

The King's Highway.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness: . . . The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Isaiah 35:8.

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THE VOICE OF JESUS.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast!"
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad:
I found in Him a resting place,
And He hath made me glad.
I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water, thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live!"
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.
I heard the voice of Jesus say,
I am this dark world's light:
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise
And all thy day be bright!"
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun:
And in the light of life I'll walk,
Till all my journey's done.

HORATIUS BONAR.

THE RICHEST GIFT TO MAN.

E. E. CURTIS.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus 2:14

We call attention, 1st. To the Giver and the Gift. 2d. The object of the Giver in making the Gift. 3d. The obligation the Gift brings man under to the Giver.

I. The giver and the gift. The verse preceding the text tells who gave himself for man. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior, Jesus Christ." Then comes the text, "Who gave himself." It is clear that Jesus Christ, our Savior was the gift and the giver. Gifts are prized by men for different reasons:

1. As reminders of the giver. The gift may be laid away very choicely, and be of little intrinsic value, but they could not be purchased with money. Why? They are reminders of the dear one gone, and as such are highly prized. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was and is the dearest friend any human being ever had. His love was more intensified and more richly manifested. Men have given hundreds, yes, millions of dollars for special purposes, but Christ gave himself and all that he possessed, not only for us, but to us. "All things that the Father hath are mine."—John 16:15. "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." "I in them and thou in me."—John 17: 22, 23. And all given to us. His gift reminds us of himself.

2. On account of the scenes connected with the gift and the giver. A friend, parent, child, presented the gift when bidding us farewell, when about to leave home, the companion in the hour of death. What could purchase the mother's gift of a Bible, bearing her name, written by her own hand, given with her last breath, though it be worn, soiled, and torn! But it reminds us of the scenes connected with her last hours. Christ gave this gift when he cried, "It is finished," and it reminds us of the scenes connected with the giving.

3. The cost to the giver. There are times when gifts of little value are bestowed at a great sacrifice, times when life has been forfeited to secure gifts. It is not always the value, but the fact that we are remembered and that our dear ones are willing to sacrifice for us that makes gifts to be

prized by us. This gift cost the Giver the sacrifice of his beautiful home, heaven. It cost the scoffs and frowns of men, the trials of life, the agony in the garden, mock trial and worship, the crown of thorns, scourging and crucifixion, and death agony. The old story of the cross! but, it cost it all to purchase the gift for us. How we should prize the gift!

4. The benefit to ourselves. Prize this gift by the value to ourselves and the strongest gratitude of our hearts cannot reach it. The poor appreciate a gift of a few dollars to relieve present necessities. The gift assures us of the supply for every need at all times and always. Many would appreciate the gift of a home though it might be homely. With this gift we receive the fields of glory, waving with bountiful harvests, a mansion built by the giver, an orchard of twelve manner of fruits, which matures every month, and streets of pure gold. To the aged and diseased a gift of that which would prolong life a few years would be accepted thankfully. This gift assures of the life unending. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." What is the value of such a gift? It brings every good for this world and unending felicity in the world to come. This world with all its treasures is but a feather in the balance against it.

II. The object of the giver. Those who bestow valuable gifts usually have an object in giving. In presenting this gift Jesus plainly tells his object:

1. That he might redeem us from all iniquity. To redeem is to purchase, buy back. Christ was the author of man's existence, and claims him as his own. He created him for himself, and gave him such faculties as were congenial to himself, created him in his own image of purity. Man gave himself to Satan, and he polluted him and made him unfit for the heaven or the society of God. Of his own free will he became the servant of Satan, and as such a rebel against God, defiled, polluted, sinful, he was fitted for a companion for Satan and doomed to his abode. Christ gave himself to purchase man from this sin and all iniquity. By this purchase he placed man where he could again choose for himself; with all the consequences of serving Satan before him, and the benefits of the gift in view he makes his choice. If he refuses to accept the gift on condition of giving his service to the Giver, he still remains the servant of Satan, and must take the result of such service together with an abode with him in the place of his banishment from God. Why? Simply because he prefers the service of Satan to that of Christ. He must dwell with the one he serves, for no unclean thing can dwell with Christ. Redeemed from all iniquity man stands the ruler of his own destiny. The gift is held out with all of its benefits, the promises of the Giver, and an eternal existence with him in his home, with all its joys. He chooses or refuses at his option. But Jesus accomplished this purpose, redeemed man with his own blood from all iniquity.

2. To purify unto himself a peculiar people, unto himself, or as pure as himself. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin. Persons thus cleansed are as pure as he is pure. It was his object that he might do this. Did he fail of accom-

plishing this purpose? Some tell us, it is impossible to live a day without sin. Then Jesus gave himself for man in vain, as the purpose for which he gave himself was not accomplished, and all men are of the devil, for whosoever committeth sin is of the devil. A peculiar people. The special peculiarity, and the one from which all others spring, is their purity. One white sheep in a large flock of black ones would be peculiar from the others, and would be noticed by the observer. So the purified are peculiar from the world, and their peculiarity is of a nature to manifest itself and the text tells us how: "Zealous of good works." Zealous! earnest! anxious! careful to do good and equal earnestness not to do evil, or that which may injure others, either in person, property, or reputation. Such a person is peculiar, especially in these days. Such a peculiarity manifests itself in all of the relations of life, in dealing, conversation, deportment, disposition, and in efforts to be a benefit to the world. To purify unto himself is to make like himself. He gave not only his life, but it was his life-work to be of use to those about him, he delighted to alleviate suffering, he hastened to the ruler's house, fed the five thousand hungry ones, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, went to the relief of his disciples on the lake, and healed the sick. His life is the pattern for the purified and the only way to heaven.

III. The obligation the gift brings us under to the giver:

1. To accept and acknowledge the gift. Ungrateful indeed is the one who refuses a gift of value from a friend, who, prompted by love, purchased it at a great sacrifice. It was love for man that prompted Jesus to provide the gift though it cost his life.

2. To use the gift in harmony with the purpose of the giver. It would show ingratitude to disregard the expressed wishes of the donor of a valuable gift in regard to the disposition of the gift.

3. To show by word and act that we prize the gift and are thankful to the giver.

4. To acknowledge, conform to, and press the claims of the giver upon all with whom we mingle.

SELECTION.

"Let us strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to go on to perfection. That we may all speak the same thing, I ask, once for all, shall we defend this perfection, or give it up? You all agree to defend it, meaning thereby (as we did from the beginning) salvation from all sin,—properly so called,—by the love of God and man filling our heart. Some say this cannot be attained till we have been refined by the fire of purgatory.' Others, 'Nay; it will be attained as soon as the soul and body part.' But others say, 'It may be attained before we die; a moment after is too late. Is it so or not? You are all agreed we may be saved from all sin before death, i. e., from all sinful tempers and desires. The substance then is settled. But as to the circumstances, is the change gradual or instantaneous? It is both the one and the other. 'But should we, in preaching, insist both on one and the other?' Certainly we should insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on

the instantaneous also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? And the rather, because constant experience shows, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their souls; the more watchful they are against all sin, the more careful are they to grow in grace, the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God. Whereas just the contrary effects are observed whenever this expectation ceases. They are saved by hope, by this hope of a total change, with gradual increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still, or rather decreases daily. Therefore, whoever would advance the gradual change in believers should strongly insist on the instantaneous."—John Wesley.

THE WAGES OF SIN.

There is a tendency today to minimize sin and lessen personal responsibility. The poison of an irrational liberalism, false to nature and to human nature, is creeping along the thought avenue of the time, producing spiritual blindness and moral infirmity. It is only a new form of the old hostility to truth and revelation. Outright atheism has been silenced by a Christian philosophy, pantheism has been thrown into the convulsions of its absurdities, and agnosticism is in disorderly retreat. But if the hostile and rebellious heart, nursing its cherished iniquities and seeking escape from reproof, has been driven from these covers, along with an inexcusable ignorance, it is now devising more subtle protection for indulgences that it will not relinquish, and hopes to excuse before the moral world. But human nature is the same, God is the same, law is the same, sin is as deadly as when it blasted Eden's happiness, and personal responsibility is the same as when Adam was judged guilty and driven from the garden.

The attitude of the moral law toward sin has never changed. The antithesis between good and evil, right and wrong, the pure and impure, will remain as long as God is eternal and sets the eternal standard. Sin is the cause of all the evil, wrong and impurity in the universe, because it is the wilful departure from this standard. The time has not come when a conformity to the eternal principles of truth and holiness will not give truth and holiness with unabated happiness, and when departure from these principles will not yield pain and death. Sinai's thunder has never gone out of the sentence: The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The perversity of the human heart is as plain reading to the Almighty as when he saw Cain's deed. When, in history, has the impious and wicked heart ever obtained a charter of relinquishment from divine judgment, if it stubbornly defies God to the last? If God's attitude toward sin has softened or changed, then the principles of holiness and righteousness, as essential in his being, must have undergone just that much modification also; and if that should be true, what is there left whereto justice may anchor, or hope remain firm; the very fundamentals that determine what truth and righteousness are, will have been cut away, and what is then secure of fundamental truth and righteousness? If this modern idea of sin

is correct, then absolve Cain, forgive Nero, excuse Judas, give the tyrant a right to kill, expose innocency to the violation of lust without requital, and put the halter, poison, dirk, and all the devices of the wicked heart, into the throne of the universe, and let moral anarchy reign without an end. Then the devil, the father of liars, who prompted the thought of absolving the soul from its sin without acknowledging the sin or securing a change of heart, will have triumphed over God, as he has made himself known to man, and the blood of sacrifice will have flowed in vain, martyrs for truth's sake will have become earth's monumental fools, and the power of Calvary will have departed.

He whose evil desires will allow him to harbor, for a moment, the thought that somehow he will enjoy the blessedness of the pure in heart without forsaking impurity of heart is undertaking a feat outlawed by God. As well attempt to bind back Vesuvius' molten flow with tapestries of sophistry, and sweeten a sepulchre of dead men's bones, by merely saying it is sweet. The wages of sin is death. God has given his prophets and his Son to expose the artifices of the arch fiend against the soul. The effect of sin, if unacknowledged and unpardoned, is the bitterness of hell. Let him that runneth read; read the message in God's Word and in his soul. There is salvation at the Cross.—Omaha Christian Advocate.

HEART-SEARCHING.

"If you and I want to enter into our heritage in Christ Jesus, we must first deal definitely with God about our sins. We must examine ourselves to discover them, and when they are discovered we must drag them forth, that in God's presence they may be slain. To this work we now set ourselves. My object will be to help you to make it thorough.

"What, then, is it in your life that hinders you from actually experiencing the fulfillment of God's promises? Is it some act or course or habit of wrong-doing? It may be something in your secret life—the life of which no one but God knows—some habit of thought, some exercise of the imagination that is unpure or unholy. It may be some book that is read in secret—tasted as a forbidden thing, and sweeter because forbidden. It may be some course of action, which breaks and destroys communion with God. It may be something in your family life—over-indulgence in matters of eating or drinking or dress. It may be selfishness—an unwillingness to consult the comfort of those that live with you—ill temper, irritability, the habit of fretfulness and complaining when things are not exactly as you would wish them to be.

"Or, perhaps it is something in your social life. It may be a certain pride, an envy at some one more highly placed. It may be a habit of evil speaking, or a certain untruthfulness. Or perhaps the hindrance lies in worldly conformity. You love the pleasures of the world, and for the sake of those dear to you, you plunge into them, acting in direct disobedience to the command, 'Come ye out from among them and be separate.'

"Or it may be the trouble with you lies in your business life. Your love of money and your eager pursuit of it have hindered you in the Christian race. Your heart condemns you, now that in your business you have been, as you say, compelled to follow worldly ways. You are conscious of a certain irritation at being asked to examine your business life. That irritation is the evidence that something is wrong. Search yourselves brethren."—Christian Standard.