

and condemn. What the world needs is not more criticism or more bitter condemnation, but more love. We need to sit at the feet of Jesus and have his great love breathed into our hearts.—Bx.

What Our Thoughts Do.

Most of us have an idea that the structure of our minds is determined for us by heredity or other causes beyond our control; in other words, that the mind is fixed in its structure, and that all that we can do is to modify it a little by education and culture.

The fact is that what we call our real selves has been largely determined by the character and quality of our thinking. Outside the mind, our bodies are no more than a stone or a piece of wood. The moment the mind leaves the body, it falls, a dead and useless mass.

"It is possible to change the structure of the mind by habitually controlling the thought," says William Pitney Flint in Success. There is no reason why we should allow the mind to wander around into all sorts of fields, and to dwell upon all sorts of subjects at random. The ego, the will power, or what we call the real self, the governor of the mind, can dominate the thought. With a little practice, we can control and concentrate the mind in any reasonable way we please.

Attention, therefore, controlled by the will and directed by reason and our higher judgment, can so discipline the mind and thought that they will dwell on higher ideals, until high thinking has become a habit. Then the lower ideals and lower thinking will drop out of consciousness, and the mind will be left upon a higher plane. It is only a question of discipline.

Thought-culture is the most important business of life. Everything depends upon the quality of the mind; and, by constantly holding the thought and concentrating it upon the good, the true, and the beautiful, we shall soon form a habit of high thinking which will be so delightful that we shall never wish to let the mind drop again.

The possibilities of thought-culture are beyond calculation. The daily stretching of the mind to attain high ideals will extend it more and more, and we shall continually approximate more nearly to perfection.

How great a change do we often see effected in the mental structure of many boys and girls during their few years of school or college life! The mind is constantly fixed upon higher models until its whole structure is no longer satisfied with low thinking and low ideals.

How often do we note the wonderful transforming power of love in a young life! Even coarse and brutal natures have been completely changed under its magic influence. Why? Simply because the daily and hourly admiration of a high ideal will, in a very short time, insensibly lead the mind to measure up to it. When it has once become conscious that the attainment of the ideal is possible, it can no longer be satisfied with the mean, the low, and the common; for the higher life, the higher ideal, will haunt it for ever.

I wish it were possible to show parents and teachers the importance of thought-culture, to impress upon them the necessity of leading the young to concentrate their minds upon high ideals.

How often do we see a nature completely changed by a few weeks or months of depressing thought, anxiety, and mental suffering! How worn, haggard, and forlorn a mother becomes after a short period of mourning over a lost child! How quickly some business men change in their dispositions, in the very structure of their minds, after great reverses or misfortune, even when no reflection has been cast upon their characters!

A few weeks of anxiety and depression have not infrequently brought men to the verge of lunacy; nay, even beyond the verge, into hopeless insanity itself.

Thus we see the power of thought, not only to build up a life and make it beautiful, but to tear it down as well and make it ugly and miserable; not only to save it but also to ruin it.

A habit of constantly looking upon the dark side of things, of thinking something terrible is going to happen, that we are unfortunate, that fate is against us, that we were born under an unlucky star, and that our lives are comparative failures; a habit of thinking that we, perhaps, are not so smart as others who have succeeded, and that we have overestimated our ability; in other words, a habit of worrying or of self-depreciation will, after a while, dwarf the highest ideals.

While to ascend is difficult, it is always easy to go downhill. All we have to do to cause anything to run down is to let it alone. A dead fish will float down a stream; only a live one can go up.—The Times.

Atonement.

BY J. B. SEARCY, D. D.

This term does not occur but once in the New Testament, viz: Rom. 5: 11, "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement." Even in this passage the word "atonement" is rendered reconciliation, and yet the doctrine of the atonement of Christ is one of the

most vital doctrines in the Christian system. From the days of Justin Martyr until now there have been controversies on the atonement of Christ, mostly on its nature and extent.

"The fathers of the primitive church regarded his death as a sacrifice, and a ransom, and ascribed to his blood the power of cleansing from guilt and sin," says a recent able writer. A specific idea of the meaning of the atonement will aid us much in coming to a just conclusion. It seems clear that "expiation" is the leading idea of this word, but as expressive of what Christ does for us it seems evident that it means more than expiation—it includes "reconciliation" as well. Shakespeare used the word in this sense when he said, "He seeks to make atonement between the Duke of Gloster and your brothers." Here reconciliation was the leading thought, both ideas are evidently in the word. With this definition before me I am prepared to say the atonement, of Christ consists in two parts—sacrifice and intercession.

"All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," says the Prophet Isaiah.

When the great plague came on Israel because of the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram "Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censor and put fire therein from off the altar and put on incense and go quickly unto the congregation and make an atonement for them. . . . And he stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stayed." If Aaron had gone without his censor he would have been slain; but with his censor in hand he must stand between the dead and the living, Aaron's intercession prevailed, Christ is our High Priest, and intercedes for us "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us."

Peter tells us, "For Christ also hath suffered for sins—the just, for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

Again, Peter, speaking of Christ, says, "Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree."

The Apostle to the Hebrews says, "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."

These Scriptures clearly teach that Christ offered himself upon the cross a sacrifice for sins, evidently teaching the fact that "without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sins." That all the sacrifices made under the law were but shadows, of which he was the substance. That he was indeed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." That he really made his soul an offering of sin. That a sacrifice of less value could not have secured the release of one man from the penalty of God's violated law. That so far as the sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross was concerned it was for "every man." That God "might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." There was a divine sacrifice offered, and it was unlimited in its value. This offering "once for all" becomes the basis for reconciliation of the "unjust" sinner with the "just" God. This involves the second part of the atonement which is Christ's intercession. Christ could not be consistent with the divine laws have interceded for sinners without preceding it with sacrifice.

While the sacrifice of Christ was "for every man" his intercession is only for those "who come unto God by him." The gospel call is extended to all and "whoever will" may "take of the water of life freely." But only those who accept the gracious message and are reconciled to God receive the benefits of the atonement. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Jesus made the offering once forever. Now, he intercedes, "But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Peter tells us for what purpose Jesus is at the right hand of God, "Hence hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." So we see that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." This "word of reconciliation" is the gospel of Christ and is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

This view makes Christ's death the sacrifice and Christ's life the intercession, and these two, being reconciliation, to God, which is the end of atonement. So Christ's atonement is still going on, and will continue to the close of his mediatorial reign.

Sufficient Grace.

BY W. T. NEWSOM.

Paul knew a man (and evidently that was himself) who was caught up into the third heaven and heard things which were not lawful to tell. He did not know whether he was in the body or in the spirit. Evidently it was a vision something like Peter had on the housetop

when he was convinced that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles.

Paul must have seen things that none of his brethren had been permitted to see, and he was about to become puffed up, and in order that he might not be exalted overmuch by these revelations, there was a thorn given him in the flesh.

What that thorn was we are not told, and it is useless to speculate. It certainly was not the sinful nature that clings to us all, for it was given him after he had these revelations and for the express purpose of keeping him humble.

We may never have such visions of glory as Paul enjoyed, but there are many things which come up in our lives that tend to exalt us above measure. Paul asked the Lord three times to take this thing out of his way and the Lord answered by saying, My grace is sufficient for thee. When the Lord blesses our work and the cause prospers in our hands, the devil comes to us and suggests to us that we are doing great things in our own strength. He would make us believe that "no man can do the work that thou doest." The devil knows full well that when a man gets puffed up he is a ruined man, and the Lord will not use him in that condition. It takes thorns in the flesh to humble our hearts.

Pardon me for a personal reference. The first really great revival that the Lord blest me with there were over fifty conversions. I did most of the preaching, and it seemed that the Lord gave me liberty to tell the message of life. The brethren and sisters would come around at the close of the services and express their appreciation of my efforts. The devil also came with his congratulations and would whisper in my ears and say, "Newsom, 'you are a whale.' Much earnest prayer was necessary to keep from being exalted overmuch. God's grace is sufficient to keep us humble and accomplish great things through weak vessels. The treasure in earthen vessels! God elects to confound the mighty through the weak. He is glorified in that. The world says that awkward young man can never preach the gospel. See how stammering he is. Young man, you had better go back to your clerkship. That is the way people talked about D. L. Moody. But God said, my ways are not your ways, and so Moody rose above the world and its criticisms. The apostle took 'pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then I am strong'."

When we are strong in ourselves we are weak in the Lord, and when we are weak in ourselves we are strong in the Lord.—Bx.

Salvation by Education, by Culture, by Character.

BY S. W. CULVER, A. M.

If in this threefold assumption we change the "by" to "and" we shall have a more truthful representation. There is salvation "with" education both preceding and succeeding it. But we need to settle, first of all, what salvation is. The term raises two questions which must be fundamental to any consistent view on the subject.

First, what are we saved from? and, second, how are we saved? The first of these questions was answered by the angel that announced the birth of the Saviour: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." There is no mistaking the meaning. The salvation is "from sin." To this the apostle's statement corresponds: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Where the sin is ignored there is no occasion for salvation. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The first lesson one needs to be taught is the fact of his own sin. When this is fully realized, then, and not till then, he is in a condition to receive salvation. Just so long as the sin remains he is not saved, no matter how much of education or culture, or how high a character in other respects he may attain. He must be saved from sin. The first thing to be considered is the person's own sin. Admitting this as a fact.

The next question is, how are we saved? The New Testament statements, already quoted, tell us plainly that Jesus saves. The salvation comes to us by the exercise of his own personal agency. There is no other name given under heaven whereby the sinner can be saved. The sinner must "accept him" and "trust him," and through this faith the saving power of Christ will come to him. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his own mercy he saves us. The sinner must submit his own personality to the agency of Christ to be saved. As sure as he does this the salvation of Christ will be his. When this is assured, then a new education and culture and character will develop. The education and culture and character that ignore Christ, however admirable they may be, have no salvation in them. Salvation is a strictly personal matter. Let one first learn the lesson of his personal sinfulness, and then accept salvation from sin by Jesus Christ, and then add to this a Christly education and culture and character.—Bx.