I can do under the circumstances.

While our preachers are willing, at all times, to cheerfully acquiesce in whatever is, or seems to be, for the glory of God, they are very reluctant to appear in any way that would even *seem* ostentatious. Most of them have spent their lives in Texas, and having been hard pressed with their pastoral duties, have had but meager opportunities for cultivating the art of writing. Their written sermons, therefore, do not represent their real preaching ability. But I wish the reader to bear in mind, however, that I am offering no apology for sermons contained in this book, for I honestly believe that they will compare favorably with the same number published in the interest of any other Conference, or under the auspices of any other Church. Of course, I do not claim for these brethren the eloquence of Bascom, or the "joint-work theological compactness" of Wesley, but I do claim that for native gen-

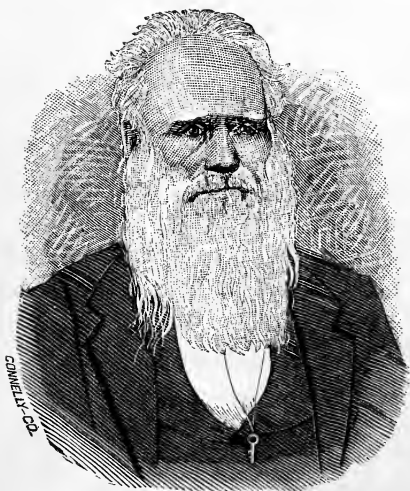
ius and common sense their superiors need boast of but little superiority. The majority of the contributors, as stated above, are Texas preachers, and that in the fullest sense of the term, though some of them have transferred from other Conferences to us. *These as well as those* are earnest and faithful heralds of the gospel for the gospel's sake. Texas is no place for worn-out, broken-down men—we do not want them!

I regret that Dr. McKenzie could not favor me with a sermon, but he kindly consented to write the Introduction, declaring, at the same time, that his writing-days were numbered. Faithful old soldier! his race is nearly run. May his sun go down without a cloud! There are others—veterans—whose contributions would have been highly appreciated, but they modestly declined—"in honor preferring one another."

As to the motives which prompt an author, or book-maker, every man will have his own opinion, but I humbly trust that the glory of God has been my chief aim in this enterprise; next to that, I confess a desire to advertise Texas Methodism, and honor the memory of my sainted mother, to whom I dedicate this book. And now, "with malice toward none, and charity for all," I send forth this humble volume, praying that it may accomplish that whereunto it is sent.

THE AUTHOR.

Avinger, Texas, June 15, 1880.



yours truly  
J. W. P. McKerny





## INTRODUCTION.

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THE North-east or Red River and Sulphur country was settled by a hardy and independent frontier people. The genius of Methodism met such people in their religious necessities. The circuit-preacher (who by the way is the most important factor in our executive economy) planted the germ in families all through this western world—preaching in private houses, in groves, and under brush-arbors—everywhere. He received whole families into the Church—some by letter, and some by profession, and others on the old probationary plan.

Before any missionary was appointed to Texas, the ministers of the M. E. Church were abreast of the emigration, and in the larger neighborhoods societies were organized, and everywhere the sound of the gospel went out. No bargains were made. Privilege was only sought, and every opportunity was seized upon to enter every open door. "Beyond" was the watch-word.

5 In 1839 the Rev. John H. Carr was sent to the Sulphur and Red River country, but, being inexperienced, he became discouraged and left. The Rev. C. B. Dennis followed, but being a man of delicate constitution, he was also compelled to leave. From these brethren the writer, who then occupied the Choctaw Mission north of Red River, secured valuable information; and crossing the river—sometimes in a ferry-boat, sometimes swimming his horse beside a canoe—he preached to a willing people, in what was then known as Miller county, Arkansas. After the line was drawn between the Republic

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SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

DAVIS 22 TEXAS

of Texas and the United States, the societies were found to be, some in Bowie and some in Red River county, Texas. The laws protected us then, as now, and He who opened the door gave us grace to enter and succeed.

The writer was appointed to a field of labor south of Red River, and his first circuit contained thirty-two appointments. This circuit was made in four weeks; but soon the cry, "Come over and help us!" became so urgent that, ere we were aware, we had a six-weeks' circuit. The labor was arduous, but there was no *safe* way to say no. God was in the field, and "Lo, I am with you alway" rested the weary limbs and invigorated the drooping spirits of his faithful servants. In those days men came to Texas to work, not to hide away from a scene of failure, or to seek a soft place. There were dangers here to brave, and privations to endure, which called for moral bone and muscle. The receipts on our first circuit in Texas amounted to fifty-six dollars and seventy-five cents! and a wife and four children were to be supported. But the wife was not a mere "boarder," but a helpmeet—a producer—and by a rigid economy and constant industry managed somehow to live. The holy men who have labored, suffered, and some died, in this field, are in God's book. The lovely Lewis, the warm-hearted Baker, the faithful Tullis, and Fields Graham—some in heaven, some on earth—we shall meet again.

It is not my province or purpose to write a history, or even an historical epitome, of Texas Methodism; if so, I should begin back in 1837, when Martin Ruter, Littleton Fowler, and Robert Alexander, came as missionaries to this State—then a Republic. But I deal more especially with the North Texas Conference and its territory. This Conference was organized October 9, 1867, by Bishop McTyeire. At that time

there were forty traveling and twenty-eight local preachers—the statistics show an increase since then of about one hundred per cent. It is pleasant to note, in this connection, that the membership of the Church in the bounds of this Conference has increased upward of *two hundred* per cent. in the same space of time.

It may not be improper here to allude to McKenzie College. The founder and proprietor never asked or received a dollar to build or support said college, but relied on the tuition, which was amply sufficient. The school was opened in 1841, with sixteen select students. In 1848 it was incorporated under the style of McKenzie College, and in 1852 matriculated four hundred and three students, of whom over one hundred were pursuing a curriculum as thorough as any in the States. Children of ministers in the active duties of the ministry paid no tuition, and sometimes no board; neither did young men preparing for the ministry. Several orphan children were also educated free. Our college-life was the success of our life—twenty-two hundred converts made public profession of religion. O yes, the ministry is our highest star, thank God! Some of the contributors to this book were graduated with honor in this school. They live and shine to-day to bless and honor Methodism in Texas. The careful reader may observe in some of the sermons a lack of art in composition, but an earnest piety and powerful common sense is obvious in every discourse. Our brethren—the contributors—have had no time to practice the art of writing sermons, etc. They have been minute-men, but have had little time to squander on “labored efforts.” There has, until recently, been “more work than worship” for the preacher—no fat places, where, at the Church’s expense, he might while away his hours book-making, etc. Nay, verily! But we thank

God that not only men of piety and common sense are here, but some of the most cultivated men and women are engaged in this part of God's vineyard.

Singular Introduction, this; but stubborn facts are frequently singular also. I never wish to make history, but I intend to do my duty as best I can—so, I suppose, the majority of the preachers who have toiled and suffered, and still toil in the vineyard of our common Lord. Let no man attempt to gather anecdotes or retail incidents as to my ministerial or college-life. The web of life is woven; and I loathe self, and adore God.

Toward the youthful publisher of this book, and toward the contributors, I cherish most tender feelings. I feel humiliated by my many failures in my humble sphere, but I have a most affectionate regard for all. Read diligently.

McKenzie

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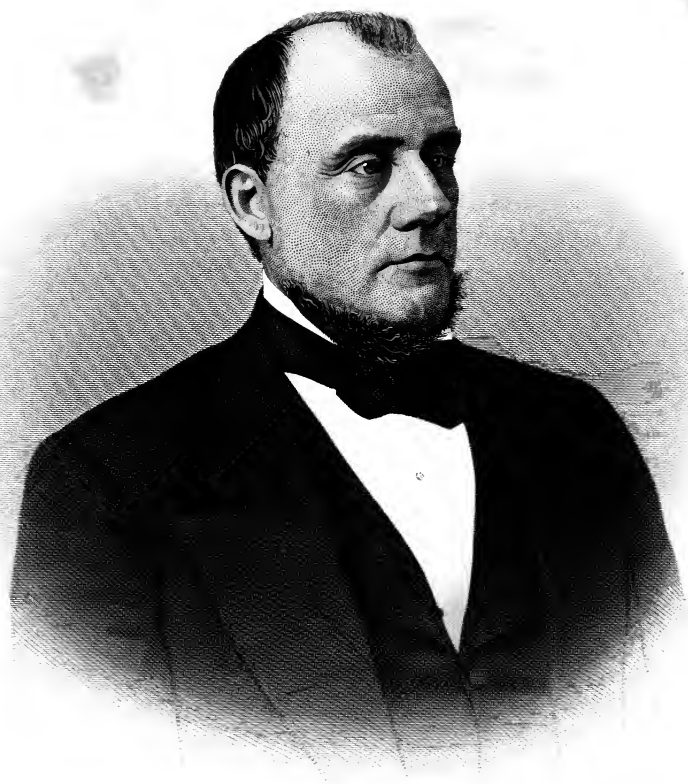


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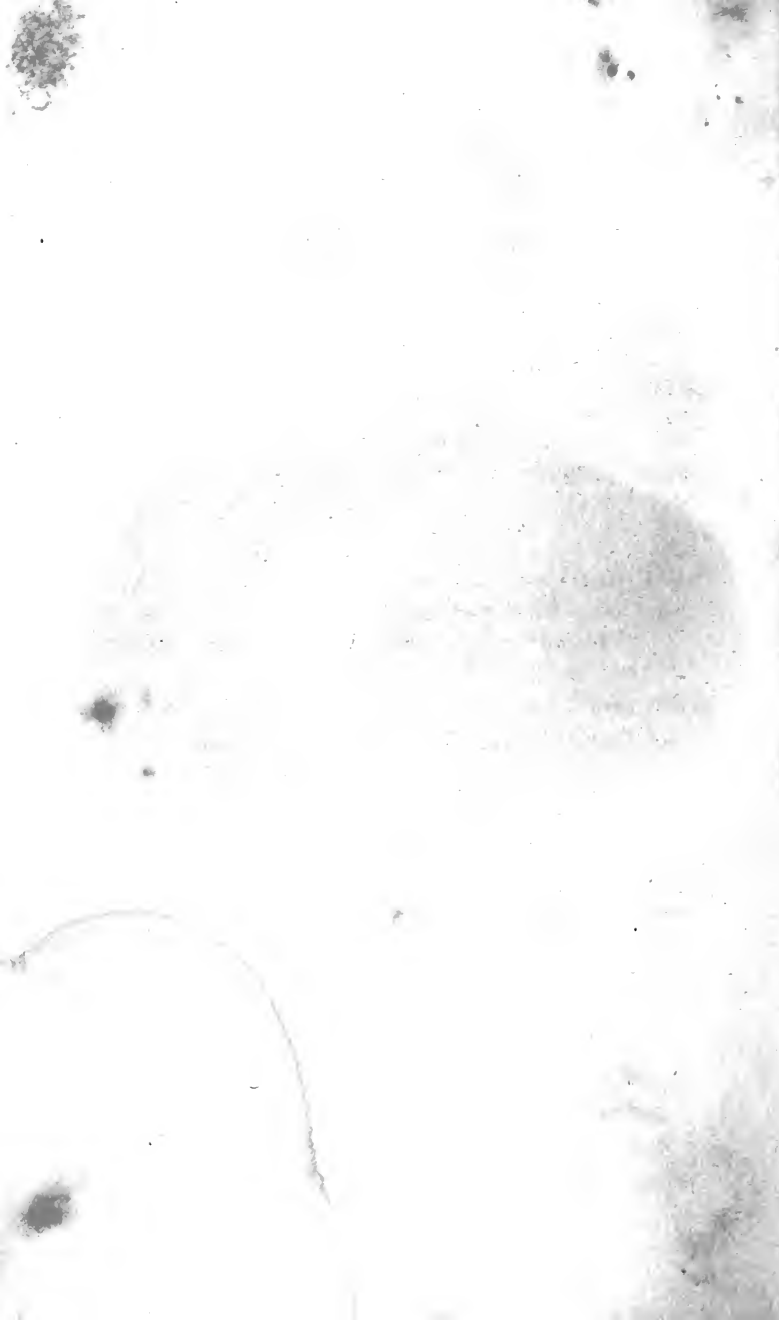
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Yours Truly  
J. M. Buckley



## THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. J. M. BINKLEY.

“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.” Matt. xvii. 1-6.

WHILE “*all* scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction,” yet some portions of the word of God are of much significance and more highly edifying than others. The one I have stated above, from which to write my first sermon, I regard as one of more than ordinary significance and sublimity. While many have seen nothing more than an ordinary scrap of *history* in this passage, containing the wonderful account of the transfiguration of our Lord, I have found much to study and admire. To my mind it is full of divine revealings and sublime manifestations.

Let us prayerfully investigate this wonderful transaction of the Son of God.

I. And first, let us look at the necessity and design of the transfiguration *in the presence of these three New Testament apostles.*

The greatest problem of all ages has been to bring the supernatural down to the natural—the divine to the human. This “mystery of godliness” can only be explained by bringing the divine to the human, or the human to the divine. Revelation proposes to beautifully blend these two natures in one person, uniting God and man—hence, Jesus is the God-man. As Peter, James, and John, were to be a trinity in spreading the gospel of our salvation, they are selected by Jesus as witnesses, not only of his sweat and blood in the shadows of dark and lonely Gethsemane, but also of the bright and glorious scene “on Tabor, where transformed he stood.” They must be eye-witnesses, both of the dark shadow of his death and passion, and also of the radiance of the “bright and morning star.” *This is human, the other is divine.* Now they can go with a firmer step and stronger faith, and in the full assurance of hope, to spread the joyful news of salvation to a lost and ruined world. After such scenes they are prepared to preach Jesus as a divine and victorious Saviour; for as our faith, so will be our zeal and works. This transfiguration was therefore to confirm and strengthen the apostles in the faith of the Son of God and his glorious gospel.

II. Let us now look at the *doctrines* revealed in the transfiguration.

(1) *The unity of the dispensations of the law, the prophets, and the gospel, seemed to be one prominent*

*feature in the scene.* For here is Moses, the lawgiver (under God), Elias, the chief of prophets, and Jesus, the theme of Moses and Elias, or the law and the prophets. There are here also Peter, James, and John, the New Testament apostles—all meeting around the glorified body and person of Jesus, who is Lord of all. So, on this mountain high, and higher up apart, meets the Church of all ages, or the leading representatives of the periods spanning the time of God's dealings with earth, as revealed under the dispensations of the law and the prophets, as well as the sunlight dispensation of the gospel. Not that the dispensations were radically different, for God has never had but one way to save the sinner since the fall—Jesus is the one Mediator between God and man; but in revealing this plan to man, God approached man's plane of understanding by three successive and harmonious steps called dispensations by conventional consent. Peter seems to have had, like many now, confused views of these dispensations; hence he wished to erect three tabernacles—one for Moses, one for Elias, and one for our Lord. But out of the cloud (symbol of God mysterious) fell a voice saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him. Jesus is now lawgiver, prophet, priest, and king. He is also Lord of all, one God, one Saviour, one plan of salvation, one race, the whole human family, one earth and one heaven. "For the Lord God is one God." The unity of the divine plan is prominently set forth in this unique scene.

(2) *The divinity of the Son of God.* This is the

“corner-stone, elect,” tried, true, and “precious.” The “whole building” of our beloved Christianity rests on this fact. This is the test of orthodoxy. He that buildeth on this Rock shall never be confounded. This doctrine is plainly taught in the Scriptures—the apostles had heard and were familiar with this. But now, in addition to the “logic of facts,” they have the experience of sight. “They see his face with glory shine,” and hear a voice from the clouds proclaiming him the Son of God. No wonder they fell on their faces, “sore afraid.” When the divine comes so near the human, O wonderful sight! convincing arguments! The divine and human are brought face to face. See the grandeur of the transfiguration! “That mount, how bright! those forms, how fair!” See the cloud, hear the voice, and, like the apostles, overpowered, let us fall down, honor, love, and adore our Maker too! This world has had no sublimer scene. Sinai was terribly sublime, but that was a manifestation of law. Smoke, clouds, thunder, and death, were the realities of that day. But Tabor has a cloud, but a bright one—has a “lawgiver” transformed into the shining and inexpressible brightness of the Son of God. The divinity of the Son of God is prominent in this scene.

(3) *The reality of the world of spirits* is also taught. On the mount of transfiguration there appeared “Moses and Elias talking with them.” Moses, who, fourteen hundred years past, had gone up on Pisgah and died, whom, alone, God buried and watched his sepulcher—this Moses, who for the rash act of smiting

the rock was prohibited from crossing the Jordan and entering the promised land, is now on Tabor's heights in Palestine. Elias, too, who nine centuries gone had finished his earthly toils, and for whom God sent a chariot of fire with steeds of heavenly birth and equipage, in which he seats his servant, and they lift him through heaven's eternal blue concave, up, up, on, on, with lightning-speed and unwearied wing, till, amid the celestial beauties, joys, and splendors of heaven, the pious and grand old prophet joins the chosen of the redeemed whose names are written in heaven—yes, Elijah is now on Tabor with his Lord. Two of the olden-time servants of God and his Church come down to be seen and heard by Peter, James, and John. This is, probably, the brightest manifestation of our departed friends appearing on earth in the whole history of the world. So the reality of the world of spirits is taught in this scene.

(4) *Departed spirits are in sympathy with us and the triumphs of the gospel.* Luke says Moses and Elias talked with Jesus about his death at Jerusalem. This had been their *theme* while on earth, and was doubtless their *song* in heaven. The redemptive scheme therefore seems to be the subject of heavenly solicitude and contemplation. "Which things," says Peter, "the angels desire to look into." The cloud of witnesses, of which Paul speaks in Heb. xii. 1, behold us with deepest sympathy, and, no doubt, like Moses and Elias, sometimes come near to earth, and in love embrace us and encourage us on to the final conflict and ultimate victory. And

when death's trying hour comes, and we "shuffle off this mortal coil," these loving spirits conduct us home to heaven. O glorious thought! O blessed doctrine! Our loved ones dear, though gone to the spirit-land, love us, and care for us still, and we may love them still. This mystic bond grows stronger and stronger as our loved ones pass the river, and the volume of their love will increase toward us, until heaven's gravitation shall become so strong that one day we shall pass from those present to those gone before. The sympathy of the departed with us, and the success of the gospel, are promised in this scene.

(5) The bodily appearance of Jesus on this occasion, when transfigured, was to reveal the bodily appearance of the saints, when "our vile bodies are fashioned after his glorious body." "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." The psalmist declares, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." And Paul puts it thus: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead." "We shall be changed," says he, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." O what a world of change is this! how fleeting! But think also of what a change will pass over us in fitting and qualifying us for heaven: "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." O yes! "Our hearts will be fire, and our tongues will be flame." And on angelic



wing we shall fly to grasp the prize. O blessed home! and blessed abode! we shall be nearer and more like our God, "for when we shall see him, we shall be like him." We shall lift our spirits from scene to scene, and from world to world, and spend eternity in musing on the infinite and eternal glories of heaven.

(6) *Heavenly recognition* is also taught. With what apparent ease and grace does the convocation meet and mingle as a household circle! What though Moses and Elias had ascended the heavens centuries gone? Now they are on Tabor with "Peter, James, and John, talking with them." There is no thought connected with the future more consoling than the fact, I shall know my loved ones flown; shall meet them again—meet to part no more. O how many a heart has it cheered, how many a lonely home has it thrown a halo of light upon! When placing in earth's cold bosom our dear departed ones, we can say we shall meet them again. "We shall know as we are known." Many, doubtless, who read these words I shall never meet on this storm-beaten shore, but I hope to meet them in our common heavenly home.

We know that those bowers are green and fair,  
In the light of that summer shore;  
And we know that the friends we have lost are there—  
They are there—and we'll meet once more.

(7) And finally, this sublime scene assures us that heaven will be a happy home, of grand and exalted vision. Peter said, "Lord, it is good to be here." Yes, good to be on Tabor, if Christ was

there, in glorious and divine form, lighting up all the mountain's rugged places with a heavenly light and glory. Dear brethren, if such a place as the mount of transfiguration was a good place to dwell in, what will heaven be? Think of its gates and streets, of its flowers and trees, of its songs and shouts, its palms and harps, its glories and visions! O think of the saints of all ages who in harmony meet, of our loved ones who wait to welcome us home! "Blessed" are we if we "do his commandments, for we shall have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates to the city."

In conclusion, let us contemplate Tabor as a scene of thrilling interest to us all. And, above all, let us "dwell on his name with sweetest song," whom heaven proclaimed the Son of God.

On Tabor thus his servants viewed  
His luster, when transformed he stood;  
And, bidding earthly scenes farewell,  
Cried, "Lord, 't is pleasant here to dwell!"

That mount, how bright! those forms, how fair!  
'T is good to dwell forever there!  
Come, death, dear envoy of my God,  
And bear me to that blest abode!



*yours truly*  
*J. W. Chubb*



## THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE.

BY THE REV. J. W. CHALK.

“Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.” John v. 39.

THE idea of a golden age was universal among the ancient oriental nations. They believed that at some period in the deep obscurity of the past the human family had enjoyed a much higher state of felicity than now, and they as confidently believed that that happy period would again be returned to the earth—in fact, that day was looked to as a necessity. Of course, their ideas of what constituted a golden period were very different, and depended upon the different circumstances of nationality and education, but the hopes and fears were quite similar when viewed in the light of the history of those by-gone days. The Jews, as a nation, were not an exception to this rule, but watched with anxious eye and breathless solicitude for the rejoicing of the hills and the blossoming of the desert, which they were taught by the prophets would commence with the advent of the Messiah. The Samaritans, too, were encouraged by the same prospect, and were as fully persuaded of the truth of the promises made unto the fathers. Indeed, it was well said that Jesus was the “desire of *all* nations,” for in him “all the nations of the earth” were to be “blessed.” The popular and prevailing idea among the Jews was,

that their Messiah would be a temporal deliverer, and would restore the national privileges and immunities of the Jews, and, having conquered all their foes, would establish upon the ruins thereof a universal monarchy. Josephus says that "The enthusiasm of the Jews, in the war with the Romans, was increased by the belief of a universal monarchy." Tacitus says: "This idea prevailed throughout all the East, among the Jews." But the fact must not be ignored that many devout worshipers looked for a Deliverer whose "kingdom" was "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." There was another opinion, that the coming Christ would unite Church and State, and would be Head and Lord of both. There is no question that this idea prevailed even among the apostles, those who had the best opportunity of reading his life and studying the nature of his kingdom. Their language to him, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" is a sufficient voucher to the assertion.

I. In the first place, we will notice the evidence that the *Christ of the New Testament is the Messiah promised in the Old*. It is believed that the promise made to our first parents, that "The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," refers to the Messiah; and the Apostle Paul, following out this idea, enumerates a long line of faithful worthies, who, he says, "all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." It was, however, in the days of Abraham and the ages which

immediately succeeded them, that the ancient promise became the all-engrossing theme, the special object of prophetic attention. In those days the promise was renewed, and the words, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," gladdened the hearts of the faithful like joyful tidings from their far-off home, and kindled afresh their happy expectation. The lines are more definitely drawn. The Redeemer is to spring from the loins of Abraham. And so fully persuaded was that pious man, that though Sarah's womb was barren, and he "all bowed with years," he "staggered not at the promise through unbelief." Again it was foretold that "the scepter should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come." The preëminence of the tribe of Judah was to continue until the promise was fulfilled. This prophecy, according to the history of the times, found its literal fulfillment in the coming of the Son of God. Moses predicted, "The Lord God will raise up a prophet from among his brethren like unto me," etc., and this prophecy is quoted by St. Peter, and applied to Christ. Isaiah, usually styled the evangelical prophet, who wrote in the present tense, as though the entire life of Christ, from the manger to the cross, was passing in grand review before him, seven hundred and fifty years before the incarnation, enters into all the circumstantial details of his life—his deep humiliation, his rejection, tragic death, burial, and exaltation—in so lucid and pointed a manner that it is utterly impossible to find their application or fulfillment in any other save our Lord

Jesus Christ. The Prophet Micah, who was contemporary with Isaiah, gives us the birthplace of the Messiah — “Bethlehem Ephratah, though little among the thousands of Judah,” was to have the distinguished honor of giving birth to Him who should sit on the throne of his father David, and judge his people Israel. The Prophet Zechariah gives the family of David as the line through which Christ was to descend, and Haggai gives the time of his coming. It was the testimony of these, and the fulfillment of so much prophecy, that stirred up the priest, the scribe, and Pharisee, to inquire into the signs of the times, and to diligently search the prophets for the period of the “sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” As the time approached for the advent, as foretold, their anxiety was heightened, and the very circumstances by which they were surrounded gave inspiration to their rising hopes, and a new impulse to their ancient faith.

II. *Christ was born.* We have already called attention to the prophecy of Micah, who, guided by the Holy Ghost, mentioned Bethlehem as the place of the Messiah’s birth, and the family of David as the line of descent—“made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” Bethlehem was the very place where the house of David had its origin. This now is to give birth to David’s greatest Son. About seventy years before the incarnation the Jewish nation was subjugated and made tributary to the Roman Empire by Pompey the Great. Augustus, the emperor at the time of our Lord’s advent, had ordered a general census of the Roman Empire—



partly, it is thought, to obtain current statistics, and partly for the purpose of levying taxes. Judah was in deep humiliation and poverty, dependent upon this opulent and powerful empire, and it is not unlikely that one object of Augustus was to complete the ruin of this crushed and miserable people. Herod, in the assessment and collection of this tax, no doubt followed the uniform custom of numbering the tribes; hence they went up by tribes, to the places designated, to be taxed. Joseph, and Mary, the mother of our Lord, being of the lineage of David, of course went to Bethlehem, the city of David. When they arrived, so immense was the multitude that they found it impossible to get "room in the inn," and were compelled to seek shelter in a neighboring stall. Here, in the depths of poverty, was born our blessed and divine Saviour and Lord. It has been said by an eminent writer, and I think wisely too, that "all great events that have introduced a new development in human history have been preceded by conscious or unconscious prophecy." The ancient prophecies were finding their literal fulfillment in the time, place, and circumstances of our Saviour's birth. This very oppressed and afflicted people, guided by the ancient prophets, looked, as we have said, with anxious solicitude for the promised Deliverer, and now they wept and groaned under the weight of Roman oppression, their burdens being intensified by the pollution of the holy place and the delay of their Redeemer. And, as the tribes "went up," no doubt their former greatness came to their remembrance,

and the prayers of a thousand hearts were, "Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south." The time was recent when the elders ruled, but *now* the sword of the uncircumcised keeps the "gates of the daughter of Zion." Here once dwelt the royal bard whose sword was as trenchant as his harp was melodious. In yonder verdant vale the sweet-voiced daughters of Israel sung, "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands." But now, alas! those happy days have passed away. David sleeps with his fathers, and his coming Son, O when will he appear? The devout and simple shepherds upon the plain, "watching their flocks by night," no doubt had this all-absorbing subject under consideration also, but little thought angel-bands waited round them, hovered over them, to make the sublime announcement that the "tabernacle of God was with men." It was in the deep solitudes of the night when the star of Bethlehem arose—it was the star of Jacob. Following the impulses of their own longing hearts, and guided by the star, they came to Bethlehem and found the young child, and Joseph, and Mary, his mother, "and they rejoiced." Simeon, who had long prayed for the deliverance of his people, and had received an answer from Heaven to the effect that he should live to see the Prince of Peace, guided by divine impulses, entered the temple as the young child was brought in by Mary and Joseph. The infant child was now forty days old, was lying sweetly (shall we say conscious of the surroundings?) upon his mother's breast. The moment the pious old man's eyes fell upon the child

he recognized the long-hoped-for Messiah. His great heart was filled with gratitude and joy. "Let now thy servant depart in peace, O Lord, since mine eyes have seen thy salvation," he said, as he took the child in his arms and baptized him with tears of ecstatic joy. Hallelujah! amen and amen!

III. *The magnitude of the work of Christ.* The magnitude of the work undertaken by Christ, and to be carried out by him, fully justified the Jews and surrounding nations in the belief that the Deliverer would be sent from God. The whole world lay in wickedness. The prince of the power of the air had established himself firmly on his throne. The "strong man" was "armed," and keeping "his palace." Satan had become the prince of this world by actual conquest. The loyal subjects who once delighted to do the will of God had fallen, and now "a dreary night of blackest darkness gathered round the world." The chains which bound humanity to this horrid body of death were well forged and strong, and it required the wisdom of God to devise means to sunder them, and the power of God to carry his designs into successful execution. "Once I have heard, twice have I learned this, that power belongs to God." It is a recognized fact that what God does is not "only marvelous in our eyes," but that he has resources of power commensurate with his lofty undertakings. Nicodemus recognized this power and authority in the early days of our Lord's ministry: "No man can do the miracles which thou doest except God be with him." But it not only required wisdom and power, but *purity* also. A sac-

rifice was a necessity—without the shedding of blood there was no remission; and not a victim could be found without spot or blemish—the necessary prerequisites—“for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” This victim must be taken from among men—“made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law.” Heaven, earth, and hell, contained no created being “worthy of God;” and hopeless and *eternally* helpless would have been our fate had not He by whom all things were made, made himself of no reputation, that he might offer himself to God. He comes, and the heavens bend with mercy. Hear ye him: “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.” “A body hast thou prepared me.” “These are God’s ways, and are marvelous in our eyes.”

Your attention has been called to the opinions of the oriental nations, and to the prophecies concerning the birth of Christ, and I now invite you to consider his death.

IV. *Christ and the cross.* The date of the crucifixion of Christ stands in history in connection with the reign of Tiberius, the Roman Emperor, and a more cruel and heartless man is not to be found—a more consummate tyrant never ruled over a people. It would be natural that, in the selection of officers to assist him in the administration of the government, he would select those who approximated nearest his own heartless disposition, and were in the most profound sympathy with the administration. Hence Pilate would be a proper person to place in authority, and was accordingly exalted to the dig-

nity of governor of Judea. It may be well to mention here that the Jews had the right, under the Roman clemency, to adjudge a man worthy of death who had violated the penal code of their nation, but did not have the authority to inflict capital punishment. This prerogative was vested in the ruling governor. *Crucifixion* was the mode of inflicting capital punishment on desperate characters, outlaws, and abandoned criminals and slaves. Isaiah says, "He was numbered with the transgressors," and our Jesus "made himself of no reputation, but took upon himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "He endured the cross, despising the shame."

V. *Christ died.* St. Paul says, "Christ died according to the Scriptures." There is no incident in the annals of the past better established as an historic fact than the death of our blessed Lord. It is absolutely astonishing that men would have the temerity, with an enlightened faith in the history of the times in which Christ lived and died, to call in question for a moment the historic statements made by the evangelists, who have so minutely and concisely chronicled all the current events connected with the death of our blessed Lord. They have not only given a graphic description of the times, but have entered into all the circumstantial details of the allegations, witnesses, trial, and final decision in the premises. Pilate recognized the fact of his death, and marveled that he died so soon. The two thieves, crucified at the same time, lingered longer. Why this delay? We answer: There is no evidence

that they had been scourged as Christ was, or that they had suffered any violence before coming to the cross. Not only so, but Christ's sufferings, to a very great extent, arose from a different source. He was innocent, suffering for the guilty—Christ "dying for the ungodly." His spotless nature had never been paralyzed by sin, neither had he become contaminated by yielding to temptation. He was capable, therefore, of taking in an amount of suffering, of feeling an intensity of pain, that no one else could feel or endure. O innocent Son of God, how unutterable thy sufferings! Two circumstances claim our attention in this connection. (1) His death was voluntary. "No man," said he, "taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself." *Surely*, He "by whom are all things, and for whom are all things," could have "saved himself" as "he saved others," if his "hour" had not come. But for this end he came into the world: "That he might offer himself to God." (2) This *voluntary* death was also *vicarious*—in the stead of others. "He died *for* the ungodly." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and *by* his stripes we are healed." In the person of our Lord there are "*two* whole and perfect natures—that is to say, Godhead and manhood—and these are joined together never to be divided." Now, if, as some hold and teach, the humanity of Christ partook of all the infirmities of the fall of the first Adam, and consequently had the natural, inherent proclivities to sin as others, it seems to me that they will find some difficulty in reconciling their theory with this article in the creed

of the Church. Again, I cannot understand how Godhead could have such close affinity with that which is inherently sinful in itself. The fatherhood of our Lord is the Holy Ghost, and it would be *blasphemous* to charge upon *him* the propagation of an unclean thing! Arminius says: "The Holy Ghost so fecundated the seed of the Virgin Mary that she was enabled to conceive without the intervention of a man." Godhead took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin. This *spotless, perfect* humanity was the body which Christ said "hast thou prepared me." This "body" prepared was offered a sacrifice for "original" sin and actual transgression. It has been a question whether or not the divine nature suffered while Christ's humanity endured such agony in the garden and on the cross. I only have time to offer this suggestion to those who have the leisure to pry into a subject so profound. I submit, that if Deity was capable of taking in a sufficient amount of *sympathy*, and consequently suffering, then Deity must have suffered with humanity. I cannot conceive that Deity could have suffered from any other source or cause. That cry, in the very last throes of humanity, "I thirst," must have echoed throughout the vast dominions of God Almighty, and the heart of Deity doubtless felt the mighty commotion. But these questions will never find their proper solution until eternity shall unfold to us the mysteries of providence, and the work of Christ in the great scheme of human redemption. This is enough for us to know now, that Christ died as our *surety*—died that we might live.

“Jesus paid it all—all to him we owe.” “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” There are divine and omnipotent agencies working out a glorious destiny for every child of faith. There are resources and fortunes in the blessed beyond sufficient to compensate every child of sorrow for all his sufferings in this house of pilgrimage.

VI. *Christ the way to eternal life.* “I am,” said the blessed Saviour, “the way, the truth, and the life.” “And this is life eternal, that they might know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.” What is life eternal but the throbbings of God’s great heart reconciled to the world, and finding a response in the hearts of those who believe in Jesus? “Life eternal,” having Jesus “formed in the heart the hope of glory.” In this life the seed is planted and nurtured with the dews of divine grace, and its fruit is eternal life. Child of sorrow, your pathway lies often among briers and thorns, but this same path leads to the mountain of God. Be encouraged by the promise of the Lord: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”





*Yours in Christ*  
*J. Clark Smith*



## HIS NAME WONDERFUL.

BY THE REV. J. CLARK SMITH.

“His name shall be called Wonderful.” Isa. ix. 6.

IN all departments of God's creation we behold the wonderful. The mind of man is attracted by objects and influences that are wonderful everywhere. When we turn to the heavens above, we find them all dotted with stars and systems, each moving harmoniously around its common center, or is held to its place by a certain law known to us by the term attraction of gravitation. The mind is filled with wonder, and becomes awe-struck at nature's developments. Behold how majestically, how harmoniously these worlds go their round! They move with no hand to help them, no chart or compass to travel by, but the unerring law of their Maker. “By him all things consist.” We stand and look with admiration at these worlds of wonder flying through space, or standing as a mighty center of attraction around which others move, and think the God that made those worlds made the globe on which we live. And as he has seen proper to people the ball on which we live with immortal beings, we may conclude other worlds are inhabited with creatures capable of enjoying the God that gave them being. Turning from these systems and worlds of wonder, we now contemplate, for a moment, the laws of life. In the vegetable kingdom there are the laws pecul-

iar to it. Hill and dale are rich and fragrant with the odors of vegetable life. Things that are pleasing to the eye and satisfying to the taste all stand out before us. Leaving these for a time in our investigations, we next open our eyes upon animated being. From the smallest animalcule to the largest sea-monster, they have their instincts and appetites, which afford them pleasure peculiar to themselves. The laws of life that govern them are mysterious, and beyond the power of the human mind to understand. But in the heavens above, or earth beneath, there are no wonders comparable to the one introduced by Isaiah when he said, "His name shall be called Wonderful." This prophecy no doubt refers to Christ—the incarnation—Christ coming in the flesh. The government was to be upon his shoulder. "To him was the gathering of the people to be." His name indicates his nature. Here he is introduced as the star of promise shining out on the moral firmament for man. The first intimation of its luster is seen in the promise that God gave to Adam, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." This star of promise, as the ages rolled on, began to increase in magnitude, until its luster was exceedingly great, and finally it broke forth on the plains of Judea, with all the majesty of truth, as the star of fulfillment, and the heavens above became vocal with angelic voices proclaiming the arrival of the long-looked-for Saviour, which was Christ the Lord. The angels desire to look into the mysteries and wonders of redemption. Notwithstanding they bore the news from heaven to

earth of the arrival of Jesus Christ, yet I apprehend they know but little about the object of his mission. It has been the wonder of ages past, and will be of the ages to come.

We come now to notice this character introduced by the prophet, which is called Wonderful. The Lord Jesus Christ, as he appears in prophecy, is wonderful in his person. He comes as the child born, which no doubt refers to his humanity. He comes also as the only-begotten of the Father given to man, which refers to his divine nature. He possesses two whole and perfect natures, yet one individual, self-conscious person, having volition and will. This union of God and man is never to be divided. As a divine being, he is of one substance with the Father—the same in power, glory, and eternity. As a man, he possessed all the infirmities of human nature, yet without sin. No person ever figured on the theater of human life such as he. His disposition was to be admired by all. His enemies could but say, "I find no fault in him." He eclipsed all the laws of heathen morality and honesty, and taught that we were to love our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us. Heathens taught that we ought to love them that love us. If we do no more, we are no better than they.

He was wonderful in his conception. In regard to this important yet mysterious part of my subject many have been the theories advanced in the world. I suppose this is owing to the fact that he did not come in the ordinary course of generation. It partakes of the wonderful, in that he was begotten

by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost was the efficient agent in the incarnation, yet he was the seed of Abraham. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ was not a phantom. It was not a deception—it was real. It was not a new creation, with its physical and spiritual properties similar to the humanity of man in its original state. The Bible nowhere authorizes the conclusion that the humanity of Jesus Christ was a creation any more than other men. If it was necessary for a new creation, why was it necessary for a mother? The same necessity exists for a father. According to the new-creation theory, the whole work could have been completed without a virgin-mother. If the incarnation was effected by the deposit of a new creation of humanity in the womb of the Virgin Mary, where is the consanguinity between it and the human race? None whatever. This may be a matter of very little importance to some, but it is of vital importance to my mind. The Bible teaches “that God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.” Jesus is declared to be the “seed of Abraham,” “offspring of David,” “Son of man,” etc. All such expressions lead us to the conclusion that the humanity in which divinity was incarnated in the person of Jesus Christ was the same humanity propagated by Adam, the head of the human race. Those to be rescued were fallen. “He took part of the same flesh”—not a nature like theirs, but a fallen nature such as Adam’s posterity inherited. Here is the mystery of redemption. O the wonders of that union of God and man in the person of Je-

sus Christ to save the lost! We can but admire the love that brought him to earth, and caused him to unite his divine nature with humanity to make an atonement, notwithstanding his miraculous conception, being the results of the overshadowing of the Highest, the wonderful coming forth of God and man. He came not as contemplated by the Jews. No pomp or splendor surrounded him. The arm of military power was not given to carry him on to conquest. But, to the wonder and astonishment of earth, we see him with a manger for his cradle, lying with the beasts of the stall. Thousands had been born of woman before him, but when he comes heavenly choristers sing his approach—the upper heights reverberate with songs.

The theme, the song, the joy was new—

'T was more than heaven could hold.

A meteoric flash comes forth, and stands in mid-heaven above him. The wise men from the East are attracted by its luster, and wend their way to the place. When they come, they come with bending knee, falling before him. The heart's richest treasures are imparted in worshiping and adoring the God-man. Earth's treasures are bestowed, and the wise men wonder at the gift of God to man. This babe of Bethlehem grew from infancy to manhood, and when he was thirty years of age he was baptized by John the Baptist, who was his harbinger, that he might be made manifest to Israel. He now began to teach and preach. His preaching was different from any thing they had heard. Jewish rabbis, scribes, and Pharisees, were

all amazed at his teachings. He pronounced his woes against them. He spake as one having authority, and at the same time he was the friend of the needy and the distressed. He was feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf, and the healer of all that were sick or diseased. Aching hearts always found comfort from the words that fell from his lips. His words were to the penitent, trusting heart, Son, or daughter, go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee. It was truly said of him that he went about doing good. He took upon him the form of a servant. He was ever ready to supply the wants of the needy. Earth's inhabitants were subject to his command. The riches of land and ocean belonged to him. How different from all other men before or since his day! His life was a wonder to infidels, and from his incarnation on down to the present day they all, Pilate-like, say, "I find no fault in him."

He was wonderful in his doctrines. The doctrines of Jesus Christ were an epitome of the moral law. They were embraced in two injunctions—love to God and man. On loving God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves, hung all the law and the prophets. The obligation to love God with all the heart brings the soul of the believer directly in contact with the life-giving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus saith, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." He taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, of a future life in happiness or misery. The doctrines of Jesus Christ are such as to meet all the wants of humanity, cor-



rect all his errors, purify all his uncleanness, and restore him to his lost inheritance. When he went up into the mount and began, in the presence of the multitude, to teach his disciples, no such teachings ever fell from the lips of a teacher before. Are you a mourner? Christ says ye shall be comforted; are you poor in spirit? the kingdom of heaven is yours; are you a peace-maker? you shall be called a child of God; are you hungering and thirsting after righteousness? ye shall be filled; are you persecuted? do men revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely? rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. He taught the necessity of the new birth—the necessity of being born again. So strange and wonderful were his teachings, the people were astonished at his doctrines. Never man spake like this man. When Nicodemus, a Jewish ruler, came to the Saviour, he was lost in the mysteries of Christ's teaching. When the Saviour said, "Ye must be born again," he understood not what he meant by the term "be born again." The doctrines of Jesus Christ stand out preëminently above the teachings of all others—like the sun in mid-heaven, shedding light everywhere.

He was wonderful in his miracles. A miracle is understood to be counteracting the established laws of nature. Jesus Christ did this. He healed the sick by a word, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, cast out devils, by his own almighty power. He called on no name for help—he spake, and it was done. When the disciples wrought miracles, they did it in the name of Christ; but Jesus said, "Laz-

arus, come forth," and the chains of death were broken. All law was under his control, or, more properly speaking, he was the source of all law, and the functions of law were suspended at his will.

Wonderful in love.—The love of Jesus has been the wonder of mankind for near two thousand years, and will be till the end of time. Yes, it will be the wonder and theme of the redeemed to all eternity. We can understand something of reciprocal love, or how it is that we love that which is lovable, but the love that brought Jesus from heaven to die for sinners is beyond our comprehension. It is expressed in the language of the Apostle John, in the words, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed."

The wonders of the redemptive scheme.—This sacrifice was peculiar, in that it was voluntary. He laid down his life. He was a sin-offering. He became sin for us who knew no sin—that is, he paid the debt that sin had contracted—received to himself the suffering that man was to suffer for the violation of law. The full extent of his sufferings we cannot tell—enough, however, to satisfy the demands of law. He came to "redeem them that were under the law." O the wonders of that love that would cause him to bare his own breast to the demands of law, and receive to his own heart the pointed steel from the soldiers' hands!

O for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break,  
And all harmonious human tongues  
The Saviour's praises speak!

We love him because he first loved us. That is reciprocal love. Jesus loved because it was his nature to love. It was like a fountain, deep and wide, and that fountain which he possessed enabled him to endure the sufferings which he did.

He was wonderful in his sufferings. As intimated in another place, the full extent of his sufferings we cannot tell. The obligation was upon him. It behooved him to suffer. The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, was a matter of great wonder to the prophets. They were looking into the times to see what the prophecies meant, when they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ. I am impressed that the crucifixion was no part of the atonement. The manner of Christ's sufferings had nothing to do with the satisfaction which he rendered to law. The most that can be said on this point is, that prophecy and its fulfillment meet here, which was necessary that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, but not to meet the claims of law. It behooved him to die. Death had to be endured to pay the debt that man had contracted. Suffering was the antecedent to death. Crucifixion expresses the manner of his death. The redemption of man was not suspended on the betrayal of Christ by Judas, or his crucifixion under the Roman law. It was dependent on his death, which was a free-will offering. He laid his life down. He saw proper to lay it down in a manner that the voluntary actions of men were connected with it as violators of the moral law—that is, he suffered them to crucify him. Hence, the guilt of

Judas for the betrayal of Christ, and of the Romans for putting him to death. In connection with the wonderful sufferings of Jesus, that the divine nature suffered with the human, is a fine-spun theory with no truth in it. If the divinity of Christ suffered, it is suffering still, and suffered from all eternity. If it is a property of the divine nature to suffer, he must be perfect in suffering, as in love, or omnipotence. The wondrous blending of the human and the divine natures in one person, to be sacrificed, sustains the same relation of sacrifice and altar the human being sustained by the divine. The whole of the debt was paid that was due to the law, while God and man were united.

Wonderful in his death.—The death of Christ is the theme of millions in different lands, and by different tongues. It was for this he came into the world, to give his life a ransom for man—to die in man's stead—step into man's place and die for him. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." His death is so intimately connected with his sufferings that it is difficult to speak of either separate from the other. His death was a legitimate result connected with his sufferings. It took the death of Christ to make atonement, and here is the difference between his death and that of any other good man. The dual nature of our Lord prepared him to meet the demands of law. There was an altar to sanctify the gift, and stamp the sacrifice with

infinite value and merit. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Well may we sing:

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power.

There is an infinitude of merit in the death of Christ. Complete satisfaction is rendered to the demands of justice and law. All legal obstructions are removed. The free gift passed upon all men unto justification of life. God can be just in the salvation of a sinner. All the attributes of God perfectly harmonize in the salvation of man. There is no conflict between justice and mercy. "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I rejoice to know that the claims of divine justice on man for the violation of law have been so perfectly satisfied in the death of Christ—that God can freely forgive a penitent, believing sinner. Here is our hope—"our city of refuge." He was bruised for our iniquities. He died in our place. God's uplifted thunder-bolts of wrath against man fell on him. God's justice is as perfectly satisfied in the salvation of a sinner as his love.

But he who so freely gave his life for us, chose not to remain under the dominion of death, but to take up his life again. It takes the resurrection to complete the chain of the redemptive scheme. If

Christ had not risen, his death would have been in vain. His resurrection is the acme of all he did—the grand achievement. Death vanquished, robbed of his spoils. Although our Substitute fell under the power of death, it was only for a short time. Jesus, with death chained to his chariot-wheels, came forth from the grave, leading captivity captive—bearing the first-fruits from the grave. That difficult problem that had been so long disturbing the minds of men was at last solved, and the grand truth of a future life unfolded. “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” was a question often asked in apostolic times, and man’s mind is still wrestling with its mysteries. About all we know of it is what revelation teaches; and the plainest and most important fact which revelation presents is fruit from the grave in the person of Christ. After his resurrection, the saints that arose and went into the holy city, leads us to the conclusion that our Saviour’s resurrection from the grave represents ours. What the difference was between our Saviour’s body after his ascension and its state immediately after his resurrection, revelation does not teach us. We find him on the eternity side of death with the same body that was nailed to the cross. The incision which the soldier’s spear had made was still open in his side. He ate broiled fish and honey-comb in the presence of his disciples. His words of comfort were, “It is I, be not afraid.”

Our Saviour saw best to accompany his rising from the dead with scenes that were wonderful. When the angel of the Lord descended and rolled the

stone away, the guard fell back and became as dead men. So overwhelmingly bright was the face of the angel that it is compared to lightning, and raiment white as snow. Scenes of the wonderful attended our Saviour all through the redemptive work. We love to talk and sing of his birth—sing of his life—sing of his death. How the heavenly choristers heralded his coming with a multitude of voices! We love to join in the funeral procession, and go from the cross to Joseph's tomb. The tragic scenes of Calvary linger with us. The sun looks away. The earth trembles as if her pillars were giving way, and the vail of the temple, the place of sacrifice, is rent in twain from top to bottom. Look yonder at that group of disciples. How disappointed they appear! Their Master is crucified. He is hanging on the cross. Disappointment and gloom is pictured on each countenance. Joseph begs his body, and lays it away in his own new tomb. Although this is a funeral occasion—a sad time—we love to think of it, talk of it, sing of it, and all the wonders attending it. Our faith takes hold of his death.

We now step across the grave, and see him rise from the tomb. Our faith is strengthened, our songs are enlivened, and of all the wonderful events in the history of our Lord this is the grandest. Here is the fruit of "the corn of wheat which was cast into the ground." His triumph is the assurance of our final triumph. In the coming ages of eternity it will be "much fruit." Thank God he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"—

that is, the continuity of life's chain will not be broken by death. It is not so hard to die since Jesus died. Death is robbed of its sting, the grave of its victory, and heaven is in full view of the Christian.

The chain of sacred wonders still attend the God-man. We now reassemble with the disciples since the resurrection of their Leader from the grave. How changed their countenances! They are now all-expectant of success. Now he delivers unto them authority to preach the gospel, to stand in his stead and beseech men to be reconciled to God. These disciples, how changed! They are now bold, and begin to tell it abroad that Jesus is risen. They soon follow him out to the mount called Olivet, and Jesus begins to talk to them, and while he speaks to them, he speaks in words that burn. From this mount he delivers his last benediction, and while their hearts are still warm from his recent sermon, I see, drawing near, a bright cloud. The luster is very great. The disciples look amazed at its peculiar appearance and strange movements. They begin to shrink back from its near approach, and while they stand and gaze with wonder and astonishment at its majestic movements, it spreads its bright border around the feet of the God-man, and on it, as his chariot, he bids adieu to earth till he should come again the second time, without sin unto salvation. In his ascension the law of attraction was suspended, and he, contrary to all the laws that bind bodies to the earth, rose and ascended into heaven. When he told his disciples it was needful that he



should go away, they comprehended not what he meant. They stand and gaze with wonder and astonishment at their ascending Lord, until he is lost from their vision in the blue concave above them. Standing near by them are two men in shining apparel, who announce to them the return of their Lord: "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." Wonderful in his exaltation, wonderful in his humiliation—ascended higher, descended lower, higher than the highest, lower than the lowest. He ascended up far above all heavens. His descension into the lower parts of the earth was antithesis to his ascension up far above all heavens. His kingly power was designed to be felt and proclaimed through the entire universe—hell as well as heaven. The depths of his humiliation is found in his death on the cross. He stooped to die between two thieves—to receive crucifixion under Roman law.

How low he stooped, how high he rose,  
And rose to stoop no more!

O the wonders of that cross on which he died, that around his head, wreathed with thorns, should so soon be crowned with diadems of glory, and the ages to come should be vocal with coronation-anthems to the once Crucified!

O that, with yonder sacred throng,  
We at his feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown him Lord of all.

Wonderful in his grace.—How free, how bounteous—“enough for all, enough forevermore!” The millions of earth can slake their thirst at this Fountain—it always flows. His heart beats in unison and sympathy with the distressed and burdened of every land. He was our brother, and therefore could enter into sympathy with the race. The wonders of grace are, that while it can stoop to the “lower parts of the earth,” it ascends “far above all heavens.” Hence, on the ascending scale, we contemplate him as wonderful in glory. His glory began to shine forth on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elias came forth from the glories of immortality to converse with him concerning his death at Jerusalem. “His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” The Apostle Peter, in referring to this scene, calls it “the excellent glory.” Here grand honors begin to encircle the brow of Jesus Christ. That the Babe of Bethlehem should finally be promoted to such position of influence and power, has been the wonder of the ages. There is scarcely a nation on earth but gives him honor. We stand in awe at the gigantic movements of Christianity, and think it will not be long until that system of moral power put into operation by the incarnated Christ will begirt the earth, and he that was laid in a manger shall be exalted to the highest position in the government of God; and when

the last day shall come, he will step off the mediatorial seat, and the reins of government will be put in his hands, and he will be all, and in all. When that time shall come, may you and I, dear reader, be found sufficiently near this Sun of the moral universe to be attracted by it. May we not have lost our moorings, and be lost in the blackness of darkness forever, but, under the light of that Sun, and amid the splendors of that city which hath foundations whose maker and builder is God, may we find a place where,

Encircled with light, and with glory enshrouded,  
My happiness perfect, my mind's sky unclouded,  
I'll bathe in the ocean of pleasure unbounded,  
And range with delight through the Eden of love!

## THE LAMP OF THE WORLD.

BY THE REV. JOHN H. McLEAN, A.M.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. cxix. 105.

A RECENT tourist says there is a tradition among the Orientals that lamps, or lanterns, were originally worn upon the feet. How appropriate the metaphor, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Or, as Solomon expresses it, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." The Scriptures abound in what may be denominated object-lesson teaching. The facts of nature and the pursuits of life are but lenses in the divine hand for focalizing light upon hidden spiritual truth. Nature and revelation have a common paternity, and the elder is made to serve the younger in furnishing illustrations for scriptural uses. We are clothed in the "lilies," fed in the "fowls," regenerated in the "wind," enlightened in the "sun," protected in the "mountains." Many, indeed, are the still-tongued remembrancers of divine promises and interpreters of religious truth.

The metaphor in hand is of easy interpretation: as a lamp dispels the gloom and discloses the way with its exposures, so does God's word—the Bible—shine out upon man's benighted spiritual state, and

reveal the narrow way that leads to life with the broad way that leads to destruction. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The reason for a revelation from God is found in the fact that there were things needful for man to know which by wisdom he knew not, and by searching could not find out. Prominent among these may be mentioned God, man's origin, duty, and destiny. It is well that man should know something of God—his nature and worship. Man is a born worshiper, and, like the helpless vine, failing to entwine itself around a substantial support, grovels in the dust. So of man possessed of theistic ideas; he goes on a godward search, and descries "gods many, and lords many." The heavens above, and the earth beneath, are peopled with his deities, and as if these were not enough, he has gods of his own invention. Happy for us, God through his word dispels the night of this inevitable idolatry in these trenchant sentences: "The Lord our God is one Lord;" and, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." In addition to the unity and personality of God, he has also announced himself a "Spirit," and "they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"—and

adumbrated his attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, justice, love, and mercy.

In the second place, it is needful that man should know something of his origin. Unaided by revelation, he has wildest conjectures upon this subject. Some have conceived man to have been of mushroom growth—springing spontaneously from the earth; others, that he had scrambled into being, like frogs, from the inundations of the Nile; whilst others—latter-day wiseacres—ignoring the light of revelation, have, with a flourish of words and show of science, made him an “evolution” from the “zoölogical garden”—a monkey, less the caudal appendage. Well that this superstitious ignorance and stupendous infidel folly has been hushed to silence and shamed to contempt by that grand soul-satisfying, man-dignifying utterance, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: . . . in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

In the third place, as by “the fitness of things” the eye demands light, the appetite food, so does man’s moral nature, his sense of “oughtness,” demand as its counterpart authoritative law by which its action is to be governed. Allow every man to become a law unto himself, to lean to his own unassisted reason in the determination of duty, and we should have well-nigh as many standards of duty and notions of right and wrong as we have men. No two would be agreed in all points. The conjugal relation would be an open question, and left to man’s caprice whether he should be the husband of

one wife, many wives, or no wife at all; or, assuming the domestic relation, it would be left to each man how he would deport himself toward his wife, and to the wife how she should deport herself toward her husband, and the parent toward the child, and the child toward the parent; and passing into social and civil relations, man would again be left to his own option how he would demean himself toward his fellow-man. Thus would the very foundations of society be uprooted, and the several relations of life thrown into wildest confusion. But, happily, the Bible comes to our relief upon all these questions, and authoritatively proclaims, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband; let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence, and likewise also the wife unto the husband." "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." And for social and civil relations, we have a grand compendium in the Golden Rule and Decalogue.

In the fourth place, man should know something of his destiny. Left to himself, futurity is a leap into the dark—a *terra incognita*. With some, death is an eternal sleep, or, what is about its equivalent, annihilation; others have fancied transmigrations, but none, unaided by revelation, have ever entertained well-defined views of a future state of existence. But it has remained for God, through his word, to bring life and immortality to light. "Many

[the multitude] of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." And again, God "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, *eternal life*; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; . . . but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good."

Having shown some of the prominent subjects upon which man needed divine light, and having shown the adaptation of revelation to meet this want, we now consider briefly some of the evidences in support of the claims of this revelation to our credence. That the Scriptures were written by "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," may be argued from their predictions that have been fulfilled. To foresee and foretell unlooked-for remarkable events is evidence of divine inspiration. Of such events may be enumerated the prophecies concerning the destruction of the once proud walled cities of Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Jerusalem. They were supposed to have been impregnable, and their destruction was predicted in their palmiest days, when such events were, to all human appearance, entirely un-supposable. Two hundred years before Cyrus was born he was predicted, by name, as the leader in the desolation of Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar was prophesied of as the leader in the destruction



of Tyre. The prophecy of the Saviour concerning the destruction of Jerusalem has been literally fulfilled, whilst Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre, are in ruins and desolation to this day, in fulfillment of the prophecies of Nahum, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. To these we will only add the prophecies fulfilled respecting the scattering of the Jewish nation, and the advent, life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Our next proof is from miracles. As evidence that the sacred writers were under divine influence, they were enabled to perform "many wonderful works" outside of, and contrary to, the ordinary course of nature, such as the instantaneous cure of leprosy and palsy, deafness and blindness, plague-spots and poison of reptiles, yea, multiplied miracles, with the crowning act of raising the dead to life.

Aside from the conclusive evidences to be drawn from these sources, there are many facts coupled with the history of the Bible which tend to confirm its divinity. It is difficult to conceive of any sinister motive that could have indited this book, and the circumstances under which it was written preclude all possibility of complicity and collusion on the part of the sacred writers. About forty in number—and but few contemporaneous with each other—separated by time and space, they wrote at intervals during a period of near sixteen hundred years. And when done, and their writings collated—like the stones and timbers prepared by Hiram and his workmen—so perfect was their finish, and

so well adapted each piece to its place, that noiselessly the temple went up without sound of hammer or of ax, and when completed presented an imposing symmetrical structure. So of the Bible—when its sixty-six books are gathered together from their various sources, times, and places, and combined into one volume, it presents one continued serial, one harmonious, beauteous whole, with Christ's redeeming work, like a silver thread, running from Genesis to Revelation.

It is the tendency of other books, by lapse of time, to go out of use and out of print. But not so with the Bible. Instead of going into disuse, it is coming more into use; and instead of going out of print, it is coming more into print, being now translated into about two hundred and seventy languages. It is also the fate of men, by lapse of time, to go into obscurity and forgetfulness. Not so, however, with Bible characters. Christ, the Alpha and Omega of the Scriptures, instead of being relegated by antiquity to obscurity and oblivion, is only burnished and brightened by each succeeding cycle, ever approaching, but never reaching, his meridian glory. The great Napoleon felt the force of this fact in contrasting the fate of Christ with that of men—yea, the greatest of men—in significantly inquiring, “Who cares for Alexander and Cæsar now, whilst there are millions that will *die* for Christ?”

With the advent of Christ all history seems to have closed, and with this epoch time began anew its reckonings, and even skeptics bow to the inevi-

table "Anno Domini" in all their dates and computations of time.

Passing to the inwardness of the Scriptures, we recognize the most exalted doctrines and the purest morals. Not stopping with the overt act, but probing to the very source of thought and purpose, it defines *lust* as adultery, and *hate*, murder. If this be not the book of God, then have we the mystery of mysteries, the best of books written by the worst of men — grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles. Among books, this fills the place of Joseph's kingly sheaf, to which all others bow down in obeisance. It is the God of books as well as the book of God.

Practically, the Bible vindicates itself, in that individual and national character is exalted in proportion to its allegiance to scriptural truth. "Godliness" is found profitable "unto all things," and "righteousness" is the foundation of national prosperity. By its transforming power the proud have been made humble, the drunkard sober, the lecherous virtuous—in a word, the bad good. No one has ever been known to have espoused these principles in life, and to have repudiated them in death; whilst myriads that have neglected scriptural injunctions in life, have in death deeply lamented such neglect, and sighed for religious peace as the pillow of their hopes.

Go on, dear old Book, and as an angel of mercy girdle the earth with thy blessings. Go on from conquering to conquest, until "thou hast gained the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "Go on,"

in the language of a once eloquent but now stilled tongue, "and teach the rich man how to use his wealth, the poor man how to be happy in his cabin—teach all men the way of salvation; and when we die, give us a promise and hope of immortality, and kindle a light in our graves which all hell cannot blow out; and you have done for us what all the world's philosophy never dreamed of."



Yours Truly  
M. H. Keely



## CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

BY THE REV. M. H. NEELY, B.S.

“Let us go on unto perfection.” Heb. vi. 1.

THE word “therefore,” with which this chapter is introduced, refers us back to the preceding chapter, in the latter part of which the apostle rebukes some who had been hearing the gospel for years, and had been professors of religion for some time, and yet had made no advancement in the divine life. When they ought to have been able to teach others, they had need to be taught the first principles of the gospel. Dr. Clarke says, “Either they had not continued to hear, or they had heard so carelessly that they were not profited by what they heard. They had probably totally omitted the preaching of the gospel, and had consequently forgotten all they had learned. Indeed, it was to reclaim those Hebrews from backsliding, and preserve them from total apostasy, that the Epistle was written.” This view is strengthened by the fact that the apostle, in the verses following the text, clearly intimates that “those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” but who remained in a state of babyhood, making no advancement in the divine life, failing to “go on unto perfection,” are in great danger of “falling away.” But it is not my purpose to preach a sermon on the possibility of apos-

tasy; however, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

We propose to present, in connection with the text, what we understand to be the true scriptural doctrine of Christian Perfection, and rescue it from the abuses of its enemies, and the excesses of its overardent friends. The language of the apostle clearly indicates growth, development, a forward movement, a going on from something already attained to something yet attainable. It presents the possibility, the importance, yea, the absolute necessity, of going on to higher heights in religious attainment, deeper depths in Christian experience. And this is in harmony with the whole tenor of Scripture-teaching on this subject. We are to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Growth is the law of development of the Christian life. This great truth is presented again and again, with great variety of expression, in the word of God. Paul says, in his Epistle to the Philippians, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Let us notice the nature and conditions of this growth. There must be a starting-point. In going on to perfection, how and where are we to begin? The answer to this question is of special importance, for the same principles that are to guide us in the prosecution of the work are the same which guide



us in its commencement; so that the beginning is not a beginning merely, but a beginning which has all the principles of development wrapped up in it—a seed which has only to shoot up in order to become “a blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.” Paul, in writing to the Colossians, says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him,” showing that Christian progress is to proceed in the very same method as the commencement of the Christian life. The Christian life proper begins with justification and the new birth, or regeneration. While justification and regeneration are distinct works, yet they are coëtaneous and coëxistent. When God pardons our sins he regenerates our nature, and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus, so that “old things are passed away, and all things are become new.”

Now, justification is a full and complete work, and does not admit of degrees. We cannot conceive of any such thing as being half justified. We mean to say that God does not pardon our sins in detail, one at a time, and from time to time, until all are pardoned. He does not pardon any sin until there has been thorough repentance, unwavering faith, and entire, unreserved consecration, and then he pardons all our sins. “By him all that believe are justified from all things.” If this were not so, justification would be no privilege, for our sins unpardoned would seal our condemnation. “The wages of sin is death.” Not of many sins, or great sins, is it said, but “the wages of sin is death.” The Apostle Paul is therefore exceedingly careful to set

forth the completeness and thoroughness of the work of justification. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." And if he is in Christ, in any sense, he is free from all condemnation. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Who, then," asks Paul, "shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" You will notice, that in speaking of the state and condition of the justified, the terms used are always such as to convey this idea of completeness, of entire pardon from guilt and sin. All our sins, in the act of pardon, are said to be covered, hid, buried, forgotten, blotted out forever. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

Simultaneously with this work of pardon there comes our acceptance with God, adoption into his family, and the renewal of our nature by the Holy Spirit. Any interval between justification and regeneration is unknown to the Scriptures. The new birth, or regeneration, is a concomitant blessing with justification, or pardon. These states, together with adoption, whenever mentioned in Scripture, involve and imply each other. "By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "That, being justified by his grace, we should be

made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." They occur at the same time, and enter into the experience of the same persons. \* So, then, all who are justified are also regenerated and adopted—become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. They have given to them a title to the heavenly inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. All the Christian graces are then implanted in the regenerated soul, and are to be developed in the Christian life. They are undoubtedly qualified for heaven, and yet the Scriptures declare that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." They must therefore be holy—not, indeed, in the same sense or degree that God is holy, but in the measure required of fallen but redeemed humanity, and at this particular stage of their Christian life. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, they are made partakers of the divine nature. They are born of God; and John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." They are now represented as babes in Christ, "desiring the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby." They must grow or die, for growth is not only the law of the development of the spiritual life, but it is the law of the continuance of that life. Then from this great starting-point begins the new life—a life of trust, and love, and obedience, and joy in Christ Jesus, nourished by the word of God, and sustained by the indwelling Spirit.

It is to such that the apostle addresses the language of the text, "Let us go on unto perfection." As the student leaves the alphabet, not by discard-

ing it, but by adding to and combining in it all the advances of learning; or, as the builder leaves the foundation, not by dispensing with it, but by rearing a structure upon it, so let us leave the rudiments of Christian experience, and go on to higher attainments in the divine life, "pressing toward the mark for the prize." Growth, progress, and development, are absolutely essential to the Christian nature and life. There must be a perpetual development and increase of capacity, and a perpetual filling of the soul—ever drinking, ever expanding—never losing our hold on Jesus by faith. And if there is any point beyond which we may not still advance, the Scripture has failed to disclose it. Do Christians ever reach a stand-point in their experience where the language of the text would not still be applicable to them? Never. Onward, still onward, is the Christian's watch-word in all the stages of his experience. This enlargement of capacity and increase of powers will never cease, but continue throughout eternity in the realms of light and glory. And this growth is not simply a growth toward holiness, but a growth in holiness; for while justification and regeneration are full and complete in themselves, and admit of no degrees, holiness is progressive, and has various degrees. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now, we are told by some modern teachers that, after being justified and regenerated, we must still undergo another distinct change before we can claim

to be the true children of God, or be perfect Christians. Some of these self-constituted guardians of the doctrine of "holiness," with more zeal than logic, have run wild on this subject, making an un-Wesleyan and unscriptural distinction between regeneration and a state of Christian perfection. This distinction consists in making two distinct works, amounting, really, to two conversions—two kinds of religion—wherein, as we heard one say, "there must be a new faith, a second consecration, a new work of the Holy Spirit, and a distinct profession of a second blessing." Now, we do not wish to be understood as denying that the standard of holiness, and amount of salvation pleaded for, is warranted by the Scriptures. We believe in holiness. There is evidently such a thing as "perfecting holiness," as "going on unto perfection," as being made "perfect in love," as being "sanctified." Our Methodism has always taught such a doctrine. Her literature all converges to that point. Our hymnology is full of it. Our ministers have ever preached such a gospel "in words of holy flame, from burning hearts and lips." And we hope and pray that it will continue to be the teaching of the Methodist pulpit, and the experience of the Methodist people, till Gabriel shall sound the final trumpet. Yes, we believe in the doctrine of Christian Perfection, as taught in the Holy Scriptures. But the manner of stating this doctrine by those who have made it a hobby is objectionable, and leads to great confusion of thought. "Perfect love," says one of the new-school authors, "as entire sanctification, is specific-

ally a new state, and not the mere improvement of a former state." Now, the very opposite of this is the true scriptural view. Conversion and sanctification differ only in the fact that the latter includes a greater extent of the workings of grace begun in the new-born child of God. Holiness is a property that belongs, in a greater or less degree, to every child of God. John Wesley says, "Holiness is not a new religion, differing in essence from that enjoyed by the regenerate." He and his followers have always taught that there was a higher state of grace than that enjoyed at conversion, but only higher in degree, not in essence. They never taught that there were two salvations—a first and a second blessing—but that salvation, one and indivisible, might make its work complete.

A fruitful source of error on this subject has been an undervaluation of the work of justification and regeneration. I must be permitted to think that Mr. Wesley was led into some degree of error in his sermon on "Sin in Believers," and made some statements that do not harmonize with the general tenor of his teaching, owing to his bondage to the old ninth article of the Church of England. That article was as follows: "Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man, whereby man is in his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the spirit. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby lust of the flesh is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe, yet this lust hath of itself

the nature of sin." Now, it is not at all surprising that a Church which believes in the baptismal regeneration of infants should believe also that this regeneration is imperfect, and needs to be supplemented by another work afterward. This lingering idea of incompleteness in the work of regeneration underlies all that teaching which makes sanctification a separate and distinct work. A prominent member of the "National Camp-meeting Association" presents the matter in this way: "God has power to make a believing penitent, in an instant, as pure as an angel; but his wisdom has ordained, first, to forgive him, and shed abroad in him his love, and adopt him, and pour light upon him, and then lead him in the light to the fountain of cleansing blood, to be washed from all sin." Here we have a man pardoned, adopted, God's love shed abroad in his heart, and yet he has not reached the "fountain of atoning blood." The Bible clearly teaches that without the blood there is no remission of sin. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." How can we separate the "blood" from the work of pardon and regeneration? "The blood cleanseth from all sin." The cleansing blood is applied in regeneration. "By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." But hear this same author farther: "The light, if followed, will soon flash conviction for holiness upon him who follows it, deep and pungent as when first awakened." He then proceeds to show what that light will reveal in the heart of the justified believer: "It will flash all

through that charnel-house of incipient and abortive sins, and discover to him such a mass of unholy passions, stunned and deadened by the grace of God—of suppressed desires, of smothered feelings, of principles of enmity and rebellion only held in check by grace, all making such a body of death yet hidden within him—that he will loathe himself, and long for the power of God to remove these relics of moral death.” Alas! alas! is this a correct picture of the justified and regenerated soul—the new creature in Christ Jesus? It certainly resembles more the description of depraved humanity which Paul gives in the third chapter of Romans. But hear this author farther—and we quote him thus at length because he is an exponent of the views of a large and growing party: “This, when a believer thus sees himself, is conviction for holiness—when the Spirit takes him down into this work-shop of iniquity, where unholy thoughts originate, where lust is conceived, where pride has its seat, where love of the world lays its schemes, where malice plots its mischief, and where sin has its home, and plants its engines of destruction. If he walks in the light, that light will bring him down into this sink of iniquity, where he will see

Such dark and grainèd spots  
As will not leave their tinct.

Such a discovery of inbred sin yet dwelling in his heart, though not suffered to break out in his life, cannot but be a painful conviction.” We should certainly think it would be a very painful conviction. But is this the condition of the “justified by faith”



who "have peace with God?" "And such," says Paul, "were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The "such were some of you" evidently refers to their condition before they were justified; but when they were justified, they were also washed and sanctified. Let us notice one more example of the style in which these modern writers present this doctrine. A writer in the *Advocate of Holiness* says: "It is not supposed that the work of the extirpation of sin from the heart, or the complete subjugation of the will and affections to God, are entire in conversion. The measure by which the soul, body, and spirit, were given to Christ, may have been carried by a very small majority, leaving a large minority within to oppose the measure." And to support this view he refers to the seventh chapter of Romans, clearly perverting the evident meaning of the apostle, by making his language apply to a justified believer, whereas Paul is there describing the state of a man in bondage to the law of sin and death. Dr. Clarke says: "It is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the Church, or prevailed there, that the apostle speaks here of his regenerate state, and that what was, in such a state, true of himself, must be true of all others in the same state. This opinion has most pitifully and most shamefully not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence, and disgraced its character." Mr. Wesley says, in his Notes: "The character here assumed is that of a man first ignorant of the law,

then under it, and sincerely but ineffectually striving to serve God. To have spoken this of himself, or any true believer, would have been foreign to the whole scope of his discourse, nay, utterly contrary thereto, as well as what is especially asserted in the eighth chapter." The apostle reaches the happy state of the justified, and sounds the jubilant keynote of victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, when he says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

These examples serve to show how the Bible doctrine of holiness is embarrassed by a terminology that strikes the popular mind as a tissue of absurdities. They present the conditions of the justified soul as one living without sin, yet their hearts full of sin, and exhort them to come forward to the altar and seek the great blessing of full salvation from all sin. They tell us that sanctification and holiness are the same thing, that they are separate and distinct from regeneration, and in the same breath tell us that regeneration is holiness begun. And in this way the whole subject gets mixed in the minds of the people, from this perpetual jumbling of terms, and they go away with a blurred vision of the truth, if not a feeling of disgust at what appears nonsense. This idea of being half saved, half justified, half regenerated, is a solecism. Jesus Christ is a complete Saviour. He never shares the heart with sin. His blood cleanseth from all sin the moment it is applied; so that if death were immediate, the justi-

fied spirit would enter heaven, into which no stain of sin can ever enter. The very moment a man is regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, he is born into the kingdom of God, which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." And he is a child of God and an heir of glory just as truly as he ever will be on this side of heaven.

But another defect in the method of argument adopted by those who hold the theory of two distinct works, consists in their taking certain passages in the Epistles, and applying them to the justified as a distinct class of Christians, and giving these passages such a construction as to render them inapplicable to another *supposed* class of Christians, whereas no such distinction exists. For example, Paul, in 2 Cor. vii. 1, says: "Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Here it is assumed that this suggestion of cleansing is made to persons already converted, and in a justified state, as distinguished from others, who by a second work have reached a stand-point where they do not need cleansing. This may be putting it strong, but their style of argument means just that, or it means nothing. It does seem that such teachers ought to learn, if they learn nothing else, the lesson of humility from Paul, for he includes himself in the exhortation—"let us cleanse ourselves," etc. Again, 1 John iii. 3: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself." "This passage," says one of the leaders of the second-work theory, "teaches that

one may be a child of God, and have in his experience a hope of heaven, and not be in possession of purity of heart." He goes on then to tell us that there must be another work wrought in the heart to purify it. So he applies this passage to the justified exclusively, as distinguished from the sanctified. What a perversion of this plain and simple scripture: "Every man that hath this hope." Does not the justified man have this hope in him just as soon as he is adopted? Does not the man who claims to have experienced this second blessing—which, it is claimed, is necessary to purify the heart—have this hope in him? Then by what law of interpretation can it be made to apply to the one and not the other? "Every man that hath this hope," no matter what may be his religious attainments, "purifieth himself." It is a present work and a continuous work. It is a significant fact that the form of expression used in this class of passages indicates a continuous and progressive work. "The blood cleanseth," "Purifieth himself," "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God," "Groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord," all involve the same idea. And the truth is, they are equally applicable to all Christians, in all stages of their development, and we shall never get beyond their range while we live in the flesh. We all have need of purifying and cleansing all the way through our "pilgrim-journey," till we go "sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb." We reiterate our belief in the doctrine of holiness, and indorse fully this eloquent language of Dr. Foster: "The doctrine we contend

for is not limited to a bare and questionable place, a doubtful and uncertain existence in the holy records, but is repeatedly and abundantly—explicitly, and with great clearness—embodied as a cardinal feature throughout the whole system. It breathes in the prophecy, thunders in the law, murmurs in the narrative, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, sparkles in the poetry, resounds in the songs, speaks in the types, glows in the imagery, voices in the language, and burns in the spirit of the whole scheme, from its Alpha to its Omega—from its beginning to its end. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable! Holiness a present duty, a present privilege, a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme! It is the truth glowing all over—webbing all through revelation—the glorious truth which sparkles, and whispers, and sings, and shouts, in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise, and prayer—the great central truth of the system.” All true believers are indeed holy, sanctified, renewed in the image of God. It is no exceptional experience, to which only a favored class of saints may attain, and to be attained at some rare moments of life, like flashes of sunshine amid the gloom of a stormy winter’s day; but it may be, and ought to be, the ordinary experience of every child of God. It is not an isolated, exceptional thing, but all saints may understand it, and realize it. It is not freedom from temptation, however, nor from a possibility to sin, or even a liability to apostasy.

No height of holiness that we may possibly attain in this life will elevate us above these possibilities. They are inseparable from a probationary state. But when we were converted, God implanted in our hearts all the elements of holiness, and grace, and spiritual strength, necessary to resist and overcome temptation, and made ample provision for the continuous development of this inner life, so that, by a faithful and diligent use of the means, we may be constantly "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." Every step forward makes us stronger in God, and the higher we rise, the less danger of turning back. "Let us go on unto perfection."

But it may be asked, If the new-born child of God is perfect—if justification and regeneration are complete works—how can we go on to perfection? Can we go on from perfection to perfection? Most assuredly we can. Describe a circle of one yard in diameter, and it is a perfect circle. Now describe a circle ten feet in diameter, and it also is perfect. Though one is smaller than the other, it is just as perfect. So, in Christian experience, we must be growing in grace, and in knowledge, and thus enlarging our sphere of usefulness and influence, keeping ourselves, with all our growing powers, on the altar of consecration, and thus we shall be constantly describing larger circles of perfection. We go on from perfection to perfection, from holiness to holiness, from glory to glory. In no other way can we retain our justified state. It must be a continuous work, a walking by faith, a "faith that

works by love, and purifies the heart"—not a dead, inoperative faith, but a faith that works, and, by working, purifies. This working process, and this purifying process, is continuous. It is not an illumination once for all, or a confirmation once for all, but a germ of light and strength capable of indefinite development. It is a growing and expansive force—not a force which exhausts itself in one impulse. It is not a sudden leap, or "short, swift flight from the lowlands of unworthiness" to the cloudless light of impeccable purity and holiness, but a steady, persistent, persevering, climb to the "high table-lands of spiritual excellence." It is thus that the faithful Christian rises higher, and still higher, into the life of God; the field of his spiritual vision opens wider, he comes to know more and more of the doctrines of Christ, and to have a vast enlargement of spiritual knowledge and experience. And if every new fact of experience, every new capability and power, every newly-attained knowledge, be superadded to the original purpose of consecration—in other words, if the commitment of the soul, once for all and forever, be kept complete every day and every moment, God honors such a consecration by daily and momentarily renewing, cleansing, and purifying, the soul, and by witnessing to it the unmistakable fact of its adoption and sanctification. The business of the child of God is simply to yield himself to the operation of God's Spirit for his sanctification, while he rouses all his active powers to do the Father's will. The effectuating of the soul's sanctification is God's affair, and

it may safely be left in his keeping; but active Christian duty is ours, and to this we are called to especially devote ourselves by watchful diligence and earnest effort. If men will faithfully give themselves to God to do all his commandments, and watching unto prayer, God will take care of their experiences, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. And we shall go on, rising higher, drinking deeper, growing stronger, reaching advanced truth, having a firmer faith, a deeper peace, a serener joy, a brighter hope, until we finish our course with joy. Nor will any true Christian be satisfied with present attainments, but will say, with Paul, "This one thing I do: forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Says Punshon, "He must not repose on laurels won so long ago that they have withered from their greenness by the lapse of years. The summit of his attainment on yesterday must be only the starting-point for his venture of to-morrow."

O we thank God that there is no limit to this growth, no terminal-point beyond which we may not still advance, no limit to the purifying grace of God! If we felt that Christianity had displayed all its power in our hearts, that there was nothing more glorious for it to achieve, it seems to me it would sink down in our estimation, and a kind of paralysis would come upon us. Thank God it is not so! "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." God permits us to live in hope. This is the kind of Chris-



tian life and attainment bespoken in the word of God. There is no half-way station, or stop-over tickets. Onward, still onward, is the Christian's watch-word. The words of the apostle come to the Christian in all stages of his development, from its incipient "Abba, Father," to the final shout of victory over the last enemy. "Let us go on unto perfection." Christian holiness is progressive. It is an ascending angel of light, and our great life-work must be to follow after holiness. When, as babes in Christ, we have but just emerged from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, the word of exhortation comes to us, "Let us go on unto perfection." As youths in Christ, we are still beckoned onward. In the full maturity of Christian manhood, we are still to follow after holiness. In the ripened mellowness of old age, we are still to acknowledge no other leader. Through all the perplexities and embarrassments of providential dispensations, while we remain amid the scenes of earthly trial and conflict, we are still to trust in God, and follow after holiness; and when we reach the dark valley and shadow of death, holiness shall light up its gloom, and throw a radiance into the world beyond; and when we reach the gates of the heavenly city, holiness shall be the pass-word to gain us admittance there; and as we step in upon the glassy sea, and the swelling symphonies of heaven's hallelujah chorus shall burst upon our enraptured ear, our hearts, cleansed in the blood of the atonement, shall be already attuned to join in swelling the anthem, "Unto him that loved us, and

washed us from our sins in his own blood!" But shall our entrance into that world of light and bliss terminate our development in knowledge and holiness? Nay, verily. As students of the great "mystery of godliness" and the Godhead, we shall learn more and more of God and his ways. We cannot conceive of a glorified saint as if he were stereotyped in a certain measure of light and love, and could advance no farther than to a certain point in the knowledge of God. Our nature is such as not to acquiesce in a particular measure of knowledge, on any subject. We are not made to be stationary. Progress toward a goal, which yet we can never reach, seems to be an essential condition of our happiness. And as God is infinite in wisdom, power, and love, may not a blessed eternity be spent in making fresh discoveries of his glory, which shall serve as a new theme of adoration and praise? May we not be eternally approximating, and never reaching, the absolute and essential perfection of the Deity? "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

## FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

BY THE REV. S. J. HAWKINS.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John xv. 1-11.

THIS beautiful and instructive parable furnishes a striking illustration of the spiritual unity of God's people, and also of the harmonious coöperation of the Father and the Son in the work of man's redemption; but the preceptive phase of the parable is scarcely less important than the doctrinal.

The chief doctrine of the text relates to the final perseverance of the saints, a subject which, in time

past, employed the tongue and pen of a Beza and a Keplar, a Zwingle and an Episcopus, a Calvin and an Arminius, and which in the present day excites scarcely less interest than in former times. We may not hope to settle this question, or even to cast any new light upon it, yet our text is replete with instruction, and may well suggest earnest practical thoughts. The efficiency of divine truth in cleansing the human heart is asserted by our Saviour in these words addressed to his chosen disciples: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Surely no one will venture to derogate from the inherent power of divine truth, the revealed word of God; yet we are taught that the word of God is the "sword of the Spirit," by whom it is wielded unto the conviction of the sinner, the regeneration and sanctification of the soul, through sincere penitence, and that faith which prompts to a willing and cheerful obedience to God's holy commandments. As it is by the power of divine truth, energized by the Holy Spirit, that the souls of men are cleansed, so it is by the obedience of faith that they are enabled to maintain a gracious state. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

The spiritual relationship subsisting between Christ and the truly regenerate soul, symbolized by the vine and its branches, is the indispensable condition of usefulness: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

“To glorify God, and enjoy him forever,” is the chief end of man; and our Saviour hath said, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

With a divine illustration and a vehement protestation of his infinitely affectionate compassion, he exclaims, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love.”

To the tender pathos of melting pity the Saviour adds the most solemn admonitions. Hark! a voice in thunder-tones from the altitudes of eternity: “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.” “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” It were a work of supererogation to elaborate that which is quite obvious; therefore do we simply submit—

1. That all who are cleansed by the power of the gospel are in Christ—branches of the vine.

2. That some of the branches abide not in Christ.

3. That the branches which abide not are cast forth—withered—burned!

If it be alleged in opposition to what we conceive to be the obvious import of this parable, that the final salvation of every one who has been truly regenerated is infallibly certain, and that the warnings of Scripture are simply an ordained means unto this end, our response is, This theory scarcely harmonizes with the character of God.

Truth and sincerity are unquestionably attributes of the Divine Being. Warnings imply danger, but there is no danger if the salvation of the regenerate has already been made infallibly certain by the decree of God. In order to a clear understanding of this subject, we beg leave to present the doctrine of "Final Perseverance" in the very terms employed in Confessions of Faith and by eminent divines:

"They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

"This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, upon the efficacy of the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, and the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof."—*Presbyterian Confession of Faith.*

"They whom God hath justified and sanctified he will also glorify; consequently, the truly regenerated soul will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

"This perseverance depends on the unchangeable love and power of God, the merits, advocacy, and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit and seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof."—*Cumberland Presbyterian Confession of Faith.*

“The continuance of saints in holiness follows irresistibly from their election. If Christians continue not in holiness unto the end, the intercession of Christ will be frustrated.”—*Dr. Dwight* (Congregationalist).

“If he (Christ) had taken hold of the nature of the lost angels, they would all have been saved. If of the seed of Adam, all men would have been saved, and Universalism would have been the true doctrine. But he contracted as surety—Mediator—only for ‘the seed of Abraham’—the elect of mankind.”—*J. R. Graves* (Baptist).

The above quotations from Confessions of Faith and leading divines in their respective Churches present some contrariety of statement, but, so far as we can perceive, no direct antagonism of doctrine.

Calvinists, of all grades, so far as we are advised, hold that the final salvation of each and every truly regenerate soul is infallibly secured in the covenant of grace. Upon this hypothesis we are unable to perceive that the warnings with which the Scriptures abound, addressed to the regenerate, and which clearly imply that they are in danger of being finally lost, can be in harmony with the sincerity and truth of God.

Nor can we perceive any utility in these warnings if the perseverance of the saints “depends not on their own free will.” Much depends upon the manner in which we understand the “decree of election.” If it be granted that it is personal and unconditional—that God has, from all eternity, chosen some men and angels to everlasting life, and that this was merely according to the counsel of his own

will; without any reference to their faith or perseverance, then the decree of election must be regarded as absolutely mandatory; but we deny that God's decree is of such character, but maintain, on the contrary, that he has decreed salvation only to those who repent of their sins, believe in Christ, and persevere unto the end; and we insist that this is so, because he is unchangeable, and no respecter of persons.

Those who insist that the doctrine of the possibility of final apostasy conflicts with the unchangeableness of God, must reason against the logic of facts. It is not difficult to produce examples of such apostasy. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." 2 Peter ii. 4. God created these angels. They were holy and happy, loving and being loved by the Author of their being. They fell, sinned, kept not their first estate. God spared them not—cast them down to hell. Their apostasy was total, final. They changed, and the unchangeable Judge of men and angels exiled them forever. Referring to their tragic history, St. Peter, associating their fate with that of the antediluvians and the wicked Sodomites, yet remembering the salvation of Noah and Lot, presents the inexorable logic of these facts: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of



temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." The apostasy of the angels and their punishment does not cast even the shade of a shadow upon the immutability of God. And if God should deal in like manner with men who sin, who forfeit his gracious favor, perhaps, in the ages to come, realizing the unchangeableness of God and the wrath of the Lamb, they will, with unavailing, eternal sorrow, lament that they were not made wise unto their final salvation by the direful history of the fallen angels—that, held fast in the shackles of a fatal creed, they presumed upon the mercy of God, that he would spare them, although he "spared not the angels that sinned."

We confidently assert, upon the authority of inspiration, that the unchangeable and holy Governor of the moral universe will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, and that both men and angels will be rewarded according to their deeds. Men are not accustomed to think that an earthly monarch, who regards his loyal subjects with complacency, is chargeable with inconsistency because he punishes those who rebel against his authority; nor will a traitor expect greater clemency than an alien enemy. Why should different views obtain in reference to the methods of the divine administration? God regards men and angels continually according to their present spiritual *status*, and not according to what they formerly were, or yet shall be—in other words, he sees them as they are.

The power of God is presented in the Cumberland Presbyterian Confession of Faith as one of the

prime factors in securing the final perseverance of the saints. Mr. Buck (Calvinist), in his Dictionary, substitutes for "power of God" the word "Omnipotence," under which head he says, "The 'Omnipotence of God' is his almighty power. The power of God is divided into absolute, ordinate, or actual. Absolute is that whereby God is able to do that which he will not do, but is possible to be done. Ordinate is that whereby he doth that which he hath decreed to do." It is evident from the terms employed in defining God's absolute power, that it is not employed in securing the final perseverance of the saints. The ordinate power of God being "that whereby he doth that which he hath decreed to do," the question of final perseverance is thrown back upon the decree of God, which we maintain is conditional. So the Cumberland Presbyterians gain nothing by substituting "the love and power of God" for "the immutability of the decree of election." As it is only a question of taste, we concede to them the right of selecting their own terms. It will, we suppose, be admitted by Calvinists of every shade that the "called, sanctified, and accepted," "may fall into grievous sins, and incur God's displeasure;" or, according to the Presbyterian Confession, "they may, through the temptation of Satan and the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein, whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit, and come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and

comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves." We too admit all this—yea, with sadness, much more! The immutability of the decree of election, the efficiency of the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace, whilst they secure the elect from total and final apostasy, according to the Confession of Faith, do not secure them against falling into grievous sins, continuing therein for a time. They may—nay, if they fall into grievous sin, they do—incur God's displeasure, they grieve his Holy Spirit, their hearts are hardened, and their consciences wounded, they hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves. All these evils, we are taught in the Confession, may accrue unto the elect, and, as we understand it, not because of any want of efficacy in the merits and the intercession of Christ—not on account of any imperfection of the covenant of grace—but through their own free will—"the neglect of the means of their preservation." We confess that, being thus involved in sin, in hardness of heart, and resting under the divine displeasure, we see no reason why they may not continue to neglect the means of their preservation, and thus totally and finally apostatize.

St. Paul reminds his Corinthian brethren of a sad chapter in the history of God's chosen people: "All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses

in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 1-12. Dr. Clarke, in commenting on this scripture, says, "The highest saint under heaven can stand no longer than he depends upon God, and continues in the obedience of faith. He that ceases to do so will fall into sin, and get a darkened understanding and a hardened heart; and he may continue in this state till God come to take away his soul." Mr. Henry says, "He that thinks he stands should not be confident and secure, but upon his guard. Others have fallen, and so may we." As some insist that it is only those who think they are regenerate, but are

not, who are thus admonished, let them answer, How can such persons fall? Can one fall from a position he does not occupy? from a state of grace which he does not possess? Let us not fail to observe that the apostle says these things are written for our admonition. Ah! their carcasses fell in the wilderness; their eyes never saw the Canaan toward which they were journeying; and all Christians journeying toward the celestial Canaan are admonished not to do as they did. Their sad fate is an inextinguishable beacon to warn us of imminent danger.

Individual examples also of total apostasy are given. An elegant writer has beautifully said of David: "He was a true believer, a zealous adorer of God, teacher of his law and worship, inspirer of his praise, a glorious example, a fountain of true piety, a consummate and unequalled hero, a skillful and fortunate captain, a steady patriot, a wise ruler, a faithful, generous, and magnanimous friend, and, what is yet rarer, a no less generous and magnanimous enemy, a true penitent, a divine musician, a sublime poet, an inspired prophet; by birth a peasant, by merit a prince; in youth a hero, in manhood a monarch, and in age a saint." The picture of David is drawn to the life by the pencil of inspiration: "A man after God's own heart, save in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." Let the eminent commentator, Mr. Scott, relate the sad story of the total obscuration of this bright star in the galaxy of Old Testament saints: "David committed the management of the war against Ammon to Joab, and

continued at ease in his palace, when he ought to have been fighting the battles of the Lord; and thus being out of the line of present duty, he slothfully wasted his time. Without doubt, his prosperity had gradually rendered him more negligent than formerly in his devotional exercises, and more self-indulgent; and perhaps had occasioned a measure of self-confidence and carnal security. Thus his passions gathered force in proportion as his holy affections abated; and, having been accustomed, without censure, to marry any single woman for whom he conceived an affection, his inclinations had not been habituated to a denial. When, therefore, after an unseasonable sleep, he was walking on the flat roof of his house, and, by some means, had a view of a very beautiful woman, who was washing herself from a ceremonial uncleanness, he allowed himself to gaze upon her until he lusted after her in his heart, and, perhaps, supposing her not to be a married woman, he sent to inquire after her, in order to add her to the number of his wives, but his sinful passion had acquired such an ascendancy that he was the more inflamed by being informed that she was the wife of one of the bravest and most faithful officers. He therefore sent messengers for her, who could not be ignorant of his intentions, and, though she was previously a person of virtue and reputation, he obtained her compliance (probably by means of those hopes which his rank in life was capable of inspiring), and committed adultery with her. . . . Under the guilt of his very heinous sin, David was more anxious to con-

ceal his shame, and prevent the temporal consequences, than to obtain forgiveness from God. Indeed, the former seems for the time to have almost wholly occupied his mind. . . . Provided the brave Uriah were dead, David seems not to have regarded who were slain with him. . . . Whatever casuistry David might use with his conscience, this was deliberate murder of many persons, with malice prepense, aggravated exceedingly by the circumstance that these men were slain in the very act of fighting for him and his kingdom. . . . David married Bathsheba as soon as it could be done with decency, and the customary mourning (which was in this case a vile mockery) was ended. . . . All this time, as it appears from the narrative, David continued impenitent, and comparatively unconcerned. . . . However, though he had no deep remorse of conscience, we may be sure that he lost all spirituality and comfort in religion; for small transgressions, like slight wounds, give much pain to the believer's conscience; but enormous crimes, like a violent blow upon the head, leave him for a season in an unaccountable state of insensibility." We feel confident that no candid person can read this truthful statement of David's conduct, made by one of the ablest Calvinistic theologians, without being constrained to believe that his apostasy was total. We do not contend that it was final, but can by no means believe that a total apostate, while in that state, is exempt from the law of mortality. The proposition is so preposterous as to involve innumerable absurdities.

Of Saul it is recorded that "God gave him an-

other heart," that "the Spirit of God came upon him," that "he was turned into another man," that "he prophesied," and that "God was with him;" yet "he turned back from following after God;" finally, he rushed unbidden into the presence of Him who hath said, "No murderer hath eternal life." God wrought no miracle in this instance, nor will he in any case, to prevent a total apostasy from becoming also final; and indeed no one can think that he ever will.

Solomon also fearfully apostatized. Contrast, will you, his fervent aspirations for wisdom to govern Israel, while the dew of youth was upon his brow, with the follies and wickedness of his maturer years. Remember that the peaceful king who built the Lord's house, and dedicated it with the most august and imposing ceremonies, afterward participated in the worship of Ashtaroath, Milcom, Chemosh, and Molech, unto each of whom he built a temple, as well as "unto all the gods of his strange wives which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their strange gods." Well does Dr. Clarke say, "We need not wonder at the tale of the mighty Samson betraying his life's secret in the lap of Delilah, or the unconquerable Hercules handling the distaff among the maids of Omphale, queen of Lybia, when we see the son of David, the once well-beloved of the Lord, the wisest of human beings, for the love of his millenary of wives and concubines erecting temples to devils, and burning incense to them that were no gods, not considering that an idol is nothing in the world. To what an indescribable state



of blindness and fatuity must this man have been brought before he could have been capable of such acts as these!" O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou fallen! Time would fail us to tell of Judas, who "by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place;" or of Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth had erred, pronouncing the resurrection already past, and thus overthrew the faith of some. Enough, we trust, has been advanced to induce serious persons to carefully consider the obvious truths and doctrines contained in the parable under consideration, which also contains a lesson of comfort and a word of encouragement for the faithful Christian: "And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth much fruit. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

For the encouragement of his brethren, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews records the triumphs and sorrows of those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were

slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." He mentions also Abel's sacrifice, by which "he being dead, yet speaketh." Enoch's translation alive, faithful Noah's condemnation of the world, Abraham's pilgrimage and offering up his only-begotten son, Jacob leaning upon the top of his staff, Joseph giving commandment concerning his bones, Moses enduring as seeing Him that is invisible; and not having more than commenced the grand recital of faith's triumphs, he exclaims, "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets."

Let no Christian despair of salvation, nor forget the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord,"

## VITAL CHRISTIANITY.\*

BY THE REV. W. F. EASTERLING, A.M.

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Rom. ii. 28, 29.

THE apostle draws a parallel between the Jew with the law and the Gentile without the law, and vindicates the mercy and justice of God, in that he rewards the uninstructed Gentile, who does by nature the things contained in the law, and condemns the well-taught Jew, who boasts of the law, and yet breaks it, and thereby dishonors God. He presents very clearly the true relation of all mere observances to that which is essential and inherent in religion; shows that they are not necessarily and under all circumstances connected with the pardon of sin and the favor of Heaven; that a religious man is not simply one of reputation, but of character, “whose praise is not of men, but of God.” He places the whole matter of forms, and ceremonies, and sacraments, upon their proper basis, and teaches what sacred history verifies and illustrates, that the uncircumcised, broken-hearted penitent may repose in the mercy of his Maker through Jesus Christ, and realize the pardon of sin and the divine acceptance,

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\*A sermon preached before the North Texas Annual Conference.

while the fastidious and supple ritualist may know nothing in experience of the favor of Heaven or the joy of salvation. Cornelius, unbaptized, may send up prayers and alms-giving as a memorial to Heaven, while the conforming Simon may still abide "in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly." It took more than mere outward association to constitute a man a Jew. He must be one in feeling, in principle, in character, in hearty coöperation. You may be a Southern man, so far as the bare facts of birth and education are concerned, and yet, as the history of this day and generation verifies, you may be the most shameless and cruel enemy to all the interests and rights, the honor and glory of her people, by no means identified with them in character, and feeling, and purpose. By lineal descent, even in the Church of God, the unbelieving Jews were the children of Abraham, and yet, really in heart and practice, they were the children of the wicked one. "Ye are of your father, the devil," said Christ. "Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh." The apostle urges that if the Jew who was inducted into covenant relations by circumcision broke the law, his circumcision was counted uncircumcision; he stood among the uncircumcised heathen, and *vice versa* in relation to the honest and sincere Gentile, showing that the right of circumcision was significant only as it connected a sincere heart and faithful life in covenant engagement with God. The same remark may be made in relation

to all the forms of worship—to all ceremonial rites whatever. What was ablution worth aside from the idea of inward purity? Of what value were all the costly sacrifices apart from that which they typified, and in separation from the gracious results of faith? You rise in expression of reverence to call upon the Name that is above every name; but what signifies your standing in the sanctuary more than in the market-place, if there be no reverence prompting to it? You kneel before the great I Am in profession of humility and of a sense of dependence; but what are we more than as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, if there be no feeling of the heart corresponding with the act? You allow yourself submerged in water, to typify, as you imagine, the death and burial of Christ; but what more does your “liquid grave” suggest than folly and ignorance, if you are not dead unto sin and alive unto righteousness? You receive in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper the emblems of his broken body and shed blood, but what mean these to the heart that knows nothing of Christ crucified, that does not by faith appropriate to itself the benefits of his great atonement? “For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly.” “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” “Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ

is all, and in all." Let it then be distinctly stated, that there is a circumcision of the heart as well as of the flesh, in the spirit as well as in the letter; a circumcision made without as well as with hands; that there is a baptism of the Holy Ghost as well as with water; that there is a partaking of the bread that comes down from heaven, of the water of life fresh from the Saviour's hand, as well as the mere receiving of bread and wine in remembrance of him. Let it then be most solemnly declared, that if Christ was of none effect to the circumcised Jew, who in ignorance of the righteousness of God went about to establish his own righteousness, which was of the law, and that if any or all observances are taken in indifference to the spiritual verities which underlie them, and of which they are beautifully suggestive, the worshiper will find that he but leans upon a brittle reed, that will eventually break and pierce him with a thousand sorrows. "We are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh."

If circumcision did not constitute a man a Jew, and necessarily bring him into covenant engagement and blessing, then we urge that baptism and formally bringing a man into the pale of the Church by no means imply that he is an Israelite indeed, that he enjoys communion with God and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. There are two sides to our Church relations. On the one side we are bound to men, and on the other to God. And the former may be firmly held long after the latter has been broken, or even when it may never have been

established. We may associate in union with the people of God, and yet know nothing of the communion of saints. We may take a place within the circle of the sincere and sacred brotherhood of which Christ is the center, and yet really be not of God's family, which is the same on earth and in heaven. We may sing praises with his people, and yet have no melody in our hearts unto him. We may pray with his worshipers, but not "with the spirit and with the understanding." We may have names to live, and yet be dead. "Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh."

In deciding what is necessary in religion, it is important that we understand man's true state and relation to his Maker. We assume that the declared will of God is the only reliable rule of right and wrong. With the questions what is right and what is wrong are bound up interests and results that are eternal, and consequently none but infinite wisdom is capable of prescribing a rule for our guidance and controlment which is intended to result in the accomplishment of the purpose—the eternal purpose of Heaven in immortal beings. The interests of life, directly related as they are to the endless destinies of the future, are so varied, and often so apparently conflicting—are of such magnitude—that no finite mind can possibly adopt and apply principles for their preservation and furtherance, amid all the changing conditions and circumstances of our earthly state, that will keep them above the effect of unavoidable errors—unaffected and uninjured by the unexpected influences and unforeseen events which

it would be powerless to control. Now take the revealed will of Heaven, not only as the ordainment of infinite wisdom to promote man's highest good as well as the glory of God, but as the expression of infinite purity, and you can intelligently judge of human depravity by the strength of its opposition to the divine will and authority. You need not look to the dark and disastrous wrongs of positive transgression to convict man of total depravity. Just see "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ," and men turning away from it, preferring the darkness. See the incarnate God, full of grace, and truth, and wisdom, and love, proposing friendly and happy alliance with man, and consider the haughty and wicked rejection, and tell me what must be the character of the soul that finds no attraction in this embodiment of love, and purity, and goodness. See the mercy of God revealed in the death of Christ, the gift of the Spirit, in all the means and appliances of salvation, and consider the fact, that though man is well satisfied that they will purify, and ennoble, and glorify him, if he accept the offer of love, yet in no instance will he consent to be saved except under the convicting power of the Spirit; that he must be made to feel that he is involved in ruin before the fearful spell which binds him in depravity and guilt can be broken. You need not talk of gross immoralities in deciding upon human nature, its depravity and fearful capability of evil, for even indifference to the love of God in Christ Jesus is a high crime—a mortal sin.



It evidences such antagonism to the pure and good as to show that the very instincts of the soul are vile. Consider, farther, that man indulges and cherishes his depraved appetites and passions; that in the exercise of the fearful prerogative of freedom he dares to confront his Maker in actual rebellion, and even deliberately and willfully tramples upon his true interests, and honor, and glory, to break those commandments that are holy, just, and good. These considerations indicate what must be done for and in the depraved and guilty soul. The divine law has been broken, pardon must be obtained, and the offended Deity alone can grant it. The soul has steadily and woefully grown corrupt under the effect of sin, and alliance with the Father, fellowship with the Son, and communion with the Holy Spirit, is an utter impossibility. It must then be regenerated and sanctified. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" What can change the feelings of the heart, the aspirations of the soul, the principles and purposes of the life, even in a moment of time, but infinite wisdom and almighty power? Then religion is an individual concernment directly between the soul and its Maker. What care I, then, for priestly absolution? Only let me hear my Saviour's pronouncement, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee," and I am content. I ascribe no significance—though the act were innocent—to human confirmation. Only let the Holy Spirit be a witness within me, and I shall abide in assurance, and know that the things which are freely given are of God. I want no human verdict upon my character or ex-

perience. Only let the King immortal, eternal, and invisible, enstamp his image and superscription upon me, and I shall pass current with the best of earth, and, thank God, eventually with the glorified of heaven. The work must be an inward work—in the spirit, and not in the letter—approved of God, and not of men. I love to contemplate religion as involving the exercises of the soul, reaching out and embracing the great Spirit, who fills immensity with his presence. I love to contemplate it as the gift of God—the work—the transforming power of God, the very fullness of God in the bestowment of his mercy and love in Christ Jesus, of which I may be conscious, and in which I may “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” “God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” “There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” O I love to meditate upon the religion which Jesus gives, as implying the active engagement of the triune God, breaking the power of Satan, separating the soul from his infernal instigation, and subjecting it to the inspiration, the in-breathing of the infinite purity! “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

If what we have said in relation to individual Christian character and experience be scriptural, then we hold that we have furnished us the clew to the real character of the true Church of God. We have said that our Church relations are twofold. On the one side we are bound to earth, and on the other to heaven. On the one side we covenant with

men, and on the other with God. Wherever and whenever the proper covenant obligation is imposed, the sacraments duly administered, the pure word of God preached, and the membership are spiritual in experience and religious in character, you have a true Church of God, whether its existence commenced on yesterday, or in the days of the apostles. And while we would not attach little importance to any thing which the Lord has seen fit to connect with his Church, yet we do say, that to make the validity of the claims of a Church to depend upon its age, its connection with the past, its ceremonies and manner of administering sacraments, is not only to decide without authority of the word of God, but to exalt the earthly above the heavenly; it is to ignore that which mainly gives significance and sacredness to all forms and sacraments. To say that I am no member of the Church of God because I have not been immersed in water, or manipulated by one who imagines that he sees what he cannot point out to others (apostolic succession), is in reality to confront Paul, and avow that he *is* a Jew which is one outwardly, and that circumcision *is* outward and of the flesh. We risk nothing, we think, in declaring that the word of inspiration rests the claims of a Church mainly, as with the individual membership, upon its character, its spirituality, its purity, and the work it accomplishes. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The special purpose in the mind of Christ in giving himself for the Church was to sanctify it

unto himself, "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." When the Church sings, she must sing with the spirit and with the understanding also; when she prays, she must pray with the spirit and with the understanding also; when the word of life is preached, it must be preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and in power." Moreover, the distinctive glory with which prophecy crowns the Church in doing the work of God is plainly set forth: "Of Zion it shall be said this and that man was born in her, and the Highest shall establish her." The great body of believers must hold communion with God, must act in co-operation with him in his great work of salvation. Hence the Church, to be a Church of God, must carry on the work of the apostolic Church when "the Lord added daily unto it such as should be saved." If this be so, then any Church, no matter how correct its general creed, how proper its forms of worship, how regular the administration of the sacraments, is no Church of Christ if it possesses not spirituality and purity, and is not in such hearty coöperation with the Spirit as that he successfully engages its members in carrying on the glorious work of converting and saving souls. This, after all, is the true test. A sensuous service, a formal worship, a carnal ministry, courting the wealthy, anxious about numbers, compromising with the world, giving place to the devil—alas! these may satisfy the unawakened spirit that carries its pride and self-conceit into the service of its Maker, that

sports with sacred things, and trifles with eternal interests, but they can never meet the wants of the broken heart, palpitating with agony, fearing the retributions of the future, apprehending the wrath severe, and crying out under its burden of guilt and woe, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "What must I do to be saved?" "God be merciful to me a sinner!" All these combined, taken even in connection with lives of respectability and morality, are poor substitutes indeed for evangelical faith in Christ Jesus, for the riches of the grace of God, the peace of God which passeth knowledge, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, the ineffable joy of salvation, the witness of the Spirit that I am a child of God, a joint-heir with Christ, for the inspiration of the hope of being like my glorified Redeemer, which at once prompts to purity of heart and faithfulness of life. Let not the Church transfer her faith from God to secondary means and agencies. Wealth is valuable, but let it be sanctified wealth. Intelligence is important, but let it be in alliance with the Infinite Mind, accomplishing his gracious purpose of love and mercy to our sin-cursed race. Influence is to be desired, but let it be in harmony with the spirit of Him who, full of grace and truth, went about doing good. Let the Church remember that the "weapons of her warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Let her make it indispensable that, through Christ, by one Spirit, she has access to God the Father; that she understands the joy and glory

of communion with the Spirit, of fellowship with the Son, and then, as she descends to her daily engagements, she will carry with her the halo of heavenly glory upon her brow, and the inspiration of the Almighty in her heart, begetting a readiness unto every good word and work. Let the Church learn to bring herself, with all her wealth, and wisdom, and influence, to the mercy-seat, and there abide until she kinal glory shall descend, betokening the divine presence and acceptance. O let the Church clothe herself in the panoply divine, put on the whole armor of God, the armor of light! Then shall she shine forth bright as the sun in the firmament; then shall she reveal a character fair as the queen of night, as she sits serenely upon the circle of the heavens, making even the gloom of night beautiful in her silvery light; then shall she be, in her brightness, and purity, and spiritual power, terrible to all the enemies of God and religion as an army with banners. Let the Church ever keep in mind her high character and her grand mission, that the nations are to be blessed by her heavenly light and subdued by the power of her love. Let her feel her weakness and insufficiency as she contemplates her great work of bringing the world—the guilty, godless world—into the embrace of Christ, of contributing to the exceeding eternal weight of glory which comprehends the high, endless destinies of the redeemed at God's right-hand in heaven. Let her ever keep in her heart the assurance that the weapons of her warfare are mighty through God—that by virtue of direct intercourse they are to be

drawn from the armory of heaven, and wielded according to the declared will and special direction of the Majesty on high, to upbuild the kingdom of Christ, to pull down the strongholds of the wicked one.

Allow me, my brethren, farther to maintain that, by parity of reasoning, and in strict accordance with the spirit of the text, he is not necessarily a preacher of righteousness, a minister of God, who is merely one outwardly; that no endowments, no attainments, no earthly authority, can qualify and constitute a man in the high, most important sense, a true evangelical "prophet of the cross." He must be an ambassador for Christ, one sent of God, separated unto the gospel of God; called, not by man, but by the will of God revealed to his consciousness; one who feels, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel;" one who feels that he disregards a sacred obligation imposed by his Master in declining to proclaim the riches of Christ to a lost world. I am not speaking presumptuously. The truth is, there is no assumption so monstrous, and no presumption so outrageous, as that involved in one's taking this honor unto himself—undertaking to discharge obligations so sacred and difficult, to bear responsibilities so fearful, to stand in a relation to God and eternity so awful, without having been impressed by the Holy Spirit, and led into truth and duty in accordance with his willingness to yield to the divine impression. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly." There is nothing but the constraining power of the love and authority of our Saviour, real-

ized in conscious communion, that can enable us, like Peter, to forsake all and follow him; or, like Paul, to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord—to feel though bonds and afflictions await us, yet that none of these things move us—to count not our own lives dear, “that we may finish our course with joy, and the ministry of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” “I am not only ready to go bound unto Jerusalem, but to die for the Lord Jesus.” God is my witness, as he will be my judge, that I would rather feel the inspiration, the elevating and ennobling influence of this spirit, than to trace back my ministerial position directly by a visible line either to John the Baptist or to Peter the apostle. The Pharisees sat in Moses’s seat, but they were Pharisees for all that. Ecclesiastical mountebanks have even sacrilegiously claimed to be vicegerents of the King immortal, eternal, invisible; yet they have done but little of the work of Christ, and evinced but little of the spirit of Christ. But to know that I have been called of Christ, that I am in alliance with Christ, that I enjoy the consciousness of Christ’s presence and blessing, that to live is to live unto Christ, that to die in devotedness at the post of duty is distinctively to die for Christ—the man who thus feels identified with Christ in the work of the ministry very properly cares but little for his relation to Peter, or the Baptist, or to popes or bishops. “Called of God, by the will of God, and not by man,” is his triumphant vindication of his ministe-



rial character. Wherein we have failed to apply the truth, as we have advanced in this discussion, we pray you supply the defect by a personal application each for himself. God give to each of us the witness of the Spirit joining his testimony with our spirits that we are his children! God grant that the Church may inscribe upon her banner, as the emblem of her piety, and the insignia of her character, "Holiness unto the Lord!" God give us a ministry that goes in and out among the people, "determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified!" The Lord give us a Church and ministry whose praise is not of men, but of God!

## THE RIVER OF LIFE.

BY THE REV. L. P. LIVELY.

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Rev. xxii. 1. “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John iv. 14.

NOTHING adds more to the beauty and fertility of a country than broad, flowing rivers. The ever-varying scenery, the towering bluff, the overhanging rocks, and the verdant shore, all conspire to charm the eye, and fill the mind with wonder and admiration. The banks of rivers have been favorite places of resort to the meditative and thoughtful in all ages. The poet, and the orator, and philosopher, have gathered their loftiest inspiration on their banks. Prophets themselves, in olden times, were not dead to their influence. Daniel had his grand view of the coming kingdom of the Messiah on the banks of a great river, while riches of grace and abundant blessings are compared to overflowing streams and gushing waters. It was predicted of the gospel age that “streams should break out in the desert,” and that the dry land should become “pools of water.”

So with the imagery of the New Testament water of life—“a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” And Revelation almost closes with an

invitation so general that none may mistake it: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The imagery of the Apocalypse is most wonderfully blended—stars, angels, beasts, seas, and devils, all conspire, in one grand panoramic view, to develop the providence and judgments of Almighty God. The picture of the text is peaceful and lovely; the view is rather retrospective. Wonders have been wrought, upheaval and disorder has ceased, the tabernacle of God is with man, and we are to behold the agencies employed in the moral conquest of the world—the final subjugation of all to Christ. The one great agent in the conversion and renewal of the world is the gospel of God; and whatever helps may be employed, unsanctified by its hallowed power and spirit, will be found, in the end, to be delusive hinderances. Assuming, then, that the exhaustless provision of the gospel is the theme of our text, we proceed to notice its origin and source.

The river beheld by John proceeded out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Nothing could by possibility have a higher origin—nothing more permanent and lasting. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." "His dominion is everlasting, and his throne ruleth over all." But how inimitable the blending the throne of God and the Lamb—the one the embodiment of all power and glory, the other of all meekness and grace—a union of omnipotence with weakness, of justice with mercy, and of wrath with love. There could by possibility be no discord in the united Trinity to redeem and save

man. The Father "so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son to die, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And the "Son gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." The first covenant reveals Jehovah. He it was that declared to Abraham that in his "seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed." The Jah and I Am of the Old Testament was the one conspicuous person seen in the call of Moses and the giving of the law. So terrible was his revealed presence, and so holy his name, that we are not surprised that it should have been uttered at low breath, and with solemn awe. The Son, during these long years of dim twilight, if seen at all, was under the title of Angel of the Covenant, or Ancient of Days. But preparation was making for his advent. The scale was grand and imposing, so that all eyes must have looked for some new development of Godhead. It might seem to us that God waited long, but in all this there was an object—that all men might be left without excuse before God.

But, when the "fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Hence, the Gospels are full of Christ. The opening of this second great development of Deity was graciously left to the Son. He was veiled in humanity that he might be allied to us, of us, and with us, but God manifest in the flesh. No wonder, then, that a long line of prophets told of his coming, minutely detailed the facts of his

conception, and the place of his birth—saw in the dim, distant future, the manger and the cross. But to remove all doubt that may exist on this subject, hear the attestation of the Father: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." "The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son." In his extremity on the cross he cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Alone he trod the wine-press, and of the people there was none to help. Angels in legion-bands stood ready to assist, but even angelic hands were too feeble to pile up the monumental price of man's redemption. The atonement made, all types and shadows filled, he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost, thus preparing the way for the descent of the Holy Ghost, so that the agencies hereafter employed, whether song, prayer, or the preaching of the word, might be instinctive with life.

The day of Pentecost was no mean occasion. It began a new era in the dispensations of grace. If the giving of the law was preceded by the congealing of the waters of the Red Sea, the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, the gifts of Pentecost were only obtained by the death of Christ, his resurrection, and triumphant ascension into heaven. "I believe in the Holy Ghost," says the Creed, and who would change or alter the language? These godlike steps were all to prepare the way of his coming, that the last of all dispensations might be the grandest and best, more replete with displays of mercy, and more effectual in the enlightenment and salvation of the world. This accords with the prom-

ise of the Saviour: "I go away, but I will not leave you comfortless—he [the Spirit] shall abide with you forever—he shall take of mine and show them unto you, shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come." The language of the Master was, "Tarry at Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." Strange word, tarry! Are not sinners dying? is not the world in darkness? Why not go now, with lightning-speed, and inaugurate at once the kingdom of light? Wait for power—power from on high. This is to be the secret of your success, and the shield of your defense. Thus we see God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, coëqual and coëtternal, in all dispensations, and under all shadows, active in man's redemption.

The first general feature of the river is purity. "And he showed me a pure river of the water of life." Nothing impure could emanate from God. If the gospel inculcated impurity of heart or life—if its tendencies were remotely in that direction—the discovery would be sufficient to brand its author with eternal infamy. It demands a pure heart, a pure life, and promises as reward a pure heaven. It begins at the very fountain-spring of all action, the heart—carries with it its own agents, and embodies its own remedy—the blood of Jesus, and a living faith. Of all the affections, none so pure as love. Coming, as it may, from a sin-polluted heart, it is still easy to be entreated, "thinketh no evil—never faileth." Nothing but the distorted eye of sin can see any impurity in the gospel. There are

some diseases that affect the vision—the patient sees objects double, or finds imaginary demons wherever he may look. So, it is not until sin has warped, bent, and strained the moral vision, that man sees any thing impure in the gospel. To mar this purity was the object of hell; to defile the Son of man, the bold scheme of the devil; but in the temptation and at the sepulcher he was foiled.

If, under the old dispensation, blood was used to cleanse the conscience from sin, so that the worshiper might have no more remembrance of sin, how sublime the figure when transferred to heaven, and you behold an innumerable company, which no man can number, redeemed and washed in the blood of the Lamb!

It is known that two-thirds of the earth's surface is covered with water. How abundant the supply! yet not more than Infinite Wisdom saw necessary to meet the demands of his great empire. Were it possible for these vast bodies of water to become infected and putrid—the fruitful source of disease and death—their combined influence would be sufficient to depopulate the globe. But God has made them the source of many blessings—the native element of myriads of living creatures—great stores that give their abundance for the support of man. Besides, they hold in solution millions of tons of salt and other substances, for the double purpose of self-purification and to season the earth. That was a wonderful utterance which fell from the lips of the blessed Saviour when he said, “Ye are the salt of the earth,” and “the wind bloweth where it listeth.”

Taken up by the absorbent winds in minute particles, the life-restoring virtues of the sea are distributed over hill and vale, to meet the demands of the vegetable as well as animal life. We might think that the countless streams of fresh water pouring into the sea would augment the volume, or so dilute the great mass as to ruin the whole, but God, in his wisdom, has ordered otherwise — not a particle is lost, not one drop annihilated. From whence the waters come, thither they return, again to start on their mission of mercy, to refresh and make beautiful the footstool of God. Nothing more wonderful than the forces of nature—only equaled by the provisions of grace. Water, as prepared by God, is free for all, accessible to all, and is an absolute necessity. By it life is supported, and the world made enduring. Man may be so corrupt, so degraded, that one might think that his salvation and redemption would quite exhaust the merits of Christ. But one sinner is only the type of all. There may be grades, shades, and shapes, from the most degraded heathen to the highest point of refinement and culture; but if there be water to slake his natural thirst, and make clean his body, there is for him the water of life to save his soul and elevate his being.

This enterprise is so great that we cannot comprehend it. To us it would seem to require unnumbered ages to effect the redemption of the world. But so sure as God has provided water for the countless number of his creatures, in every climate and land, so sure has he provided for each salvation; and if one solitary sinner can be found in all the



universe of God, in earth or heaven, redeemed and saved, then there was a chance for all. Nor can man, in his individual or national capacity, be saved by other means than those devised by God. Merely human agencies have been tried, and are now being tried, but everywhere the failure has been wonderful. It may take a nation long years of patient toil to emerge from the twilight of barbarism to the sunlight of Christianity, but if one single example can be found of national independence and good Christian government affording protection to all, then may every nation, no matter how degraded, be disenthralled and elevated.

This is the one view of the subject that gives hope to Christian effort, kindles the missionary spirit, and inflames the Church. It is first personal — must, from its nature, be always so. The argument is this: It saved me; if I can be saved—I, the worst of sinners—surely it can save others. Go, said Jesus, and tell what great things the Lord has done for you. “Come hither, all ye that know the Lord, and I will tell you what great things the Lord has done for my soul.” A man is converted that he may tell it. If he does not, he hides his light under a bushel. In telling it, he carries one of the rills of the water of life to his brother. Look at that stricken Israelitish camp. The flying, fiery serpents have invaded every part—they are in every tent. The sick, the dying, and the dead, are everywhere. But see! what means that commotion, that pole, that serpent of brass? Thank God, it is the remedy! The terms are, Look and live. Did the

restored and healed tell it? Can you not almost, down the long years of the past, hear the exultant shout of thanksgiving and praise that went up to God from the vast camp of happy people?

My brethren, the view is hopeful. The success of the past proclaims the triumph of the gospel in the near future. India, Japan, China, and even degraded Africa, only await the flowing of the waters of the river of life. Once under their influence, life becomes instinctive. Old superstitions, including idolatry, oppression, and crime, cease, and order, harmony, and beauty, take the place of chaos and confusion. So happily has God blended Christian effort with the success of the Church that, if the world is not saved, it is no fault of his. The eternal stream of life is prepared, not in some far-away portion of his dominion, as if to hide it from his sight, but it emanates from his throne, that it may be defended by his omnipotent power, and be forever under his omniscient eye. Now, if the waters of this life-giving, soul-saving stream, are not turned upon the dry, barren waste-places of the world, the fault is not in God. The sin lies at our door—fearful our responsibilities. The heathen, at home and abroad, perish of thirst, and we give them no water—die of hunger for the bread of life, and we feed them not.

The second descriptive feature of the text is, clear as crystal. The banks of a river may be precipitous and grand, the scenery fine, but if its waters are murky and muddy, much of its beauty is lost. Streams of all kinds have their waters tinged, more or less, by the nature of the soils through which

they pass, and to this accidental fact many owe their names. The soluble parts of plants, rocks, and even the heaviest metals, are held in solution, and the appearance of the water indicate their presence. But here we have a grand exception, in itself without a parallel in all the rivers of the world. In the heavenly waters are graciously infused all that is dear, good, or lasting, in all earth or heaven, and yet clear as crystal. The figure used is one of the most beautiful. The natural crystal is no work of art. It has been prepared by God himself in nature's great laboratory, and for pure brightness is unexcelled. Whether exhumed from dark caverns, or gathered upon the sides of lofty mountains, their grace and finish is always admired. Without much stretch of the imagination, clearness, when applied to the ways of God, would imply perfect harmony in all his attributes, a plan to redeem and save man, not at the expense of his infinite justice, not by the overthrow of law and order, but in perfect keeping with law—no abatement of any of its claims. All was met and fulfilled in the person and death of Christ, thus opening to mortal view the hitherto unknown love and compassion of God, astounding to angels, and a ceaseless theme of gratitude and praise to man.

Clearness, when applied to the gospel, would denote its wonderful power of reflection—so clear that it reflects to our moral senses the slightest defects as well as highest graces. As in a glass he beholds himself, and happy for him if, in the view, he is changed from "glory to glory." In the clear gos-

pel is the model of holy living, the make-up of character, the perfect rule of life, as well as the form of all pure and elevated government. It is this one feature in the gospel that deters men from its study, makes the wicked and dissolute hate and detest it, because in it they see themselves—their pride, hatred, malice, and lust, are displayed. No wonder they attack the gospel. It is not surprising that those ungodly defilers of all that is good, pure, and lovely, seek to banish the Bible from the land. In it they see themselves, and the view maddens and drives them to desperation. A small piece of glass, when properly prepared, reflects the image of any object coming before it. So God, in his wonderful providence, by the agency of Sunday-schools, Bible Societies, and a sanctified press, hangs up, as so many mirrors, little portions of the word of God, in all the great thoroughfares, as well as marts of trade, that man may get a look at himself. The result of such a look is surprising. It accounts for all the friction, disorder, and misery, that exist in society; beholds nature in perfect harmony with grace, and science in full accord with revelation. Our want of adjustment to the will and mind of God is the one prolific source of all unhappiness. For this reason Christianity has its crosses that continue through life—the struggle goes on until sin is subdued. The happy and good are so just in proportion as they resemble Christ. The likeness of God, regained by fallen man, argues the highest attainment of grace.

The third and last quality of the river that John

saw was, that it was the river of life—the fountain, source, and origin, of all life. In some mysterious way to us all life and all being is connected with the atonement. But for the intervention of Christ, man had never survived the fall. I am not surprised that some of the ancient pagans worshiped rivers. The Nile was almost literally a river of life. To its annual inundation Egypt owed its wonderful fertility—but for this the country had remained desert and barren. The fallow-ground prepared, the aqueducts and sluices all ready, with longing eyes they watched for the rising mist that proclaimed the near approach of the coming waters. At last, far up the stream, they behold the hazy cloud, the sure precursor of the coming flood; and now from hill-top and mountain the happy people shout until the broad valley is filled with melody and mirth. It is not much wonder that the people paid divine honors to the source of all their wealth, and made the river that gave them bread the object of their worship. The Ganges, of India, has opened its sluggish bosom to become the tomb of thousands of deluded worshipers. How many millions have made long and perilous journeys, crossing continents and oceans, to bathe in some distant river whose waters possessed some imaginary virtue! I can have some patience with the dream of the alchemist, and his fruitless search for the fountain of perpetual youth; I can pity the thousands that rush with fanatic zeal to some distant river to wash away sin, and thus prepare for heaven; but my contempt is supreme for that class of men that keep open, night and day,

fountains of moral impurity more deadly than the sirocco, to poison and debauch the young and old of both sexes. Nor have I ever been satisfied with the meager, lame, and feeble efforts of the State to arrest the evil. While the pulpit should form no unholy alliances, become the advocate of no political party, in or out of power, its high office is to rebuke sin, and utter its warning voice in all ears, so that all may be warned. It has always seemed to me that there was a sort of unholy alliance between the powers that be and the prince of darkness—a compromise with sin, and a league with hell. We invoke the aid of no secular force to give power and potency to the gospel—let it meet and confront the powers of darkness in its own native power and divine right—but, at the same time, we protest against the custom of legalizing vice, and clothing the worst of sins with the solemn sanctions of law.

As streams of living water fructify and make beautiful the earth, they become, in a special sense, fit emblems of the spiritual and pure. Nor is natural water more necessary to the body—more life-preserving and life-giving—than the water of life to the soul. Perhaps I have not given sufficient emphasis to the fact that water is preëminently the gift of God. In all of its forms, and at all times, it is God's gift. Man, with all his boasted power, cannot create a single drop of water. So all the elements of salvation are from God. To use these elements is justly our work; so that we are copartners with God in the culture of the world, and in

working out our own salvation. For the use we make of the free grace of God we are responsible, and our responsibilities increase with our privileges. One prophet declares that a fountain should be opened in the house of David, for sin and uncleanness; that a part should flow to the former, and a part to the hinder sea, and that in summer and winter it should be liable to no fluctuations—no ebbs, no falls. Another prophet says that every thing shall live whithersoever the waters went. Would that we had just conceptions of the virtues of the heavenly waters! then would there be less reliance on human means, and more dependence upon God. Remember that “whatsoever things are pure, lovely, honest, and of good report, if there be any virtue, any praise,” all comes from the gospel. Nothing but a power so replete with divine energy could meet the wants of man, and the demands of the world. He is blind, deaf, and dead, and nothing short of a personal contact with the meritorious blood of Christ can restore him to life. Every individual Christian should be a type of the whole body of believers; for this reason our religion must be personal—personal faith, repentance, and obedience. The only advantage to be gained by union is simply a concentration of forces, and the opening of new channels for the flow of grace, and to swell into irresistible volume the glories as well as the triumphs of the cross. If the dead soul lives, breathes, and reflects the image of God, it is simply because, in some way, and by some agency, it has found access to the water of life. And the life

begun here must culminate into life eternal. The kingdoms differ not in kind, but in degree. The same river that waters the Church, and makes glad the city of God, fills heaven with subjects as well as earth with glory.

If the hopes inspired by the gospel are not to be realized, if its transforming power is to find no expression in the boundless future, how inexpressibly sad the brightest pages of earth's history! How brief the record of the first man—"and Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died!" Death is simply the absence of life—is opposed to life—the war between the forces goes on until death conquers. Our hopes are laid in the dust, our jewels are taken away, and gloom and sadness fills our hearts. Under all this darkness and gloom, with heaving bosom and streaming eyes, we ask, O God, is there no hope, no end? are we always to die? Can it be that we are destined to non-existence? that the grave closes forever our being? While these dreadful questions wring our hearts and hang on our lips, our faith settles on the word of God. Did he ever deceive? Has one single promise of all the thousands he has given failed? These gems that sparkle in his chaplet of grace inspire our faith and make sublime our trust. Has he not said that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," and that "the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to eternal life?" Here only we rest—here are the rocks on which we plant our feet, and bid defiance to the raging storm.



Let death devour,  
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,  
If firm the word of God remains.

In nature, no anguish exceeds that of thirst—no death so terrible as to perish for the want of water. In vain the effort to describe the horrors of such a scene! The swollen tongue, blood-shot eyes, parched and blackened lips, and fetid breath, proclaim the sufferings of a starving man. The rich man in hell did not ask to have the fires of the eternal pit extinguished, but for one *drop* of water to cool his tongue. Of all the dread horrors that belong to the region and state of the damned, none exceed this, that it is waterless! No river of life floods the gloomy prison of the lost with its crystal streams. No material fire is needed to make a hell—only banishment from the river of life—a thirst never to be allayed—a moral want for which infinite goodness has made no provision. He who willfully spurns the rich provision that God has made for him here, must hereafter reap the rewards of his own doing.

Once more, and we are done. See yonder throne, before which the thrones of the kings of the earth sink into utter nothingness. Its base is the universe, omnipotence its defense. Its subjects are all agencies—all powers. From beneath the throne flows the river of life, leading to a state where calendars are never used, and time is never reckoned. Here evening is always followed by night, and night by day. Thank God there awaits us, if good, a cloudless, nightless being! It is eternal life!

## THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

BY THE REV. L. B. ELLIS.

“Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” Matt. v. 25, 26.

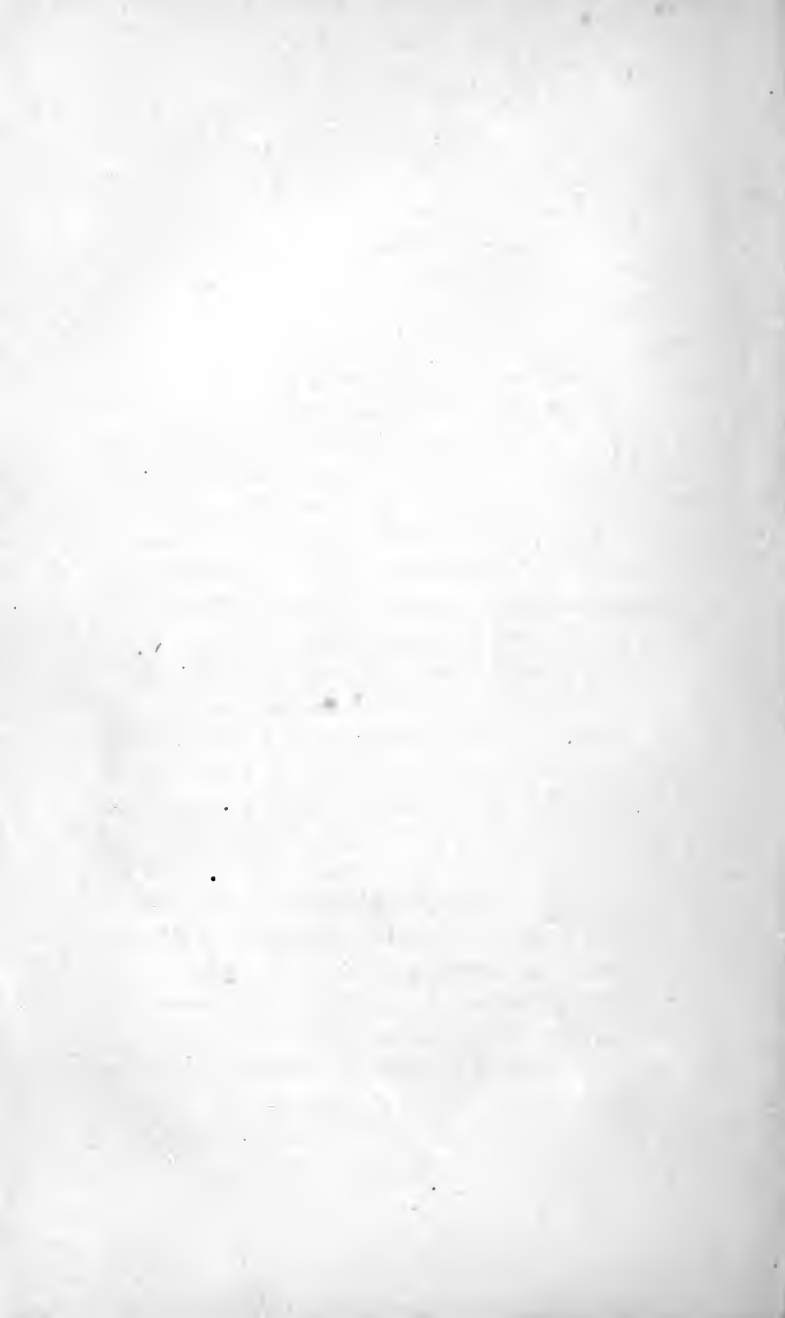
THIS is the language of our Saviour, and is uttered in the form of a specific command. Found as it is in the imperative form, we may not disregard it, except at our peril. It is of vital concern to us, then, to know the full import of it, that we may intelligently comply with the requisition, obtain favor, and escape the impending evil.

In order to a proper understanding of our text, and a clear view of what it requires of us, we will inquire:

I. Who the adversary is with whom we are so positively required to agree, upon which such momentous consequences are suspended. On this point several commentators have been examined, but with no great degree of satisfaction. The commonly received opinion, that our Saviour refers to conflicts growing out of ordinary transactions between fellows, is, to my mind, obviously defective. The solemnity of style adopted by our Lord, to say the least of it, indicates a much more important, a profounder and deeper, meaning than this—a fear-



*Yours truly*  
*L. B. Ellis*



fully momentous spiritual and eternal meaning—the full import of which we will do well to consider with feelings of profoundest reverence. That God is not the adversary referred to in the text is clear enough, for the reason that he is *nowhere* in the Scriptures so represented. On the contrary, his “tender mercies” are declared to be “over all his works.” Besides, the *love* which God displayed in the gift of his Son for the salvation of man, precludes the idea of such a relation by the Father of mercies to man as this appellation would establish. God is *not* the adversary. Neither is Satan, who is the adversary of both God and man, because we are commanded—*positively* commanded—to resist him. The Saviour nowhere requires man to willingly acquiesce in, or agree to, that which is wrong. Who, then, is the adversary with whom we must agree? That this question may be answered clearly, and at the same time, if possible, with commendable brevity, we will, so far as we may be able, inquire into the character and demands of the moral law, and man’s relation to it. I know it has been said that the gospel abrogates the law, and that we are not concerned now as to what its demands may or may not have been originally, or what man’s relation to it may have been, as we are not any longer under law, but under grace. It is true that we are under a dispensation of grace, but it is not true that the gospel abrogates the law, or releases man from its demands, or secures him against its penalty, except on conditions. When St. Paul preached the doctrine of justification by faith, this very point was

raised, whereupon the apostle declared positively that he did not make the law void through faith, but that he established the law—that is, that the gospel did not supersede or abrogate the law, but it fulfilled or established it. The apostle, on another occasion, on the same subject, quotes Jeremiah: “Then will I put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” This quotation was made by the apostle to prove that the gospel does not contravene, but agrees with and confirms, the law. The gospel does not abolish the law, but “magnifies and makes it honorable, so that God may be just and the justifier of the ungodly.” The Saviour furnishes a last and final analysis of the law in answer to the question, “Which is the first and great commandment?” viz., “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, and on these hang all the law and the prophets.” Hence love is the fulfilling of the law, as the Scripture affirms. Love is the very gist of the gospel demand. Love to God and man is the culmination of Christian excellence. “Perfect love casts out all fear.” The quality or character of the law is clearly furnished by the Apostle Paul: “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” The law is spiritual. But what of man’s character? and how does it accord with the character and demands of the law, which, as above, is declared to be just, and holy, and good, and spiritual? Now, it is very apparent that nothing less than the qualities or characteristics

above set forth can put man in harmony with the law. It is perfectly clear that if man is not just, and holy, and good, and spiritual, he is in conflict with the law. The attitude he occupies is certainly one of antagonism to the law. St. Paul says the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. This does not apply to the apostle particularly, but to man generally, and amounts to this: The law is spiritual, but man is carnal; the law is holy, but man is unholy; the law is good, but man is not good. You perceive, therefore, that the law is adverse to sinful man, and condemns him. The law, then, is thine adversary, sinner. With it you are required to agree quickly. By this means your condemnation can be removed, and the consequences of the conflict escaped, but by no other means can such a result be accomplished. This brings us to consider,

II. The time when this command of our Saviour is to be obeyed. The language is nervous, the demand imperative. Quickly is the word. No tardiness is allowed—no waiting is permitted. Immediate and decisive action only promises success. Life is the only time in which this great result can be achieved. Hence the injunction, “While thou art in the way with him, lest at any time.” O the perplexing uncertainty of life, and the appalling certainty of death! *Lest at any time.* Death comes frequently without premonition. “In the midst of life we are in death.” *Liable to be delivered by operation of law to the Judge at any time.* We inquire,

III. Who is the Judge? There can be deference

of opinion here. God is the author of the law which wicked men oppose and dishonor. God will maintain and honor his own law, and conduct the awardments of eternity in wisdom and justice. The omniscient God is Judge, before whom all must appear without disguise, each in his own proper character. "The adversary deliver thee to the judge." Here the Saviour, by way of illustration, refers to a simple proceeding in criminal jurisprudence with which all are familiar: arraignment by authority of law before a proper tribunal—the cause adjudicated, the culprit condemned and delivered into the custody of the officer whose duty it is to execute the sentence of the court or inflict the penalty of the law—"the judge deliver thee to the officer." This brings us, in the next place, to inquire,

IV. Who the officer may probably be. If you will allow me to deduce an answer to this question from general Bible-teaching, I may be able to render satisfaction. A conclusion arrived at by legitimate inference is considered sufficient in scientific research, and ought to be so accepted in interpreting Scripture. That God has generally employed agents to execute his will and purposes among men, is a fact well established by Scripture. This, we may reasonably conclude, will continue to be the divine plan. While it is a fact that we do not know much about angels or celestial beings, it is at the same time a fact well known to Bible-readers that God generally revealed his will and executed his purposes in our world through the agency of this class of intelligences. It is safe, therefore, to infer that



angels are, and will continue to be, God's ministers—ready to do his bidding and execute his purposes. Celestial beings were put on duty to guard the way of the tree of life. Angels revealed important facts to Abraham. Angels were sent to accomplish God's purpose, and inflict his fearful judgments on the devoted cities of the plain. The Roman guards at the holy sepulcher were terror-stricken and confounded, falling as dead men to the ground, when the angel came to roll away the stone from its mouth. Angels constituted the ascending Saviour's escort, and superintended his coronation. An angel defeated the purpose of the wicked Jews concerning the Apostle Peter. Angels will proclaim the end of time. The voice of the archangel and the trump of God will wake the dead, and call the multitudes of earth of every age to the judgment of the great day. St. John informs us that angels will wind up the affairs of men in this world, God saying to them, Thrust in your sickles and reap the earth. It is clearly deducible from Scripture that this class of intelligences have been, and will continue to be, agents or ministers to execute the divine will. Is it not reasonably probable, then, that angels, as God's officers, will inflict the penalty of his violated law, and consign incorrigible sinners to their final doom? "The judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison." We notice,

V. The nature and extent of future punishment. A prison, probably, illustrates the condition of the sinner's suffering future punishment as strikingly as any object that could be presented—dark and loath-

some, terrific and repulsive in every feature, and dreadful in every aspect. There is an immeasurable increase of anguish and horror if the imprisonment is perpetual. "Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." This language is supposed, by some at least, to teach the doctrine of restoration, or at least to justify the belief of the doctrine of rescue from future punishment, and therefore stands against the orthodox idea of eternal punishment. We will examine it in the light both of Scripture and reason, and try to arrive at the truth. The truth is what we want. The truth is what we need. It is the truth that makes men free. The doctrine of restoration—the substratum of universal salvation—is supposed by the people generally to be comparatively new.

A sentiment obtains, to some extent, and it may be on the increase, favorable to that which is new, seemingly for no other reason than because it is new, and is supposed to indicate progress and a corresponding opposition to that which is old simply because it is old. But truth cannot possibly militate against any interest of man, either in time or in eternity; nor can it cease to be truth, or lose any of its force, by reason of the length of time man may have been in possession of it. But the doctrine of restoration has none of the glare of novelty. It antedates the advent of Christ by several centuries. It is anterior to the exodus from Egypt. Its equivalent may be found in the creed of Zoroaster, and in the mythology of Egypt, and of the East generally.

I refer to the heathen doctrine of transmigration. The foundation-idea is the same in both systems. The pagan metempsychosis, Roman purgatory, and modern restoration, all stand on the same foundation. The gist of the one is the gist of them all. In fact, the latter, each in succession, is the substitute of the former. The central idea in them all is atonement for and expiation of guilt by human endurance or human agency. The historian cannot fail to perceive that purgatory was invented to meet the pagan demand of the times in the Roman Empire after the edict of Constantine. It is obvious to the thoughtful that the hypothesis of atonement by man for his own sins stands against and must supersede the doctrine of atonement by Christ. But the Scriptures teach clearly the necessity of the atonement by Christ. Without such atonement there could be no pardon. Sin can be pardoned only with reference to Christ's atonement. "That God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," says St. Paul. If man can by his own suffering atone for his sins, the sufferings of Christ must stand for nothing, there being no necessity for them. Neither can the suffering of the just for the unjust be reconciled with the principles of justice, if the guilty can, by his own suffering, expiate his own guilt. God's administration would become inexplicable, and the divine demand for the atonement by Christ a monstrous cruelty. But the atonement is pleaded by some as the ground of restoration. The fallacy of this plea becomes apparent so soon as we learn from the Bible that the justice of God

will not permit forgiveness to any but "them that believe." Faith implies at least this much: a recognition by man of his need of the atonement, and an humble trust in the merits of it, or, in other words, a thankful and contrite acceptance of God's plan of salvation. But if he reject this plan, there is no other sacrifice for sin. "There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." I have already said that the doctrine of restoration was by no means new. It was held by many in the days of our Saviour. Our text certainly includes the premise. The Saviour well and truly here puts it on the proper ground, "Till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." No one will, or can, object to the sinner's release when he makes full payment. That is the exact basis on which it is put in the text.

We will see about the payment. It has already been shown that salvation can only be obtained through Christ, "for there is salvation in no other." But the sinner has rejected Christ, and the adversary, the law, has delivered him to the Judge, and the Judge has delivered him to the officer, and he has been cast into prison. When will he be released? Obviously, not till he pays to the uttermost the full demand, which can be nothing less than the demand made by the law, which is perfect obedience. If a man declines the offices of the Redeemer and the benefits of the atonement, and persists in it till the law incarcerates him, or, in other words, till his probation is ended, or until death, if you please, it is thenceforward to him as if there was no Re-

deemer nor any atonement. The law henceforth forever says to him in thunder tones, "Pay that thou owest." What does he owe? Perfect obedience. But one violation—and he is guilty of many—forever ruins the perfection of obedience. The law will not, cannot, accept any less than perfect obedience. One transgression, therefore, renders payment impossible. The impossibility of payment establishes the impossibility of restoration. The impossibility of restoration, therefore, of necessity establishes the fact of eternal punishment. Those who demur to the doctrine of eternal punishment seem never to have gone below the surface of the subject. They adopt the hypothesis that God could as well save the wicked as not. The truth that the punishment of the wicked is a necessary, and hence an unavoidable, fact, beyond the control even of Omnipotence, and not a capricious proceeding that ministers pleasure to a vindictive tyrant, appears never to have penetrated their minds. "Two cannot walk together except they be agreed." No more is future happiness possible to a wicked man. Out of harmony with the divine government, his nature adverse to the divine nature, his attitude is that of antagonism to the law of God. As effect will, must follow cause, his state cannot be other than that of unrest, hatred, malice. These, like stinging serpents and scorching flames, will torment him forever. The opinion that man's place of abode constitutes him happy, or otherwise, furnishes ground, no doubt, for a great deal of error. The sequence of this is, that character goes for nothing,

or, in other words, that it is not what a man is, but where he is, that renders him happy or miserable. The converse to this is always true—true in time as well as in eternity. I presume no one will undertake to maintain that Daniel in the lions' den, or the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, or Paul and Silas in the dungeon at Philippi, were miserable. These men of God could defy adverse surroundings, and rejoice in conscious rectitude. Where a man is, amounts to very little; what he is, amounts to a great deal. Likeness to God, made partaker of the divine nature, is the language of inspiration. Much more than place of abode constitutes heaven. Goodness and happiness are inseparably joined—without goodness there can be no happiness. Where holiness is, there is happiness. *Where holiness and happiness are, heaven is.* So also of wickedness. Sin and misery are inseparably connected. Where there is sin, there is torment. *Where sin and misery are, there is hell.* The lamentation of Milton's fallen angel illustrates well this point: "If I look upward, hell is there; if I look downward, hell is there; if to the right or left, hell is there; *hell is everywhere—I myself am hell.*" This accords with the language of our Saviour relative to the future state of the wicked, when he says, "Their worm dieth not." "Every man will be rewarded according as his works have been." But man is fallen, and out of harmony with God's government, and is condemned by his holy law. God's plan of salvation, accepted and acted upon, works in man a moral change, and puts him in harmony with the law. "The law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Those who are thus made free, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, or its demands are met by them, "Christ being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." But we must walk after the Spirit, or conform our lives to the Spirit of truth and holiness, the abounding grace of God ever present to help our infirmities, and lead us in the way everlasting. It is character, then, that makes destiny—do not be mistaken on that point. Allow no theory, how specious soever it may be, to deceive you here, because you are working out an eternal destiny. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling while God works in you," for rest assured that success is achieved only as we work in harmony with God, in concert with his plan of salvation. Agree, then, with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him—while thou art in the way—while life is prolonged—while probation continues. Opportunity ends when the adversary delivers thee to the Judge. With what humility of soul, with what meekness of spirit and contrition of heart, should poor, morally insolvent man accept the terms of reconciliation offered by his Creator! It is sheer madness to resist (held as he is in the iron grasp of a just and holy

law, which will not, cannot, abate one tittle of its demand till Christ is accepted as the end thereof for righteousness), and propose terms of his own—an act of gross contempt—and aver that Almighty God is unjust if he does not save him. It is character that makes destiny. Man's character is of his own voluntary construction, otherwise he could have no proper character of his own. It is not in the nature of force—mere power—to produce either virtue or vice. These are moral qualities, and can only be the result of moral action. No action can be moral unless it is voluntary. It is clearly a fact, then, that it is not within the scope of extraneous power to make a man holy against his will. Be admonished, then, to "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

The only means of payment declined, the only time in which payment could possibly be made, is passed. As it is not in the nature of extraneous power to produce virtue, it certainly follows as a fact that God could not, if he would, save under such circumstances. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." *Man must abide the results of his own work, stand in his own proper character, and accept forever, willing or unwilling, the destiny which that character has made for him.* His character confirmed



and settled in evil, his destiny must be forever evil. But a higher and a brighter destiny opens to our view, which St. John was permitted to see and describe. The veil was withdrawn, and the refulgent glory of the upper sanctuary revealed: while with admiring wonder he looked upon the saints in bliss in beauty arrayed, and was regaled with their swelling anthems of praise, he was informed by a celestial messenger as to their identity. "These," said the angel, "are they who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These robes, which are the righteousness of saints, have been procured by a faithful compliance with God's gracious plan of salvation. Righteousness renders them suitable for the society of angels and the just made perfect. "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." But if the sinner is lost, it is because he refuses to be saved, for "the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." May all heed the gracious admonition, and come to the Saviour!

## GOD THE SOURCE OF ALL BEAUTY.\*

BY THE REV. H. A. BOURLAND, A.M.

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Ps.  
xc. 17.

WHEN creation, in its virgin purity, rolled from the forming hands of its Creator, it was beautiful. The Bible, grandest classic of all ages, gives the verdict of the Almighty upon surveying his completed work: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." The old Greeks called the earth, even in its fallen state, *Cosmos*—beautiful, or ornamental—for it is still so, notwithstanding the blight that has fallen upon it in consequence of sin. Solomon says, "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time." Isaiah, the poet-prophet, speaks in majestic prose: "God himself, that formed the earth and made it, he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he made it to be inhabited." God is the author of all beauty, and we are called to be imitators of God, and hence ours is a mission of beauty—to brighten the world with our words and actions while we live, and, dying, leave an influence behind us which shall be as the mellow glory of the setting sun. It is impossible to realize such a character, and project ourselves upon humanity in such a beneficial way, unless we propose God

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\* Commencement Sermon before the Graduating Class of Dallas Female College, June, 1879.

as our ideal, and seek him as the source of all good. May his words, written in his own book, be braided into all our thoughts, words, deeds! Beauty is usually limited to the emotions, excited in the mind by objects which address the eye, such as landscapes, painting, sculpture, or statuary; or the ear, as music and poetry; but we shall give it a much wider application, for, as a queen, she reigns in the realms of mind and spirit as well as the domain of matter. So we may, with great propriety, speak not only of beautiful landscapes flecked with flowers, diversified with streams, and festooned with vines, of beautiful pictures touched to life by the cunning hand of the artist, of sculpture and statuary which finds angels in stones. But there is beauty in poetry, in strains of music, and in virtuous actions. There is beauty everywhere, if we but lift our couched and cultured vision and behold it. There is beauty in the blue heavens above us, and the green earth beneath us; in the orchards when in bloom; in empurpled vineyards when the clusters are hanging in their ripeness; in the modest flower that blooms in the sequestered vale, and the giant oak that withstands the storms of centuries; in a child's actions at artless play; in the unselfish devotion of a mother at the bedside of suffering innocence. It has been usual to classify beauty under four forms, as it is seen in nature, art, the intellect, and the moral nature. We accept the classification as philosophical, only desiring to add that the unit of beauty is in God. There is not a curve in geometry, nor a sentence in language, nor a virtuous action, which may

not be traced to him. As the seven prismatic colors of the rainbow blend in one pure white light, and as all the rays of light which make our day may be traced back to the sun, so all the principles of nature, art, mind, and morals, blend in one unity, and that unity is God.

Two factors enter into all the works of God—utility and beauty. As one has happily expressed it, “The works of God combine their substantial value with their attractive charms. It is the law of nature. The landscape which incloses your life with its supply enchants your eye with its vista. The sky which overhangs you with its blessing at once subdues and exalts you by its grandeur. The tender grass that grows to grain gleams in verdure. The stream that quenches thirst ripples and sparkles in the sunshine.” If the only design of God in the physical creation had been utility, it could have been so constructed that it never would have afforded us pleasure. The sky might have worn a somber hue, the grass might have been made yellow, the forests a monotonous brown. But how different! From the dandelion, that crouches in the grass, to the lordly magnolia, throughout the floral world, there is beauty; from the dew-drop, that spheres itself upon the clover-blossoms when the rain is over, to the stars that orb themselves above us, throughout floral and stellar worlds there is beauty. But what is physical beauty? To understand it, one must have a sympathy with nature; for no more can a blind man appreciate combinations of colors, no more can he who has no music in his soul interpret the grand

symphonies of a Mozart or a Beethoven, than we can understand the beautiful in nature, unless our minds have a susceptibility to take in the delicate pencilings of the divine artist upon the fields or in the clouds. What is that common property which plays upon the human face, and trembles upon the wing of the butterfly, shimmers in stars, and dances upon sunny waves, reposes upon the dimpled cheek of a sleeping babe, and gleams in the phosphorescent billow, tints the lily of the valley, and is iridescent in snow-crystals upon mountain-summits? There is a unit of beauty in all this diversity, and in this law of unity in diversity may be found the principle which runs through all the woof of nature. This in part answers the interesting question proposed, and yet it admits of a fuller definition. Beauty is not only to be traced to unity in diversity, but it also consists in that perfect harmony which makes all the parts agree together, and thus bespeaks in loudest praise the wisdom of the Lord our God. Or, to vary the figure, every separate object has its own peculiar tone in the grand orchestra of nature, from the simple sharp to the majestic basso; and there is beauty only when each chord gives its proper sound, and every mood is satisfied in the sublime performance as we listen to nature's anthem rising from the plaintive minor to the thundering jubilate. This argument itself, as one has said, "confutes all the pretentious babblings of modern pedantry about different centers, and different periods of creation, and all loose theories of spontaneous development, as if there had been many deities at work on their

elements, as if creation had been a factory of whirling wheels and whanging hammers rather than the universal voice of God in the calm. We could refute them all by pointing to the flush of common beauty, and the mellowing of kindred charm in which all things repose, revealing a single plastic hand, a single presiding power." Take a cell or bioplast, and subject it to the microscope, and it is the same in man, and beast, and fowl. Analyze it, and it is inorganic matter, structureless, and without any power of motion; but under certain conditions it begins to weave the invisible threads into form, but who can tell what that form will be? But there is a designer unseen, who has a plan, and now it begins to unfold, and the albuminous clot takes on shape, and from the same matter the divine hand fashions the war-horse, the soaring eagle, immortal man. It is the beautiful design of the Lord our God which regulates all production—we live not in a world of chance. We have dwelt upon this point of physical beauty that we might trace it to its source in the mind of God, and justify the deep philosophy of the Scriptures. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. In him we live, and move, and have our being. He sends the rain upon the just and the unjust; he giveth snow like wool; he holds the winds in his fists; he gives fruitful seasons.

We proceed next to consider art, in relation to our subject. Art is but a copy of nature, and he or she is the best artist who most faithfully reproduces the characters of nature. The arts dignify and eu-

noble us because they bring the mind into this contact. In proportion as a people are refined and cultivated in the arts, in that proportion should they be spiritual, for all art has its foundation in spiritual conceptions. We select from the arts best adapted to illustrate this thought, and because we have not space to consider others, these three—music, painting, poetry. We mention music first, because it occupies the lowest place as an art. While it stirs more profoundly than any other the emotional nature, yet it is the most transient. Painting abides with us continually, and we wander through a picture-gallery entranced, half-worshipful. Every time we gaze upon a work of true genius new beauties reveal themselves. Poetry is the divinest of the arts. It is the concrete of all. Sculpture, painting, melody, are represented in the numbers of the poet. But by all these means we come nearer to God. There is music everywhere—in the spheres and among the angels and redeemed who stand upon Mount Zion with harps in hand, and among the purest-hearted sons and daughters of men. The power of music can scarcely be exaggerated. Ancient mythology tells us of Orpheus, by whose strains the very trees danced, and the dull, insensate rocks started from their beds. The fire-breathing bulls of Colchis forgot their rage while Jason took the golden fleece. The youthful David exorcised the evil spirit from Saul by his mellifluous harp. No wonder a wise man said, "Let me make a nation's ballads, and I care not who makes its laws." Music should be cultivated in our homes, and

schools, and churches. Painting too should be cultivated. However rude the hut or unpretentious the furniture, the walls should be hung with chaste pictures. I care not how beautiful our homes are made—the more attractive they are, the fewer the temptations of the young men to seek the brilliantly-lighted saloon. Some object to tastily-arranged homes, but surely they have consulted God's works to little profit. Take a sea-shell, and see with what delicate tints God has painted it—and for what purpose? To be the home of a mollusk. Certainly he cannot object to the proper adornment of our homes. Let the choicest poems lie upon the center-table, to be read by the young. And of all poetry, the sublimest are our incomparable hymns. The grandest lyrics in the world are to be found in the hymns of Charles Wesley, and Philip Doddridge, and Dr. Watts, and others of their class.

I take a step forward, as the subject of intellectual beauty comes before me. Nature is to be admired in all her moods—in spring, when dressed in her gayest robes, and all the vegetable world experiences a resurrection unto life. We love autumn too,

Breathing now

Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,  
And from a beaker, full of richest dyes,  
Pouring new glories on the autumn woods,  
And dipping in warm light the pillared clouds.

We love to look upon the meadow, as the dewy morn smiles upon it, and see its diamonds glittering with rich splendors; but our admiration of nature gives way to wonder as we contemplate the creations



of genius—the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, and Correggio. Architecture, with its five orders, so ancient, and beautiful, and useful as well, impresses us; but what shall we say of the powers of mind which have produced these results? It is said an artist, walking one day with a friend, stopped abruptly before a rough piece of marble, and said, “I see an angel in that block of stone.” That was an ideal angel: the beautiful conception was in the mind, and as flake after flake fell off from that mass, the beautiful ideal came more and more into objective expression, until it was well-nigh perfect.

The most symmetrically-formed face, with rosiest cheeks, and clearest complexion, and graceful movements in every step, cease to win our admiration if these are but the envelope of an ignorant or vicious mind. Again, consider the mental imbecile: let no intelligence gleam in the merry smile, or twinkle in the eye, and we feel compassion for them, but no admiration. But intellectual greatness wins our praise in whatever department or sphere it is exerted, and this without regard to the sentiments entertained or expressed. Homer, the father of poetry, will live while time shall last, and Shakespeare shall be ever acknowledged as a prince in the realm of letters.

Having spoken of beauty in nature, art, and mind, it remains for us to consider moral beauty. This is, indeed, the foundation of all beauty—all else is a fading flower that is not based upon this—this is the perfect fruit. The true nobility of man, the

ornament of woman, the attractive robe wherewith angels are habited, is the beauty of holiness. History records many instructive examples of the morally beautiful. Take, for example, the character of Ruth. The story is one, to all pure minds, of transcendent interest. Even Voltaire "dwelt with enthusiasm on the marvelous sweetness and simplicity of this gem of oriental history." This Moabitish damsel had married into an exiled Hebrew family, and after a short season of wedded life her husband died, leaving her poor in this world's goods, but rich in the possession of a new-found faith. Orpah, of the same nationality and religion, had become connected with this same family, and had shared the same misfortune. The widowed mother-in-law called her two daughters-in-law to bid them an affectionate and tearful farewell, and return to the land of her nativity to find a sepulcher with her fathers, but they were reluctant to give up one whom they loved. But Orpah returned—not so did Ruth. A new life had been inspired into her soul, and she said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." What devotion to widowed sorrow and helplessness! Daniel, in the midst of a corrupt court, maintaining his integrity, although it involved the possible loss of life, retiring to his room for daily prayer, although against

the king's commandment, holding on his course amidst so many influences calculated to sway him from the orbit of duty, is another conspicuous example of the morally beautiful. Stephen, too, upon whose upturned face comes down a gleam of heavenly radiance while praying for his persecutors, is beautiful, but the culmination is only reached in the cross of the Crucified. He who dwelt in the bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth, who was the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, laid aside his glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, and veiled himself in humanity, that he might lift up the fallen, unbind the chains of the prisoner, pour eyesight upon the blind, and music upon the deaf, and open the pearly gates of mercy to you and me.

O lovely attitude! he stands  
 With melting heart and bleeding hands;  
 O matchless kindness! and he shows  
 This matchless kindness to his foes!

The beauty of the Lord our God was upon him. He was the only absolutely perfect flower that ever bloomed upon the stalk of humanity—a flower which flourishes alike, in Norwegian snows and burning desert sands, throughout all seasons and ages. There are single beautiful traits of character in different persons, and even clusters of graces in a few. Abraham is distinguished upon the sacred page for his faith, Moses for meekness, and Job for patience, but no one ever did combine all these excellences in his person. Christ did this, being the one altogether lovely among uncounted myriads.

We can only study the moral character of God in him. The elements of moral beauty met in him, and were elucidated in his speech and actions. What were these elements? First, truth. There is something so intrinsically excellent in truth that even a heathen philosopher said, "If truth should appear on earth, and display her lovely form, all men would fall down and worship her." Not so, alas! Truth did walk incarnate in the Son of God. He was the Eternal Reason in flesh—the Divine Logos. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; but so far were men from falling down in adoring love before him, they crucified truth. Truth is beautiful, but we have so many disabilities of education, and such imperfection of understanding, that we fail to comprehend truth in all things. We have only fragments of truth—precious gold mixed with much alloy. But truth is so related that by patience and perseverance we may find enough of truth to set us free from a thousand deformities. Let us study truth in its correlations, and we are not liable to any fatal mistake. Cuvier from the smallest bone could construct the entire animal to which it belonged, and assign it its rightful place in the zoölogical kingdom. The simplest axiom of mathematics applies not only to calculations here, and is useful to the architect, the mechanic, and the engineer, but the astronomer uses it as he calculates eclipses and determines the parallax. If we have only portions of truth, it must exist in perfection somewhere. But where? Our creeds are all more or less mixed with error; and as to modern science in its most

advanced stages, we know how unreliable are its most dogmatic assertions. No book on science has passed to a second edition without corrections and emendations—our most beautiful systems are found faulty. The familiar apothegms that have passed into universal speech, and have crystallized into infallible maxims, are found to be the grossest errors—such as, “Honesty is the best policy,” and “Praise the bridge that carries you over safely,” and “Still water runs deep,” etc.; whereas we know that when honesty becomes a line of policy it ceases to be honesty; and as to praising the bridge that carries one over safely, many a rotten bridge has done that for a time, but has at last fallen, burying beneath its *débris* many precious lives; and so far from still water running deep, *still* water does *not* run at all. We should therefore suspect any mere human utterances. But is there no infallibility? None on earth—it is found alone in God. He opens a window in the inspired word, and lets his truth stream through it upon our understanding; and if we would follow these rays back to their source, we should behold them focalizing in Deity.

Again, justice is an element of moral perfection. How the unsullied ermine becomes the incorruptible judge! Justice is only felt to be oppressive where there is guilt. What would earth be if injustice should raven in our streets, and oppressed innocence should have no tribunal where its wrongs could be redressed? Human society is dependent upon the execution of justice, and heaven is vocal with the song, “Just and true are thy ways, thou King of

saints." Again, we would mention as an essential constituent of moral beauty, purity. It is so wherever found, whether it be in the limpid water which percolates through rock and sand, rolling on like a ribbon of silver through emerald plains, flashing its bright sheen into our eyes by day, or mirroring the stars upon its bosom in the still and solemn night, or in the lily that droops its modest head—chosen emblem of our Redeemer—or in chaste woman, purity is always lovely. But where is absolute purity to be found? Ah! where? It is no earth-born production—it is to be found in God.

I mention but one element more—benevolence. We use the word in its divinest sense. It is that outgoing of a generous nature in words and deeds of kindness toward others needing help. There is nothing so godlike, for God is benevolence. Need I point to illustrations of this? Only look about you, and every thing we see, or hear, or feel, tells us God is love.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;  
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same;  
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame;  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze;  
Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;  
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part;  
As full, as perfect in a hair as heart;  
As full, as perfect in vile man that mourns,  
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:  
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Let me remind you, in conclusion, that the text is a prayer, and prayer is the language of need and helplessness. We trust we have sufficiently indicated in the discourse the desirableness of beauty, and have given some of its elements; but let me add—and may it be graven upon every heart as with a pen of diamond—that it is impossible to secure this exalted character by our own efforts. God's nature must be communicated by the power of the Holy Ghost. We must be born from above. We love the old phrase, and shall ever cling to it—"Get religion." We cannot acquire religion, we cannot improve into religion, we cannot cultivate the latent germs of religion in us. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Who can know it? who? Not only so, having obtained the new nature, it must *grow*. Here comes in the culture, and improvability, and the perfection of character which we are to seek, the end of which is to be like God. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." True, the mark is high, and can never be fully reached, but it may be forever approached, and so the soul may go on acquiring forever. What a glorious thought—we are to forever approach God! I am glad it is so, otherwise heavenly felicity might terminate. We all feel the need of such a God. Given a beautiful act, I can conceive of one more beautiful still. Let the artist produce a picture after years of laborious effort—he will not be satisfied—it will be open to criticism. No one ever built a house that he did not find, when the last touch was given, how he might have made

it more convenient, or more ornamental. No one ever composed a poem but he found some line to cross, some figure to correct, some measure to mend. We never realize our ideals. The student looks back over the opportunities past, and soliloquizes: If I had my school-days to go over again, how much better improvement I would make! The best Christian upon the verge of life, about to go into the presence of his God, finds nothing to plead but the infinite mercy of his Judge. No one ever realized the purport of existence out of God. It was said in the days of Rome's greatness, "All roads lead to Rome." So all our studies should lead to God. All study, properly conducted, does lead to him. Is it geometry? he is the great Geometer who has so nicely calculated the orbits of the heavenly bodies that they have not varied a hair's-breadth since they began their revolutions. Is it painting? the best efforts of human genius are but tolerable imitations of him. Is it music? the true mission of music is to suggest the Infinite. Let us cultivate our æsthetical nature more. Heaven is beautiful. It is the many-mansioned place, and every dweller therein is a son and daughter of the King of all kingdoms. Home should be made as near like it as possible. The home where piety dwells, and love reigns, and prayer ascends, and song resounds; where each member of the family vies with the other to make the household happy; where the father and mother are patient toward the children, and the children are obedient toward their parents—this home is a miniature of heaven.



## PLENARY RESOURCES OF THE DIVINE POWER AND GOODNESS.

BY THE REV. JAMES GRAHAM, A.M.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.” Eph. ii. 4-7.

1. It is often affirmed that the “world is poor.” It is so only in a modified sense. Whenever we adjust ourselves to the real condition of things, it has its value; but in our haste to accumulate, as well as in the gratification of our inordinate desires, we misappropriate, and, by our own ignorance and perversities, turn good into evil. Under the influence of such a course, how fluctuating is wealth! how soon its fountains become dry! nay, how often it “takes wings and flies away!” And gold itself—how valueless to procure permanent good to the soul!

2. How unsatisfying is our knowledge of *facts*—of *things*! Of *facts*.—In what variety of phases are they represented to us? From what different points do we view them? Even our own memories are often at fault. History itself stultifies its candor by contradictory statements in the records of time. In the whirl of this tumult, growing out of the infirmities of our nature in a fallen state, “confusion be-

comes worse confounded," and we are led to yield credence to—we know not what. We have but an imperfect view of *things*. We look merely at the surface. The interior we have no means of exploring. We are ignorant of the essential substance of all things.

3. Science itself is a history of contradictions. Successive generations detect the fallacies of the preceding, and sons correct the errors of their fathers. Thus in chemistry. In its earlier periods it represented that there existed four elementary principles in nature. Now, scientists tell us there are upward of sixty. So in astronomy, sublimest of sciences. What a contrast between the systems of Ptolemy and Copernicus! And in later ages, how has world on world been added to the solar circle! To the same effect are the conflicting developments of geology. This science is yet in comparative infancy. The old and formerly hidden *strata* of our solid globe have been dug into, and learned men have labored hard, but vainly, to establish infallible dates. They read and reread these grand sheets of nature, printed and stamped by the ponderous machinery of aqueous and igneous forces, but they discover no *certain* periods. *Geology is defective, in that it has no chronology.*

4. We are compelled to the conclusion that if the views of man in reference to the physical world are so incongruous, he is but ill prepared to evolve correct theories in reference to his own origin, or to the end of his being—his own eternal future. Hence we turn with humiliated and chastened feel-

ings away from ourselves to the sublime unfoldings of divine revelation; its grand truths, like coruscations of light beaming from the infinite depths of essential Godhead, pierce the darkness, and clothe with glory the truth as it is in Jesus. Revelation addresses itself to our faith, and the understanding becomes illuminated with the radiance of celestial glory, while reason acquiesces with the harmonies of the plans of God to save the soul, and the correlations of faith and reason are established in the recognition of the institution of redeeming love.

I. In pursuing this subject, we notice briefly some of the resources of the divine wealth. "God, who is rich in mercy," etc.

1. In a cursory view of material existence. We are at once presented with all the variegated aspects of nature in the amplitude of the earth's surface, as it stretches out to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west—the vastness and mighty swell of the ocean, the grandeur of the mountain in its sublime elevation to the skies, the beauty of the valley, the verdure of the plain with its teeming herds, the opening of the morning as the landscape outstretching in its loveliness lies, the brightness of noon, and night, when in the bosom of its darkness the world goes to sleep. But, rising from these mundane scenes, the soul, leaning on the wings of the storm, or ranging the pathway of the planets, or contemplating the scenery amidst the glow of a thousand suns, as they roll along their yet unmeasured arcs, along the ranges of far-off immensity, we are led to exclaim, in the language of

Inspiration's royal bard, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." And here we learn more of the divine resources.

2. In animated nature. Look we into ocean's depth, with its myriads of moving tribes—its terrible monsters sporting along the expanse of the watery plain, then sinking into the caves of the sea, they defy the storm; the ever-working myriads of animalcules, that during six thousand years have been building islands and continents; the reptile hordes moving in the waters and on the land; the insects of earth in their many thousand varieties; the fowls of the land, of the waters, of the air; the beasts of the wood and the plain—and man! the noblest of all earth's denizens, moving in majestic grace and commanding mien. Angels too! they crown the ranks of created being—these in grand array of order and degree far exceeding the utmost limit of man's imagination.

3. Intellectual and moral existence. What is spiritual and intellectual being? How awfully mysterious! how unspeakably wonderful! We stand, as on the threshold of our natures, and peer into the depth of our emotions and thoughts, yet we stand amazed in our own presence, and tremble at the phenomena of development. Here are found the beginnings of greatness. Here only are found activity, force, power, harmonizing with the condition of things. Along all the magnificent range of inanimate nature there are no active forces. All is passive—a vast desolation of inertia. But in intel-

lectual being there are inherent energies. The understanding—how astute, how versatile, how penetrating, and how vast its capabilities of comprehension! Notice the inventions of men—their progress in science, in art, and government. Ever advancing, and with ever-increasing facilities for improvement, we have no means of limiting the onward movement. This higher department in men and angels, with irrepressible forces, can elevate itself, and expand to inconceivable heights and unknown bounds, walking as it were along the great Father's dominions as its legitimate range; or, by a contrary course, debase itself, corrode its being, degrade its nature to perish in its own undoing. In this department we find a higher source of divine wealth.

4. In the nature of God. But here we falter, waver, recoil! Dare we attempt to look into the awful depth of Godhead? We consume in the intensity of glory. It is infinite. We dare not assume to fathom or explore. We contemplate the revolving seasons as alternately they give and then receive back the fruits and foliage of earth. We survey the fathomless ocean as the great source of all the moisture of our globe, the parent of the rains of heaven and the rivers of earth, and again receiving these back into itself. We observe the power of the storm, the rush of the tempest, the violence of the volcano; but where, O tell us where are hidden the ulterior springs of power—the interior forces of their action! We can only refer these to the mysterious Jehovah; and while our hearts would adore, we tremble at his power. “O God,

be thou our God, and in the pavilion of thy power hide us."

## II. Death, moral or spiritual.

1. This condition, or state, is brought about by separation from God, as the source of spiritual life; the flow of which keeps the soul in union with God, as when man by "transgression fell." The supply being cut off, man is found dead.

2. The state of spiritual death may be represented as a state in which one is regarded as indifferent, not seeming to be affected by any thing, and may be illustrated by one asleep—the functions of the physical being are going on, but the senses are in repose, dormant, oblivious to all the surroundings, whether of security or danger.

3. So is fallen man estranged from God and his goodness—indifferent to his spiritual welfare, and his interest in the kingdom of heaven—his affections lowered, degraded. Found in this state, or rather invited by the penitent seeking unto God, he becomes "quickenened." The recreating energies of the Spirit of God infuse new life, and man is represented as living anew in Christ Jesus.

## III. The object is to elevate and establish our race. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

1. When any one receives Christ in the exercise of simple faith, the heart's living trust, he is raised up—realizes a spiritual resurrection—is "risen with Christ." He is raised from the death of sin into "newness of life." He is adopted into the family

of God, and by this action of the Holy Spirit becomes more nearly related to God. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

2. He occupies and moves upon a more elevated plane of being. In his uplifted affections.—They are set on "things above, from whence spiritual supplies are drawn." The supreme desires are unto God. As the psalmist: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee." The "courts of the Lord" are the places of his delight, in divine worship, together with the "communion of saints."

3. In the enjoyment of a higher and advancing civilization, where the benign influences of Christianity permeate and diffuse their light and vigor through all the ranges of society. Notice the political condition of the peoples in contrast with countries where the sentiments of Christianity do not predominate. How rude their arts! how undeveloped their science! Among the latter the light is as the gleaming of the stars of night, while contrasting with the former is the "Sun of righteousness," "full-orbed in his whole round of rays complete." The latter, "in the region and shadow of death"—to the former, "life and immortality" are brought to light.

4. Christian governments have within themselves the elements of preservation and development by equity in laws and justice in administration. As a result, true patriotism, which constitutes the strength of the body politic.

IV. The promise of the future "in the ages to come."

1. In the experience of the individual. However great the joy infused into the new-born soul, it is only as the twilight of morning to the advancing glory of the open day. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."

2. The felt security—as a child in the keeping of its father. The fatherhood of God, the *Ægis* of divine power. Nothing can harm him if he be a "follower of that which is good."

3. Triumph in death. Lazarus "died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom."

4. The triumphs of Christianity "in the ages to come." Christian principle expands and develops in ever-increasing ratio. Survey its history. Few and small at first were its adherents. Jewish prejudice, like an impregnable barrier, opposed it. Grecian philosophy, with its sinuous sophisms, as set forth by their learned ones, and the alluring rites of their worship, pandering to the lusts of the lowest of the people, turned its tide of impurity against it. Roman oppression, from the throne of the Cæsars, sought to crush it. But onward was its course, silently but surely—like Pleiades and Orion, from the far-off vaults of night, its rays at first pale, but steady. Now the full glories of the day have come, and shine on nations afar. Swift-footed messengers of light, of life, and love, call to each other from the tops of the mountains, over the valleys, and along



the plains. The angel of the Apocalypse has girded himself to fly through the "midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach;" soon to announce along all the plains of being that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." In that age of triumph and peace the nations shall "learn war no more." They shall "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks." Then "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together."

5. "In the ages to come"—after the resurrection. We pause here, standing on the verge of the unfathomable depth of *eternity to come!* Contemplate the multitudes of the redeemed "which no man could number!" Victorious all! They enter the kingdom of the eternal future! The "gates lift up their heads," "the everlasting doors" open wide. What scenes ineffable meet their gaze along the plains of eternal duration! Light from the central orb of inextinguishable being gilds their onward pathway! Happiness, welling up from the depths of Godhead, pours in unceasing flow! But language fails. Words cannot formulate the beatific glories of the happy saved. Imagination darkens in the "full glories of the Lamb" on Zion's hill, and Fancy folds her wings to rest amidst the bowers of the tree of life.

## THE STATE OF THE DEAD.

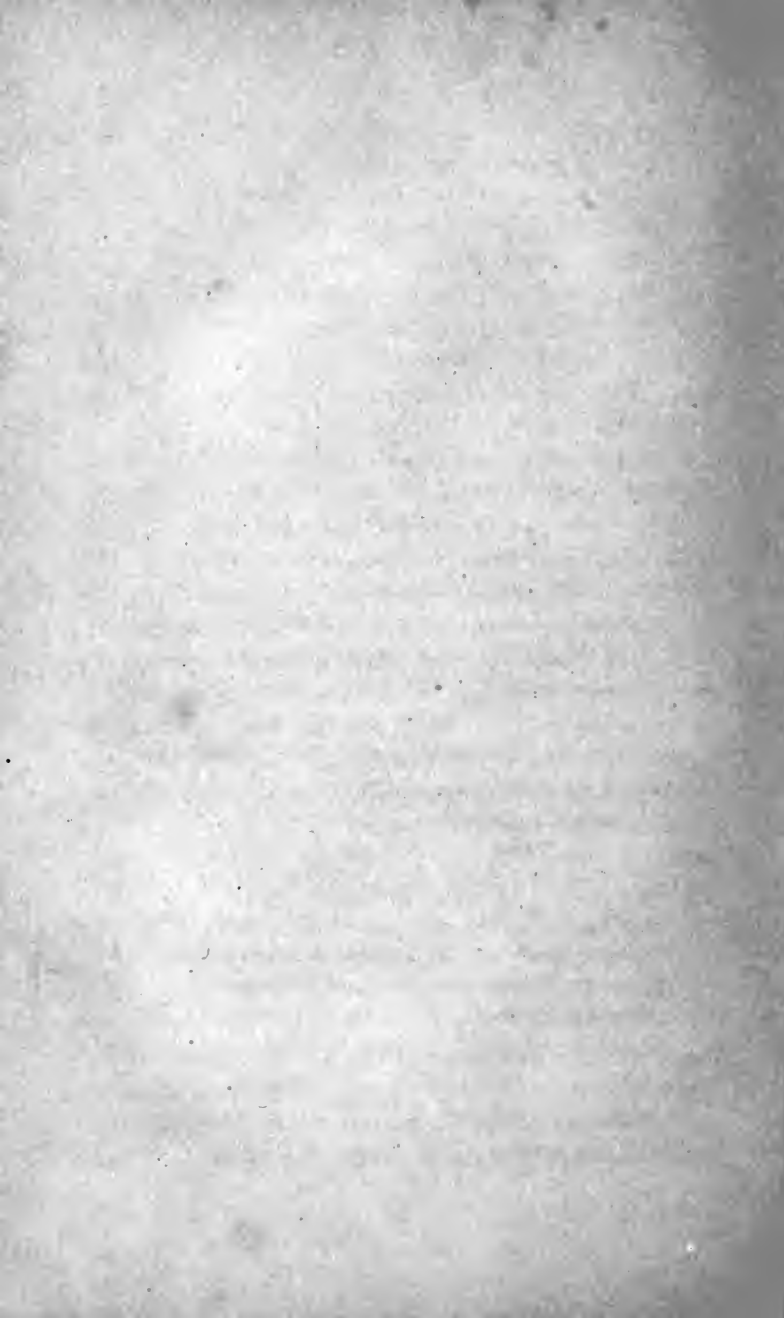
BY THE REV. M. C. BLACKBURN.

“ I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

It was the object of the Apostle Paul in this lesson to cast some light upon the darkness of the tomb, and thereby dispel the gloom that for ages past had been gathering around and enveloping the future state. For many long centuries the human family had been anxiously trying to pierce the midnight blackness that hid from their view the final destiny of man, but all their efforts had proven fruitless: no light was elicited by their toils and labors in this direction, no ray of hope came to reward their long and weary search, no voice answered back from the stillness of the grave in response to their oft-repeated inquiries with reference to the state of its inhabitants. All, all was hushed in unbroken silence.



Yours Truly  
M. C. Blackburn



Death had been pronounced to be a rayless night, a dreamless sleep, an eternal slumber. Strong men walked down to its cold and cheerless waters with dark forebodings, and amid their groans of anguish and shrieks of despair, its dashing waves and raging billows swept them out into the great ocean of eternity. The sage and the philosopher, the boasted scientist and the astronomer, had alike been unsuccessful in their attempts to solve the mystery. While they had been able to unearth great and valuable facts with reference to science; while they had been able to throw floods of light into earth's darkest caverns; yea, while they had been able to ascend the star-paved pathway, to sound the heavens and to gauge the stars, yet they were not able to gaze into the "great beyond." They could, at best, but "soar on conjecture's trembling wing," while doubt, uncertainty, or despair, was the result of their inquiries. All beyond the tomb was wrapped in the sable curtains of night. Silence and Darkness, twin monarchs, reign supreme in that lonely and solitary region.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne  
In rayless majesty now stretches forth  
Her leaden scepter o'er a slumbering world.  
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!  
Nor eye nor listening ear an object finds:  
Creation sleeps.

Such was and is the condition of all who have no revelation from God, or have rejected the revelation given. They sorrow for their dead, having no hope. But, blessed be the name of our God, we are not left

thus to wander in darkness and uncertainty, for the inspired apostle says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which sleep." No; Paul would not have the Christians at Thessalonica ignorant concerning their loved ones that were "asleep." He would not have them ignorant, like the heathen sages and philosophers, on this subject. And through the Church at Thessalonica the words of this grand, inspired man of God come down to us. Yes, glory be to God! Paul would not have us to be ignorant on this subject either! No; he would not have us to be ignorant, like the Humes, Voltaires, and Paines, of the infidel world. He would not have us to be ignorant, like the Darwins, Huxleys, Tyndalls, and boasted skeptical scientists of the present day. Their learning, their knowledge, their greatness, is all confined to this earth, and to this short life. All that they can see and know is this side the tomb. Their hopes, their expectations, their joys, their all, is confined to the narrow circle of three-score years and ten. As they approach the grave, they must then acknowledge their ignorance. When their loved ones die, they sorrow without hope. O how dark, how dismal, must the grave appear to them! How hideous the form of the "grim monster," as each moment he plies his weapon in the narrow sphere of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down the fairest bloom of their family circles! O how miserable, how ignorant, with all their earthly learning!

How kind, how compassionate in our God, that he does not leave us in this condition of ignorance

and uncertainty! He would have us know the state of those that fall asleep in Jesus. He would have us cross death's narrow isthmus with firm and undaunted step, and, over a pathway of glory, by faith to ascend to the summit of the everlasting hills, and gaze with open vision upon a scene of sublimity and beauty, without a cloud to dim or obstruct the sight. It is not a scene over which we should sorrow. Our end is not a leap in the dark like that of the infidel.

“For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again:” if we believe this—argues the apostle—then we have the assurance that God will raise those also who fall asleep in Jesus. Their resurrection rests upon the very same basis, is accomplished by the very same power, and is just as sure to be accomplished in the future as it is certain that Jesus rose from the dead over eighteen hundred years ago.

Do you believe the testimony given by the twelve apostles to the fact that Jesus rose from the dead? rose conqueror over the powers of death? Then must you also believe that God will bring those who fall asleep in Jesus with him at his second coming.

Do you believe the voice of sacred history that comes rolling down through the ages of the past, from the doomed city of Jerusalem, from the plains of Judea, from the hoary mountain-tops of Calvary and Olivet, that Jesus died and rose again? If so, you must also believe that those who fall asleep in Jesus shall rise again.

Believe you the testimony of the heavenly messengers, the dazzling angels, as they saw him rise

in resplendent glory from the sepulcher, and come forth the conqueror of death, hell, and the grave? Then you must believe also in the resurrection.

Do you believe the testimony of "above five hundred witnesses" who beheld him after his resurrection upon a mount, previously appointed by Jesus, in Galilee? If so, you must believe also that those who fall asleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Do you believe the testimony of his disciples, as they behold him upon the summit of Mount Olivet, as he rises amid the acclaims of the angelic hosts that come dashing through the skies to attend him on his triumphal march, as he rides upon the chariot of cloud to take his seat upon the throne of the universe? If so, you must also believe in the resurrection from the dead.

Then, Christian, do you mourn over the devastation and ruin wrought by the ruthless hand of death in your family circle? If so, Paul would not have you mourn as those who have no hope. For as Christ certainly rose from the dead, so also shall your loved ones, who have fallen asleep in Jesus, arise all immortalized, spiritualized, and glorified. They shall arise in the likeness of Jesus, for John declares that "we shall be like him," and David said that when he arose in the likeness of his Lord, he should then be satisfied. Then weep not, sorrow not without hope, for they have only gone over to possess the heavenly land in advance of you. Yea, as to their bodies, they only sleep, and their dust lies out in the city of the dead, there quietly to await the coming of our Lord, when, by the



mighty shout of the angelic choristers and the trump of God, they shall be awaked from the long slumber of the tomb.

How significant the words of Paul: "Them also which sleep in Jesus *will God bring with him.*" This declaration of the apostle being true, the doctrine held and taught by some, that the soul sleeps with the body in the tomb till the resurrection-morning, is false. While the body sleeps the immortal spirit, freed from the clogs of mortality, from its prison-house of clay, is rejoicing and striking its golden harp around the throne of Jesus in heaven, or at the command of the Lord it is flying upon some errand of mercy to some distant world. It has scaled the mount of God, and with shouts of victory enters the capital in triumph, and receives its crown. In accents of triumph it bids farewell to troublesome doubts and distressing fears.

Adieu, adieu! to storms around,  
I'm safe within the harbor found:  
Temptation, sorrow, sin, and pain,  
Shall never interrupt again.  
He strikes aloud some heavenly string,  
In shining realms where seraphs sing,  
"Worthy the Lamb!"

From this bright clime of glory will God bring those with him who fall "asleep in Jesus." The abode of the soul, then, between death and the resurrection, is with God and his Christ. Paradise and the third heaven are regarded by Paul as being the same place, for he uses the terms synonymously when he first says that he "was caught up to the

third heaven," and immediately afterward he calls the place "Paradise." Again, he expressed a desire to depart and be with Christ. This we believe means nothing less than being with him around his throne in heaven. Here they find their associations to be among the angels and the illustrious dead of ancient days. Here they meet and converse with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and the saints of all ages; but, bless God! the best of all is, they shall dwell with Christ in glory, and at his second coming he will bring them "with him."

No wonder, then, that Paul did not want us to be ignorant with reference to their state. What necessity for sorrowing like those who have no hope? I have no doubt that every time a child of God falls asleep in Christ there is rejoicing in heaven among the angels and the saints that are in the presence of God. Myriads meet him at the pearly gates to greet him on his safe arrival. Millions throng the golden street as he passes along in his triumphal car of excessive glory. And the angels will greet him with ten thousand welcomes as he enters the eternal city. Death to the Christian, then, is simply a step out of the present into the future, out of earth into heaven, out of sorrow into rejoicing. "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." Those who are alive at the coming of the Lord shall not go before those who are dead, or asleep. It is true they shall not die, but they have

no advantage over those who are dead. They remain just as they are, without any change, until the dead are raised; then they shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up in the clouds together—with the risen—to meet the Lord in the air.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” How imposing the scene here portrayed to our view! The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power to make up his jewels! How different from his first advent! Then he came in humiliation, now he comes in pomp and glory; then he came in poverty, now he comes in the riches of his power; then he came as a babe in a manger, now he comes as a conqueror; then he came as a child of sorrow, now he comes with the shouts of rejoicing; then he came alone and unattended, now he comes accompanied by all the armies of the sky; then he came to redeem, now he comes to judge the world in righteousness; then he came as the despised Nazarene, now he comes as the “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Human language is too lame, words are inadequate to the task, and the imagination falters as we attempt to describe the scenes of that great day. The time in the history of the universe has rolled around in which the world is to be judged. The summons has gone out through all the universe to the ransomed of the Lord, to the angels, and to the archangels, to repair at once to the throne, and pre-

pare to come with the Lord to the resurrection and to the judgment. We see them coming from every direction, and from all the various planets to which they had been sent on errands of love and mercy. There comes one convoy from Mars, another from Jupiter, another still from Saturn, and yet another from Uranus; and so they come from Neptune, Mercury, Venus, and ten thousand other worlds, assembling around the throne, until at last the vast concourse have all assembled. O what breathless silence pervades the vast multitude! Millions of spirits, poised upon their golden pinions, await the command of the Lord. All eyes are turned toward the throne. The very lips of the King are watched with the deepest anxiety. At last in terrible majesty the Lord steps forth. Hark! He speaks! The command is given. The armies of the sky wheel into line, and with a mighty shout they leave the courts above. Down through the portals of the sky with eager joy they fly. Down to this old earth they come to resume their bodies from the tomb. With lightning-speed they come dashing past old Neptune, Uranus, the sun, and the moon. With a mighty, loud, prolonged shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, they descend; and as they come in sight of earth, they raise a shout that rends the heavens, shakes the pillars of the universe, and reverberates from world to world. At last they halt in mid-air, and the mighty Gabriel advances, and plants one foot upon the sea and the other upon the land, and declares that time shall be no more! Then he cries with a loud voice, "Come

forth, ye dead, to judgment!" The dead in Christ rise first. Glory to God! The old mossy tombstones are falling, the graves are bursting, the dead are rising! What indescribable joy! What loud hallelujahs fill the air as soul and body are reuniting! The multiplied millions of God's children, risen and glorified, looking back upon the vacant and dismantled graves, unite in one grand shout of triumph over death, crying: "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?"

"So shall we be ever with the Lord." In yonder world we have parted, and have met to part again; but now we have met to part no more forever. O blessed thought! to be with the Lord and Saviour forever! And who would not exchange this world of sorrow, sickness, pain, and death, for one where we shall dwell with Christ our Saviour, in "the realms of the blessed," upon the ever-green mountains of life forever? No more sad farewells to be spoken; no more heart-rending separations to be felt in that sun-bright clime! Death and the grave are now numbered with the things of the past. And every heart is tuned to the glad chorus: "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! praise ye the Lord!"

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Yes, poor, stricken, wounded heart, there is blessed comfort in these words of the apostle. Hope, radiant from the eternal world, beams in every sentence. The dark veil that hides from our view the heavenly land is partially lifted, and we are permitted to look and be comforted. Look by the eye



## THE ATONEMENT.

BY THE REV. D. J. MARTIN.

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”  
Luke xxiii. 34.

THESE pathetic words were among the last uttered by the Son of God while expiring upon the Roman cross. They were the expression of an innocent sufferer, suffering—the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. His sufferings were *intense*—*beyond description*. The agony and travail of his soul, as he trod the wine-press alone, are too deep and awful for human or angelic analysis. He poured out his blood for the world’s redemption. Over the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ angels hung in breathless silence, studying profoundly the character and object of his sufferings and death. Philosophers stood amazed as he hung between the shaded heavens and the shaking earth—struggling, lingering, dying for lost and ruined man.

Doubtless his vile persecutors were astonished when they saw, demonstrated before their eyes, his unparalleled patience, forbearance, and anxiety for the salvation of our unfortunate race, as he gave his blood freely for us all. Such a being as Jesus Christ had never, in all the history of the world, appeared upon the earth before. His like had never been seen, nor never will be seen through all the future that is to come. He stood preëminently above all,

showing to the world his spotless character, his absolute, perfect obedience to the divine law. His death upon the cross has been the study of men and angels from then till now, and doubtless will be through time and through all eternity. Philosophers, poets, and sages have thought, discoursed, and written upon this most awfully sublime subject, and died without understanding its deep design. It stands out before the world one of the most difficult moral problems with which we have to grapple. The flight of time and the unfolding ages of eternity will continue to reveal new and hidden features concerning the atonement made by Him who "spake as never man spake." The interests of time and eternity concentrate in the divine sufferer. The weight and responsibility of opening up a new and living way for the temporal and spiritual welfare of man on earth, and his salvation in heaven, were infinitely great. No man can scientifically, philosophically, nor biblically, understand the entire meaning of the atonement while veiled in the flesh. Enough, however, has been revealed, if complied with, to save all of Adam's posterity. The necessity of the atonement, its character, its effects, and its extent, are deep and profound subjects, and have engaged the attention of the wise and good of all ages. Different opinions are, and have been, afloat in the world among Christian denominations concerning the atonement. No doubt it is right that these differences should be where they do not touch essentialities. But no Christian man can doubt the necessity of the atonement and still be a Christian,



because Christianity is the conditional outgrowth of the atonement. There could not be, in the very nature of things, such a system of Christianity as our fallen world is blessed with, in the absence of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. Christianity is evidently the gracious, living product of the atonement. If Christianity is a necessary element in the world in order to its salvation, then the atonement must, unmistakably, be a necessity. Of course there are some characters in the world who are infidel inclined, and who say they cannot see the necessity for the atonement. Whether they are honest and sincere in their belief is for them to determine. With that I have nothing to do in the discussion of this subject, for I only propose to discuss briefly the necessity, nature, and object of the atonement made by Jesus Christ for our sin-defiled and fallen race.

I. The necessity. The necessity for the atoning act of the Son of God in behalf of man grew out of the violated law which God, our Maker, gave to Adam and Eve, our first parents and legal representatives, in the garden of Eden. Man was made in the image of God; he was, therefore, evidently pure and perfect. He was, doubtless, made a free moral agent, with the ability to stand or fall. There could have been no necessity for giving him a divine and holy law to keep if he had not the freedom and ability to keep the law or to violate it. Therefore the giving of the law to our legal representatives necessarily carries with it the freedom and ability to render obedience, or to violate the law, as they might choose. If neither the one nor the other

could be done by them, then the law was not necessary. If they were in some way forced to violate it in accordance to their creation, they then could not, in the very nature of things, be responsible for the violation. And to have made man upon any other plan than the one upon which he is presented to us in the word of God, would have been to make him a mere machine, to act only as he was acted upon. He would, therefore, have had all the responsibility of a machine, and no more. The conclusion must necessarily be reached—that, inasmuch as God gave to man a divine and holy law to keep, he must have possessed the freedom and ability to keep it or to violate it. That a divine and holy law was given to our representatives, no one who believes in the word of God can deny. Coming, therefore, as it did from the Infinite Being, who is perfection himself, it must of necessity be complete, and wanting in nothing. It could not be otherwise than like its great Giver—absolutely holy and perfect. It required perfect obedience, and made no provision for sin. Of itself it stood forth empty of mercy. It knew nothing of forgiveness. There was no provision in it for *any* sort of failure on the part of its subjects. Nothing but perfect obedience could satisfy its demands. Therefore eternal happiness hung upon its perpetual obedience. There is no way of escape from this conclusion; for the law was, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” We, therefore, evidently see what the law was, and what it required; and that universal and eternal happiness depended upon perfect obedience. But alas! that

this divine, holy law was broken by our first parents in the garden of Eden, no one who believes in the word of God can deny.

The idea of sin in the moral world can only exist in the transgression of moral law. What, therefore, the moral law requires must of necessity be obeyed. If there is disobedience on the part of its subjects, the disobedience is the creation of sin, and it is sin itself. And in this way we can account for evil in the moral world. "Sin is the transgression of the law." Where there is no law, there can be no transgression—if no transgression, no sin. And where there is law, it does not necessarily follow that it shall be violated; but it necessarily follows that it may be violated, or that it may not be violated—this is left entirely with its subjects; because law presupposes that its subjects have the ability to keep it or to violate it. The sin of our representatives evidently consisted in the actual violation of this divine, holy law. The violation of this law was a disobedient action, and as an action of disobedience was, therefore, eternal in its duration. It could not be recalled. As an act it must stand without cessation. We might as well undertake to conceive of a time or period when God himself will cease to exist, as to suppose a time in this life, or in the world to come, when an action of disobedience will cease to exist; hence the necessity of the atonement. For the law knows nothing when violated but to demand in tones of thunder the eternal punishment of the violator. The violation must live and burn in the conscious individual through the

flight of time and onward roll of eternity. Death was and is the penalty. This signified separation from God and every thing holy; and this death, or separation, occurred the moment the forbidden fruit was eaten. How gloomy paradise appeared to the guilty pair as they secluded themselves, as they thought, and sat alone in solitude! Angels who had been their constant companions fled from the scene of desolation. No heavenly convoy came to greet them with smiles. Even the birds had lost their charm and attraction for the place; their musical notes had become funeral dirges. Death had written itself in their souls and in their bodies—in a word, they were living, walking spectacles of death. They lived in death, and death lived in them, and so it does in all who are under sin. The law had been broken, and there they were with the eternal weight of their own disobedience upon them, and upon their posterity. Was there any way of escape? None; because they could not undo what they had done. Could they not reform so as to secure the favor of God? No; for there was no chance, according to the broken law, for reformation. The condemning shades of time had settled upon them. The winds of heaven sung their fate in dolefully death-like wails. Life had become death—heaven exchanged for hell—happiness for woe—joy for sorrow—light for darkness—the music of paradise for the choral thunder-peals of despair. Well might the guilty ones seek to hide themselves in some recess of a once happy home; but God's omnipresent, blazing eye is ever upon all his creat-

ures. No one can dig his home so deep in the mountain-caves but that God will see and call the hermit to account. "The deep tract of hell hides nothing from his view." Things small and large are naked before him with whom we have to do. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge. There is no place in all the immensity of God where a trembling, guilty soul can hide from an inner, guilty conscience, much less from the Divine Being. The guilty, throbbing, fluttering soul must groan in wails of despair through the roll of eternity. O the hell of guilt, suffering through time, then in eternity, receive its culminating force forever! But we must turn away from this death-like scene, and call your attention to the all-sufficient sacrifice which God has provided for the atonement; for, indeed, it is evidently apparent to all thinkers and Bible-readers that the atonement is an absolute necessity, for the reason that eternal death was the condition of our poor unfortunate race.

II. The nature of the atonement. The sacrifice must necessarily be infinite, holy, and without blemish, to atone for the sins of the world; because the law which was broken was holy and perfect, and therefore demanded a perfect sacrifice. Man was fallen, and could not, therefore, atone for himself. An angel could not make the atonement, because he had not the power, neither was the nature of his being sufficient; for the broken law required blood and death on the part of the sacrifice, or sufferer, in order to the atonement. Where was the sacrifice? who is to be the sacrifice? were questions beyond

the ability of earth or heaven to answer—God alone could answer. Well might St. John weep, while in the Isle of Patmos, over such a desolating scene as this. Well might there be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour, when our eternal interest hung upon an accepted sacrificial offering. God alone solved the mighty moral problem, and provided the sacrifice. “The Lion of the tribe of Juda” prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals containing the fate of the world. He was the only being in all the universe of God sufficient to take upon himself the awful responsibility of dying in man’s stead.

I now call your attention to the character of Jesus Christ, and to the atonement made by him. He was both God and man, “for in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” How it is that he is the very and eternal God I know not, neither does any one know, nor is it necessary that we should know. Enough, however, has been revealed to inform us that he is the very and eternal God. This is, and should be, sufficient for us. He was, and is, “The mighty God,” “The everlasting Father,” “The Prince of Peace.” “Before Abraham was I am.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” In addition to these, I might quote many other kindred texts of Scripture in proof of his divinity and Godhead, but it seems that such an array of scriptural evidence is sufficient to convince any one who is not prejudiced against the doctrine that Jesus Christ was, and is, the very and eternal God. And while he is God, he is nevertheless the Son of God; and

as such, he was, and is, therefore, coëqual with the Father. "Let us make man in our own image." This address was delivered by the Father to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as his coëquals in the creation of man. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again." None but God could talk thus. He is the "Alpha and Omega," "First and Last," "King of kings, and Lord of lords." The entire Bible is full of evidence supporting the doctrine of the divinity and Godhead of Jesus Christ. He was also very man—he was promised to the world soon after the fall of man. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Moses said: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up, like unto me; him shall ye hear." Isaiah said: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." He was prophesied of long and much. The Church, from righteous Abel to the coming of Christ, was laden with types, shadows, symbols, adumbrations, and with a heavy ritualism, all pointing to his gracious advent into the world. The time for his appearance came—the world was looking somehow for some grand event to occur. Mosheim says that the age in which Christ appeared was a pacific age. According to promise, he was born in the city of Bethlehem. "A body hast thou prepared me." The humanity of Jesus, or his body, as the text just quoted has it, seems to have been prepared specially for him. His birth was announced to Mary, his mother, by Gabriel from heaven. She was overshadowed by the Most High, by which act the body of Jesus Christ was prepared, and Mary, the mother

of Jesus, highly honored. We must evidently believe, from the light which revelation throws upon this subject, that this was the only plan, under all the circumstances, that God could adopt for the world's atonement. By this divine act Jesus Christ became man—bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood, yet without sin. It seems to have been, and is, a nearer relationship to God than even man sustained prior to the fall. When saved by grace divine, our relationship to God becomes nearer than the angels of heaven. In Christ we have one grand brotherhood, linked to God by an infinite tie which mocks all opposition. Consequently, by the conception and birth of the Saviour, he became the Son of man as well as the Son of God. And in that he was both the Son of God and the Son of man, he reconciled and united two worlds in himself; hence he stands as our daysman by virtue of his own merit, linking our world to the throne of the Eternal.

According to prophecy, and the nature of his birth, and the necessity of the sacrifice, he was evidently prepared, sufficient and able, to meet the demands of justice, in offering himself to God freely for us all. As a sacrifice, he was absolutely perfect. In him, as his Son and sacrifice, God was well pleased. This was shown when he was baptized, and when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration, and in many other ways while he sojourned in sorrow. His doctrines were godlike and reformatory in their nature, often startling to the aristocratic Pharisees, because of their deep spiritual meaning.



But little is said of his life by the evangelists until he entered upon his public ministry. Enough, however, is said for us to see that no part of his life was lost from divine, useful employment. From his early boyhood he literally went about doing good; not, however, as he did after he entered upon his public ministry; but, as an obedient Son, he was no doubt all the while engaged in the interest of the world's redemption. When he was baptized by John the Baptist, as I understand it, into his priestly office, he then entered upon his public ministry. And during his entire public ministry he was healing, teaching, preaching, praying, fasting, and performing all the functions of his holy office. Such absolute, self-sacrificing human perfection never blessed the earth before. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Such was the condition of the "man of sorrows"—subjected to temptations and trials, yet never murmuring, keeping the law to the letter—living above sin. Adam yielded to sin, and fell. He prayed, wrestled, and stood. Adam entailed guilt and ruin upon his posterity. He proposed by his sufferings and death to regain our long-lost paradise. He *came* to suffer and to die. Thus Christ labored and toiled until the fullness of the time came for him to surrender for a time to his foes. The Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane were places where he often resorted for prayer; and in the Garden of Gethsemane he was found by his foes in solemn prayer to the Father of all mercies, that he might set his

followers an example, and that he might be ready to be offered up. Here "he sweat as though it were great drops of blood" running down to the ground. Such was the agony of his soul that his heart's blood forced its way out through the pores of the skin. These precious drops were for the healing of the nations. O the anguish of his soul when he prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt!" What suffering and what humble submission! They stand out without a parallel in the world. His foes came upon him—Judas betrayed him with a kiss, saying, "Hail, Master." He voluntarily surrendered, and was carried to Pontius Pilate, and then to Herod, and from Herod back to Pilate for a final trial. Several false accusations were brought against him, but of course they could not be sustained. The trial was a mockery. The decision of Pilate was, "I find no fault in this man." Pilate's wife warned him to have nothing to do with that good man. Eventually, he was nailed to the accursed tree; here he hung between the veiled heavens and the trembling earth—mocked, scourged, derided, and crowned with thorns. They cry, "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children. He saved others; himself he cannot save." An infuriated mob howling for the life of the *incarnate* Son of God! Inflamed by sin, and prompted by hate, they turned loose their burning vengeance upon the innocent Sufferer. It seemed to have been an hour of the triumph of sin and darkness; but, blessed be the name of God, he triumphed in death; he died with the plaint-

ive appeal of my text upon his lips: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Victory, immortality, and everlasting life, were immortal diamonds found clustering and shining with the radiance of Him who triumphed in and over death; these were purchased by his shed blood, death, and resurrection. The law was satisfied when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. The atonement for our lost and ruined world was effected. God was reconciled. The law was honored and magnified. Our poor, unfortunate race was placed upon a basis of salvation. Mercy was offered without money and without price.

III. The object of the atonement. Evidently the object of the atoning act was to give our fallen humanity a chance for salvation from sin. This was done by the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." We see from these consolatory scriptural quotations that Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, and that therefore the object of the atonement was conditionally universal. It was not, therefore, confined to a few, or to a single nation, but was for the whole of mankind. All are invited to come and be saved by faith in the Son of God. The divine proclamation is, and should be, borne upon the wings of mercy, and with tongues of fire:

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.” The commission is universal: “I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Christianity is destined, eventually, to girdle the world, and throw its undying radiance throughout all heathen lands. “I am he that was dead, and am alive forevermore.” When kingdoms, empires, and republics are dead and gone, Christ and his followers will live. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” By virtue of *his* life his disciples are to live, not only through time, but when the world is a corpse at his feet. Hannibal, Napoleon, and others, whose names adorn the military galaxy of fame, only live in the cold, insensible pages of profane history; while Jesus does, and will, live in millions of souls through the unfolding ages of eternity. “Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” How sweet and consoling to the way-worn pilgrim as he looks by faith beyond to his celestial home in heaven! This, therefore, was the object of God in the gift of his Son for the world’s redemption. How godlike and sublimely grand was the mission of the man of sorrows! Pardon, regeneration, and final salvation from sin, and a blissful entrance into heaven by faith in him, are the final inheritance of the Christian. Thus crowned, palmed, and saved amid the blissful scenes and opening splendors, the redeemed hosts will sing in tones of melody, *Eternal Salvation!*

## INFANT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP.

BY THE REV. W. H. HUGHES.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matt. xxviii. 19. “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark xvi. 15, 16.

IN addressing you upon this subject, which has employed thousands of the best writers, and upon which hundreds of volumes have been published, I am conscious of two things: First, I shall not be able to present any thing new or startling; and secondly, in the small space allowed me I cannot treat the subject exhaustively, but only touch a few of the most important points. The very best I can hope for is, in this way to correct, to some extent, a fault in some of our preachers and people. Our preachers, from a false modesty, not wishing to offend our Antipedobaptist friends, do not instruct our people on this subject; and our people, for the want of this instruction, in too many instances, let their children grow up without this precious rite. If I can, to any extent, counteract these evils, my highest ambition is gratified.

Before we enter fully into the discussion of this subject, it would be well to see how far we agree, and where our differences begin. So far as I know, all Christians who baptize at all agree that baptism

is the initiatory rite into the visible Church; that all persons entitled to Church-membership are entitled to baptism; and that adult believers are proper subjects of this sacrament. Thus far there is no dispute; but Pedobaptists believe that infant children, with their parents, are proper subjects of Church-membership, and consequently of baptism, while Antipedobaptists deny this. This places the issue plainly before us, and we proceed at once to examine the apostolic commission, which is the only command in the Bible to baptize anybody. Mark you, this is the only authority we have to baptize at all, and if the language employed is not broad or comprehensive enough to include children, then the controversy is at an end—we yield. But if, on the other hand, the words used are sufficiently sweeping and universal to embrace children with their parents, then those who oppose them ought to yield.

Take first the commission as recorded by Matthew: “Go ye therefore and teach [disciple, or proselyte] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Are there any children in “all nations?” Yes. What is the command? “Baptize *them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

The same command by Mark, if possible, is in still broader and more comprehensive language: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” None will deny that children are in “all

the world," and that they are included in the terms, "every creature." But our Antipedobaptist friends, instead of yielding to the only logical conclusion to be drawn from this commission, and admitting children to holy baptism, resort to the unchristian position that children, being incapable of believing, are thereby disqualified for the ordinance of baptism. If this disability renders them unworthy of the Church here, will it not render them unworthy of the Church in heaven? This last you dare not assert in this enlightened day, and yet it is the logical consequence of your position, and so natural is the logic that a small portion of the Albigenses, who were the very first sect who ever did oppose infant baptism, in A.D. 1130, "declared against the baptism of infants as being incapable of salvation." Wall, Vol. II., chap. 10, p. 501. But why stop to bandy words longer at this point, when Christ has embodied the commission in words of the most universal signification that language can afford, such as "all nations," "all the world," and "every creature?" So we proceed, in the next place, to inquire, How did the apostles understand and interpret the commission? This question shall form the nucleus of our entire argument, for I am sure that every true Christian would be willing to imitate the understanding and practice of the apostles, if he could but know what that understanding and practice was. None will deny that the commission is in very broad and general terms, and to us it may seem wanting in explicitness, but to the apostles it was doubtless perfectly plain, explicit, and easily

understood. I have collated a common-sense rule by which every sensible man, either consciously or unconsciously, is governed in the correct interpretation of all writings or utterances of every age of the world. The rule is this: To understand and correctly interpret the Scriptures, or any other writing of any age, we must make ourselves acquainted with the customs, manners, and habits, of the age and people among whom and in which the writing was done, and collect around us all the peculiar circumstances and influences by which the writer or speaker was affected. In other words, we must try to place ourselves mentally, as far as possible, where the writer or speaker stood, and enter into his feelings, ideas, sympathies, and principles, in which he had been educated, and with which he was familiar. You are requested to pause here and impartially analyze and study this rule before we proceed farther, for it embraces the universal law of all correct interpretation of all utterances, either written or oral, in every age, whether those utterances were sacred or profane. Every writer and speaker is compelled to presume largely upon the intelligence of his auditors; if not, he would have to stop and define every word; but, presuming upon the intelligence of those he addresses, he only writes or utters enough to be well understood. For illustration, you say to a friend, "Go to the post-office for me." Here you presume largely upon the intelligence of your friend; and if he were not acquainted with the habits and customs of this age, and knew nothing of the postal laws, he would only go to the post-



office; but, acting upon the principle of this rule of interpretation, he brings your letters, papers, and pamphlets, and does no more nor less than you commanded. Again, a king commands his general to "Go and conquer back a rebellious province;" and this general, knowing the customs of war, correctly interprets his orders, and takes with him an army and all the appointments of war. So we find in the Scriptures as well as in other ancient writings many things which are unintelligible until we learn that certain usages and customs prevailed in those days, and then all doubt is removed, and the subject is easily understood. Take, for instance, Luke v. 37, 38: "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved." Now, a man who is only acquainted with the common glass bottle of the present day, knows that the old bottle that has been tried once, and stood the expansive power of fermenting wine, is more reliable than the new and untried. But tell that man in the days of the Saviour it was the custom to make bottles of the skins of animals, and when once emptied they dried, and became rotten and very brittle, and he at once understands the force of what Christ has said. Again, Matt. v. 13: "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." A chemist takes pure muriate of soda—the common salt we use—and dissolves it, and nothing

is left, and he does not understand what the Master meant; but tell him the custom in the days of Christ was to dig the salt from deposits in the earth, and that there was mixed with it a white earthy substance which remained when the saltiness was all gone, and that they used this earthy substance to make walks, and all is plain. We might add many other illustrations, showing the importance and universality of this rule of interpretation, but let the above suffice, and we proceed to show its force upon the subject in hand.

Suppose the Baptist Church sends out twelve missionaries, and only instructs them in the exact language of the commission, "Go ye therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," I ask, Would they have any trouble in interpreting what the Baptist Church meant as to who are to be subjects of baptism? Not one particle, because they know the history, practice, and universal custom, of the Baptist Church, and hence they only baptize adult believers. But the Methodist, or some other Pedobaptist Church, sends out the same number of missionaries, and says not one word upon the subject of baptism as to its mode, only repeating the apostolic commission, and they baptize the children with their believing parents, and you ask them, How do you know you are properly interpreting your instructions? and they would tell you that the right of infants to Church-membership is a part of the organic law of our Church, and that infants have always been in it, and we ourselves were bap-

tized in infancy, and brought up in the Church, and there is no law abrogating this inestimable privilege. Would not every sensible man say these several parties had properly interpreted their instructions? Now, the two sets of supposed missionaries, each proceeding upon the principle of our rule of interpretation, knowing the customs, practices, and habits, of their different Churches, did exactly opposite, and yet each interpreted his instructions precisely as the Church that gave them intended they should. This again shows this rule of interpretation to be infallibly correct.

Now let us apply it in searching for the answer to the question, How did the apostles understand and practice this same commission which was first given to them? What customs were they used to? What had been the habit of the Israel of God on this subject? Had not children been put into the Church by the Almighty, in an organic law, when he made his covenant with Abraham? and was not the promise of a Christ, or Saviour, sealed by this very rite? Children had been in the Church for two thousand years, and no man in Israel had been found who was so wicked as to deny them this blessed privilege. Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, and all the apostles, had been members of the Church from eight days old, and there is no law in the Bible changing the constituency of the Church. How could the apostles have done otherwise, when the parent believed, than to baptize him "and all his, straightway?"

Under these circumstances, it does seem clear to

my mind that the apostles would have as naturally construed the commission to embrace the baptism of children as would a missionary sent out by the Methodist or Presbyterian Church; and, indeed, it seems to me if the Master had intended to forever put a stop to receiving children into the Church, he would have been compelled to give a plain, positive, and unequivocal command to his apostles on that subject, knowing so well, as he did, their extreme stubbornness and tenacity in clinging to the ancient customs and rites of the Israelitish Church they loved so well, and in which they had been reared. But was there a Church before the day of Pentecost to which the infants Jesus, John the Baptist, and the apostles could have belonged? I do not now stop to argue the questions of when, where, or with whom, the Church was organized, but did the Church of God exist? In Acts ii. 47 we learn that they that feared the Lord were daily with one accord in the temple, "and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." It is impossible to add to something that does not exist. But did the Church exist before this? If you will go back two or three years, to Matt. xviii. 17, we read: "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Now go back fourteen hundred and fifty years, and Paul tells us of the Church in the days of Moses—Acts vii. 38: "This is he, that was in the Church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sina, and with

our fathers, who received the lively oracles to give unto us." Now, from the above quotations, it is clear, 1. That the Church did exist more than fourteen hundred years before Pentecost, and that God was in it talking to our fathers; 2. That Christ told his disciples how to proceed with an offending brother in this Church; and 3. It was this Church to which Christ "added daily such as should be saved." And if Christ added to it, it must have been the Church of Christ. That children were in the Jewish state of the Church, no unprejudiced man will deny; and that the apostles understood the commission to still include them, will be clear if we will but stop here for a moment, and inquire, What is now the peculiar mission of the apostles? It was to extend or proclaim the high and holy privileges of the Church to "all nations," which up to the breaking down of the middle wall of partition had been confined to one nation. The apostles received from the lips of the Master two commissions. The first was under the old dispensation, under which there can be no controversy about the rights of children. This commission, like the old dispensation, was confined to one nation. Matt. x. 5-7: "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and as ye go, preach." If you will take the time to read carefully this whole chapter, you will discover, while this commission was confined to one nation only, yet Christ here gives his disciples instructions,

which were to direct and encourage them and their successors in all time. These were to prepare them for duty when their mission was no longer confined to one nation alone, but to all. So, when they had graduated in the smaller school, they were prepared for a larger sphere; and then it was the Master gave them the second commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Under each of these commissions they were "to preach;" under each they were to baptize, or make disciples. (John iv. 1, 2.) Their duties under both were precisely the same, with this single exception: the first confined their mission to Israel, while the last took off all restraint, and sent them "to all nations," or "every creature." How appropriate and natural it was for those disciples who were to be sent out as missionaries to invite the heathen of all nations into the privileges of the Church, should not only be members of the Church from childhood, but also acquire some experience as preachers among the brethren, before they went out upon their larger mission! The same gospel was preached, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

And now, to show that the apostles understood children to be embraced in the new as well as the old dispensation, take the very first sermon ever preached after the commission was given. Acts ii. 38, 39: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar

off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Here please note that Peter was exhorting them especially to the duty of baptism, and the blessings it symbolized, and gives as a reason why they should comply, that "the promise is unto you, and to your children," referring, doubtless, to Gen. xvii. 1; xxii. 15-19; Gal. iii. 16—where God made the promise to Abraham, and took children into the covenant at eight days old. If children were excluded from the benefits of baptism, why did not Peter, in exhorting the parents "every one" to be baptized, stop when he said, "The promise is unto you?" Why add "and to your children?" and that these same blessings will accrue, in the same way, "to all that are afar off?" etc. Christ is the good Shepherd, and when he provided a fold for his sheep, he did not forget the lambs of the flock; hence, when he told Peter to "feed my sheep," he also said, "Feed my lambs;" and this first sermon of Peter shows that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision when he said, "The promise is unto you, and to *your children.*"

Again, keeping our rule of interpretation before us, I ask, What was the instruction of the apostles with regard to children given by the Divine Teacher himself? Mark x. 13, 14: "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was *much displeased*, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." We note these were "young children,"

and "little children;" they did not come, but were "brought."

If some sapient opposer of infant baptism had been there, he might have asked, What good will it do to bring the crying babies to Christ? for they cannot understand Christian obligation. Nevertheless, Christ says, Suffer them to come. But what does "kingdom of God" here mean? It must mean either the Church on earth or the Church in heaven. If you say, It is the Church in heaven, you make Christ command us not to do a thing when he knew we had no power to do it; for children die, and go to the kingdom of God in heaven, and we cannot prevent it. But if the kingdom is the Church on earth (which it must be), then there is but one way we can violate this injunction, and that is to refuse children the rite by which they are to come into the Church, which is baptism. Alexander Campbell says kingdom means the Church. The plain English of this text is, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, . . . for of such is the Church." But again, Matt. xviii. 1-3: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Here the disciples wanted to know who was to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, or the Church. Mark you, the question is not merely, Who is to be a member of the Church? but a mod-



el—the greatest. Now, we are to get at the highest type of a Church-member from the lips of the infallible Teacher himself: “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said unto them, Except ye be converted, and become as a little child, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Then, according to Christ, the greatest in his Church, or kingdom, is a little child. He set a little child in their midst as a model, like which adults must become, or they cannot enter therein. So the very best an adult can do is to imitate, or become like, a little child. But our Antipedobaptist friends, in rejecting children, place themselves in the ridiculous attitude of rejecting the model, and accepting only the imitation. But I am glad to know the Church of Christ does admit the highest type of members in the person of little children. Perhaps the most scathing and withering reproof the Master ever gave his disciples, and the only time he ever was *much* displeased with them, was when they rebuked those that brought young children to him.

And now, with these lessons from the Divine Teacher himself, and the history of the Church for two thousand years, I ask again, with double emphasis, How did the apostles understand and practice the commission? Let the numerous accounts of household baptisms, where the parents and all theirs were baptized, answer—such as Lydia, who “was baptized, and her house,” and the jailer, who “was baptized, he and all his, straightway;” Stephanas and Cornelius, who, when the parents believed,

were baptized by households, and received into the Church by whole families. But our Baptist friends say there were no little children in these families, and we are at a loss to know what has become of the history from which they learned this important fact. But waiving the question of whether barren families only joined the Church in the days of the apostles, one thing is established by these household baptisms, and that is this: the apostles in baptism practiced an ordinance adapted to the whole family, and admitted them into the Church of Christ. All of which is in harmony with Pedobaptist practice, and with the Abrahamic covenant, when God took the children, at eight days old, into the Church with their parents.

Once more—1 Cor. x. 1, 2: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” Now, keeping the inquiry before the mind, Whom did the apostles understand as being included in the command to baptize “all nations?” let us examine this text. Here is one whole nation which Paul says “were all baptized.” The administrator was God himself, and of course it was done infallibly right. That nation was associated with types which symbolized the perfect state of the Church in which all nations were to be baptized. This nation was a model of the constituency of the Church. Moses says there were more than six hundred thousand men, besides the women and children; and Paul says they

“were all baptized.” In this text the apostles had the commission to baptize all nations construed and illustrated by the Supreme Judge of the universe. God baptized one whole nation — men, women, and children—and with this example before them, said, “Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” And to show that the apostles and their immediate successors did practice according to this divine example, the history of the Church abundantly proves. For the first eleven hundred years after Christ there was no Church or society of men who ever opposed infant baptism, and in all this time history gives us an account of but two men who even advised its delay. In A.D. 1130 a small portion of the Albigenses concluded that children could not believe, and therefore would be damned, and hence ought not to be baptized. So monstrous was this heresy this faction soon passed away, and history is as silent as the grave about any other opposition to infant baptism until the rise of the Antipedobaptists in Germany A.D. 1522. In proof of this statement, I quote from Dr. Wall, who has studied the history of infant baptism as closely as any other man, living or dead, who, after going through the whole detail of facts, gives us the following summary (Wall, Vol. II., chap. 10, p. 501): “Lastly, as these evidences are for the first four hundred years, in which there appears one man—Tertullian—that advised the delay of infant baptism in some cases; and one Gregory, that did perhaps practice such delay in the case of his children; but no society of

men so thinking or so practicing; nor no one man saying it was unlawful to baptize. So in the next seven hundred years there is not so much as one man to be found that either spoke for or practiced any such delay, but all to the contrary. And when, about the year 1130, one sect among the Albigenes declared against the baptism of infants as being incapable of salvation, the main body of that people rejected their opinion; and they of them that held that opinion quickly dwindled away and disappeared, there being no more heard of holding that tenet till the rise of the German Antipedobaptists, A.D. 1522."

We have shown that the commission included children, as they are found in "all the world," "all nations," and "every creature;" and if the apostles construed the commission by the history of the Israel of God, for two thousand years they retained children in the Church; and that the admission of Christ and John, together with themselves, into the Church in infancy, were examples they could not ignore; and when Christ taught them that an infant was a model, like which an adult must become to get into the Church, they could not be so inconsistent as to admit the imitations and reject altogether the model; and that God baptized one whole nation—men, women, and children—and then sent out the apostles to baptize "all nations;" and that children were in the Church for hundreds of years after the apostles, with no Church or society of men opposing.

Now, in conclusion, let me say, God has never had but one Church, "of whom the whole family

in heaven and earth is named;" but the Church has existed in three states, or conditions—the Jewish state of the Church, the Christian, and the heavenly. No sane man will deny that there were children in the first. They were put there at eight days old by command of the Almighty. All men, of all denominations, rejoice to know that there are children in the heavenly state of the Church, and that it is not required of them to be even eight days old to have membership there, but, for aught I know, thousands draw their first breath in glory with God in the Church of the first-born; and now is it not most unnatural to exclude them from the Christian state of the Church? If they were good enough for God to take into the Church in its organization with Abraham, and to be taken into the Church triumphant in his own house not made with hands, are they not good enough for the best Church on earth? If the Jewish state of the Church, with children in it, was a type of the Christian Church, ought not the Christian Church to have children in it, to be a true type of the heavenly, where, all admit, children are members?

We exhort our brethren, in the name of the God of Israel, with their minds firmly fixed on the evidences produced, to show the just rights and privileges of infants to baptism, to hold on to the faith of the apostles and prophets, and neither falter in faith nor practice, for it comes to us heaven-born, time-honored, and divinely-approved. It was the glory of the Jewish state of the Church, and it is the highest privilege of the Christian to point to

Jesus, who is the "Light of Life," and say, with  
Doddridge,

See Israel's gentle Shepherd stand  
With all-engaging charms:  
Hark how he calls the tender lambs,  
And folds them in his arms!

We bring them, Lord, in thankful hands,  
And yield them up to thee;  
Joyful that we ourselves are thine,  
Thine let our offspring be.

THE END.







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