



SUNDAY READING

MORNING SERVICE.

MORNING.

This is the day which the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him all the earth. The Eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

A Prayer.

Almighty God, we worship Thee as our Creator and Father, our Redeemer and Judge. By searching we cannot find Thee out unto perfection. Yet we bless Thee that we know enough of Thee to fill our hearts with the strength and peace of trust; enough to comfort and sustain us when life seems gone against us, and its crosses are heavy, and its griefs bitter. Thou art just, and merciful, and good, far beyond our highest thought and largest hope.

HYMN.

Not what these hands have done
Can save this guilty soul;
Not what this feeble flesh has borne
Can make my spirit whole.

Not what I feel or do
Can give me peace with God;
Not all my prayers, and sighs and tears
Can bear my awful load.

Thy work alone, O Christ,
Can ease this weight of sin;
Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God,
Can give me peace within.

Thy love to me, O God,
Not mine, O Lord, to Thee,
Can rid me of this dark unrest,
And set my spirit free.

Thy grace alone, O God,
To me can pardon speak;
Thy power alone, O Son of God,
Can this sore bondage break.

I bless the Christ of God:
I rest on love divine;
And, with unfaltering lip and soul,
I call this Saviour mine.

Rev. Horatio Bonar, D. D.

The Blessing of Solitude.

Seek a convenient time of leisure for thyself, and meditate often upon God's loving-kindness.

If thou wilt withdraw thyself from speaking vainly, and from gadding idly, as also from hearkening after novelties and rumors, thou shalt find leisure enough and suitable for meditation on good things.

One said, "As oft as I have been among men, I returned home less a man than I was before."

He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and spiritual things of religion, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and press of people.

No man doth safely speak but he that is glad to hold his peace.

No man doth safely rule but he that hath learned gladly to obey.

No man rejoiceth safely unless he hath within him the testimony of a good conscience.

But the security of bad men ariseth from pride and presumption, and in the end it deceiveth them.

Often times those who have been in the greatest esteem and account among men have fallen into the greatest danger by overmuch self-confidence.

O, what great peace and quietness would he possess, that would cut off all vain anxiety, and think only upon divine things, and such as are profitable for his soul, and would place all his confidence in God.

Whoso therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friend, God will draw near unto him with His holy angels.

It is better for a man to live privately and to have regard to himself, than to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in the world.

So all carnal joy enters gently, but in the end bites and stings to death.

Lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray for pardon thy sins and negligence.

Leave vain things to the vain; but be intent upon those things which God hath commanded thee.

Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jesus, thy beloved.

If thou hadst not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumors, thou wouldst the better have preserved a happy peace of mind. But since thou delightest sometimes to hear new things, it is but fit thou suffer for it some disquietude of soul.

SERMON.

The Training of the Law.

BY VEN. F. W. FAIRALL, D.D., F.R.S., ARCHDEACON OF WESTMINSTER.
Preached in Westminster Abbey.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ."—Gal. iii., 24.

I spoke to you last Sunday of the moral law, of that ideal of virtue respecting which even the heathen moralist said that it was the supreme of manliness, and that not the morning nor the evening star was so fair.

A life lived in purity and honor is the loftiest glory possible to any human being, and like the elusive and often ruinous ambitions of worldly success, it is open to the lowliest as to the most richly endowed. Every moral obedience, that is to say, virtue under every form, and every sinful indulgence, that is, every form of vice, has two interchanging aspects. Virtue has an aspect at first mind, and it may appear to some loose minds, even menacing, but to those who follow her she reveals her eternal and heavenly beauty. On the other hand, vice at first has an enchanting song and a bewitching loveliness, but when men have even for a moment listened to her, she then shrivels into loathliness, and appears only in her revolting lair, amid the fragments of shipwreck on the beaches of home-strewn isles. Now, let me try to show you these two aspects of the moral law as they are represented in the Ten Commandments, and let this show you the deep meaning which lies in the text, of which, perhaps, you may never have noticed the real significance, or

which, for you, the real significance may have been worn away by careless familiarity.

First, let us see what the words of the text mean. "The law became our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." If you will turn to the revised version, you will see that for the word "schoolmaster" it substituted the word "tutor"; but neither schoolmaster nor tutor express the meaning of the original Greek word of St. Paul, *nai-day-wyos*, indeed there is no English word which does. The *nai-day-wyos* was the slave who, in ancient Athens, led boys to school, and slave though he was he was generally an experienced and honored slave, and to him was entrusted the care, the discipline, the moral guardianship of the boys of the family. Now, the uses of the moral law are exactly analogous to this. Our life is but the childhood of our eternity, the school days preparatory for the immortal years beyond. And to the law, as it were the ruler, stern yet beneficent, has been entrusted by God the discipline of our souls until we have been built up into Christ. When that is done the end of life is attained. Then love is an unerring light and joy its own security. Then the "thou shalt" of the law has melted into the rapturous "I ought," "I can," "I will" of the disciplined character and of the perfect love. Now, as the slave who led boys to school in ancient Greece had to be stern and watchful for the sake of the boys themselves, so, too, is God's law, which comes to us, as we saw last Sunday, with the mighty sanction, "God spake these words and said."

What Are the Commandments?

What are the ten commandments, and what do they mean? No doubt multitudes of you think that you know all about them. Alas, it is only too possible for a man constantly to imagine, as the young ruler did, that he knows all about them, and even to say, with offended self-complacency: "All these have I kept from my youth up," and yet be in reality absolutely and childishly ignorant of their structure, of their significance, of every essential thing which they are meant to teach us.

Let us consider for a moment their structure. They occur in the books of Moses in five or six different forms, and the form in which we have them in the book of Exodus, with which we are so familiar is probably one of the latest and expanded editions. As engraved by Moses on the two tables of stone, they were undoubtedly in their briefest form on the first table, "Thou shalt have none other god but me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image. Thou shalt not take my name in vain. Thou shalt keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary. Honor thy father and thy mother." And on the second table, "Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not slander. Thou shalt not covet." Now, as they thus stand, apart from further explanation, they are trebly defective. Trebly defective as a code of morals, first because they are mostly prohibitions, "Thou shalt not," and therefore, taken alone, involve only a negative virtue, whereas virtue demands of us not only passivity but energy, not only abstinence but action. They are defective, secondly, because they deal with outward acts alone, and it is quite possible to be correct in outward acts and yet for the heart to be abominably wicked. Like a whitened sepulchre, glistening without, but within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. They are defective, thirdly, because taken alone they are not sufficient to comprehend, and do not, for instance, formally forbid such sins as drunkenness, or as gambling. It was such defectiveness which made the young ruler rather despise them as too elementary for him, fancying that he had kept them all from his youth up, while yet at the same time he was only too sadly conscious that, whether he had kept them or not, he had not entered into eternal life. It is such a purely external view of them which makes many a man regard himself as a highly moral, respectable, worthy and even religious personage, when in reality he is utterly self-deceived, and needs the revealing flesh of God's eternity to show him that in his worthlessness he is wretched, and miserable and poor, and blind and naked. But when once we begin to understand the ten commandments rightly, we shall be very far from thinking them too easy of fulfilment.

Let us come to Christ and hear His explanation of them. Let us arise and take our seat amongst those poor multitudes and listen with them to His Sermon on the Mount. Far different indeed is that scene from the awfulness of Sinai, with the menace of its burning and tempest-smitten crags. There are no thundering clouds, no palpable and enkindled fire, no scorching wilderness, no gathering of the darkness about the trembling hill. No; but in the calm and happy tone there is the Son of Man, the gracious Human Presence, His lips full of grace, seated on the verdant grass, with the scarlet anemones bursting into flower about His feet, like clear silver water in a cup of gold, the waves He loved, the waves that had kissed His feet, so many blessed days, and in that fair, smiling scene, a voice which did not strain or cry is floating out most gently in words of peace. What was it that He said? It was said to them of old time "Thou shalt not kill," but I say unto you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. Ye have heard that it was said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but I say that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his own heart. From these and other teachings of our Lord, we begin to see that the ten commandments were never meant to be taken only in the letter. We see that every one of them was meant to be positive as well as negative. In every "Thou shalt not" was included the positive "Thou shalt."

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The Store is the moment we can give it up. We have never flung the people in the past, and now we state the truth as usual. The Store is to be closed forever.

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less caverns, their unclean imaginary, their leprous stains; it points to some guilty, impure, abject, shrinking creature, who perhaps may stand well before the world, and tears off his mask, flings aside his coverings, and says, "Look at that villainous—it is myself." In this lies the awfulness of the law which worketh death. Its very perfections reveal to us the discords of our being, the unfathomable guilt that seems to yawn between us and God. And now you can understand why Bunyan, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, represents Moses as so furious, knocking Christian down with a word and with a blow, and dragging him under the awful crags of Sinai, where he is terrified for his life; and now you can understand why Michael Angelo invests the great lawgiver in the shaggy fall of his vast beard with so menacing and so repellent a majesty. And now you can understand the despair and self-loathing which have so often beaten down and drowned the souls of men; you can understand what made David cry out, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, but, Lord, Thou requir'st truth in the inward parts." And what made Job cry, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

And what made Isaiah cry, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips;" and what made even St. Paul cry, "Wretched man made even St. Paul deliver me from the body of this death?" And now you can understand what St. Paul meant by the curse of the law, and that the law worketh wrath, and that by the law is the knowledge of sin. The self-revelation of the law, taken alone, is the lightning flash which reveals the perils and that may send everyone to Christ from this meeting of the sea of calamity and the sea of crime which sooner or later every sinner has to experience. Upon this burden of guilt, haunted with the load of misery, cometh the midnight; then the furies take their seats upon the pillow. The man has no power to escape; iniquity hath played its part, and now vengeance leaps upon its stage. Have none of you ever felt it, this blighting consciousness of guilt and personal villainess, this abhorrence of God, this horror of shame, of which one has said "thought callest to fear, and fear whispers to horror, and horror whispers to despair and to punish thee?" and the man dies a thousand deaths, and iron bars are laid upon his body as a prisoner—his lights are put out at once. The explanation of all the most frightful tragedies in life is here. This is what is meant in many a case by the ravings of the lunatic, of the felon on the scaffold, and in the wards of the hospital, where lie the self-made victims of lust and drunkenness, and the head shattered by the pistol shot, and the dull splash in the black midnight river. All these and other forms of mental anguish are the cause of the remorse which issues from the death of sin, which comes from the gnawing and tormenting conscience. We come by law to the knowledge of sin.

The Voice of Conscience.

My friends, in conclusion, every sinner—and what man is he who sinneth not?—has

heard in his conscience at some time or other this terrible voice of most just judgment, and has felt something of this burden and sense of the wrath of God; and those of you who are past guilty with unrepented sins have felt it the most. Now, the law cannot help you any further—you have broken it; it has nothing to offer you but threats and retribution. Repentance, even if it can save you for the future, cannot atone for the past. Have you not then felt the cruelty of Satan, and will you not accept the deliverance of Christ? Will you not let this menacing, this watchful, this deathful law be your tutor to lead you to Christ? Even the punishments, even the menaces, even the unyielding sternness of the law have no object for any one of you but to bring you to Christ. With Him is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. What else but mercy, what else but deliverance, what else but the bestowal of blessedness and consolation here, and eternal peace hereafter, was the object of His incarnation, of His teaching, of His death, of His resurrection, of His ascension, of His eternal session at the right hand of God? Till you have come to Him, till you have found Him, you will not find any calm, any happiness, any rest, anything worth living for at all. "When you have come to Him, when you have told in utter penitence before His cross and tomb, then you will experience, like the balm in Gilead, the diffusion of His infinite compassion. He will take away the curse of the law; He will take away the handwriting which is against you, which is contrary to you, which now justly terrifies you. He will rend it asunder and nail its torn fragments to that they can no longer hurt or menace you, to the cross on which he died to save your souls. Turn ye: "Why will ye die, oh house of Israel? for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord." If the law has revealed to you God's righteousness and your own depth of iniquity, let it lead, let it even drive you as with scourges from its terror to kneel before your Saviour. With Him you will find no menace, but mercy; not wrath, but forgiveness; not death and hell, but everlasting life.

HYMN.

Oh, safe to the Rock that is higher than I,
My soul in its conflicts and sorrows would fly;
So sinful, so weary, Thine, Thine would I be;
Thou blest "Rock of Ages" I'm hiding in Thee.

In the calm of the noontide, in sorrow's line hour,
In times when temptation casts o'er me its power;
In the tempests of life, on its wide, heaving sea,
Thou blest "Rock of Ages" I'm hiding in Thee.

How oft in the conflict, when pressed by the foe,
I have fled to my refuge, and breathed out my woe;
How often, when trials, like sea-billows roll,
Have I hidden in Thee, O Thou Rock of my soul.

—From Sacred Songs and Solos.

Benediction.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

The Word of God is like music; every hearer—though there should be hundreds and hundreds of them—takes the whole without robbing his neighbor.—*Berthold Auerbach.*