

## LOVE OF GOD.

Oh! love of God! no word can spell,  
Nor language tell,  
What wonders in thee dwell;  
The heart that feels thy mighty thrill  
Receives its fill  
Of joy unspeakable.

It was this love that moved our God  
To send the Lord,  
The blest, the eternal word,  
To save our fallen, guilty race  
From hell's dark place,  
Through his own sovereign grace.

It is this love that to us brings  
All heavenly things,  
Upon its golden wings,  
And lightens all the pain and care  
We're called to bear  
While footsore pilgrims here.

It gives us heart to watch and pray  
And walk God's way  
From this to perfect day,  
And makes this world an Eden-bower,  
From hour to hour,  
To those who feel its power.

O Father, God! send from above  
The heavenly dove,  
To breathe to me this love,  
And let this precious bliss divine,  
Now, at this time,  
O gracious Lord! be mine.

—J. N. Folsell, in Watchman.

## THE LOST CLOSET.

BY REV. WILLIAM AIRMAN, D. D.

In the days gone by there was a place and a time very full of blessedness. You can remember the little room whose door you locked while you gathered its stillness and calm around you. You remember the chair before which you knelt. What scenes of glory and of blessedness in your soul's life were witnessed there! You remember that first time when in the depth of your despair you sank down and sobbed out your confession of sinfulness and helplessness, and when, you hardly knew how, you looked to Jesus as your Saviour. Then there came to you, like the blush of morning, the dawning of hope in your heart, the burden uplifting itself, and a strange joy coming in that you never knew before. Your prayer was turned to thanks and praises. The room became from that hour very attractive. From gay companies where smiles and laughter were about you and you were glad for the pleasant fellowship, you sought it and found it good to draw near to God. It was a sanctuary, very calm and peaceful.

You remember that day when a great joy came to you, and you knelt there and took the joy to God while you praised him for it. You remember that day when your first real grief swept over you and in your tears and through your sobs you said, "Thou knowest all, help me!" The great shadow was over you, and the night and storm were around you, but there in that room you seemed to hear a voice which you recognized, saying, "It is I." It grew into a habit with you to go thither, and the hour that had been selected seemed to have a low call that you gladly answered, and you went in—it was to meet Some One there. If at any time you missed the visit to the place of prayer, there was something wanting all day.

All this was long ago. Of late it has not been so with you. You do not much miss the closet now. You can go through all the day and feel no special vacancy in your heart, except at times when there comes a sudden and sharp pang that makes you almost cry out for what is lost. But that is only for a moment, the rush and the hurrying thoughts bear you on and away. You can go through the whole day and many days without any real prayer. You say your prayers night and morning, say them hurriedly, but there is no hour and no place that now grows sweet and solemn in its sweetness because you find it good to draw near to God. The closed door and the silence do not now bring halcyon thoughts. The closet has gone. Perhaps the room it there, but the prayers are away. The joys, the gentle comfort of those earlier days, the radiant openings of the Bible, the vistas sometimes narrowing in the distance toward the heavenly city where the home eternal is, the hopes, the undefined yet prevailing satisfaction and quiet rest—you can only say of them:

"Blossoms of peace once in my pathway springing,  
Where is your beauty and your fragrance gone?"

Perhaps you can remember—you can if you try—when the closet began to lose all that made it your meeting-place with God. You recall the growing reluctance to linger there, the effort which seemed necessary in making the moments go by, the more hurried prayers. Perhaps, were you willing to think of them, you could recall the reasons for all this and the causes; the subtle influences which came in and made this pervading change in a place which once was so radiant and so dear.—*N. Y. Observer.*

For every trial God sends, he gives sufficient grace for its endurance; but he promises no grace to bear anticipations with, and we little know how very large a portion of our mental suffering arises from anticipations of trial.—*Church Press.*

## GODLY STABILITY.

A judicious observer has said: "The longer I live the more I am certain that the great difference between men—between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant—is energy, invincible determination, a purpose, once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do any thing that can be done in this world, and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities will make any one successful without it."

The greatest failures are for want of "patient continuance in well-doing," which in the Scripture is associated with "glory, honor, and immortality." In a multitude of cases but little is accomplished, because of easy discouragement in laudable endeavor and early relinquishment of a worthy purpose. This is true in every department of Christian work. All do not endure to the end of what they begin as "workers together with God." Herein is great occasion for lamentation. Otherwise vastly more might be done so as to gain the supreme Master's approval.

One who was more than ordinarily successful in Sabbath-school work said: "For years I have laid it down as a maxim to guide me, never give up an undertaking in despair of success. If one way does not succeed, new means must be tried; and if I see no increase this year perhaps I may next. I always wish to blot the word impossible from my vocabulary." The dauntless spirit breathed in these heroic words is in widest contrast with all the pusillanimous utterances of instability.

Examples might be multiplied to show what unyielding persistency can accomplish. The history of William Carey affords such an example. At a somewhat advanced period in life, without any early classical culture, he entered upon pioneer missionary work, and began to acquire thirty-eight languages so as to translate the Bible into them. There now remain to be seen "in manuscript" his Sanscrit dictionary, in five folios of seven hundred pages each, and his Bengalee dictionary and other large works, any one of which is enough to give an ordinary man a world-wide reputation. It has been concisely said of him that "besides his appropriate work as a missionary, he acted as professor in the Government College and as a translator for the Government, and superintendent of an indigo plantation—all that he might obtain the means of supporting the mission." Through this one man twenty-seven millions of the East for the first time read the Word of God in their own tongue.

This was the triumph of stability in contrast with instability. The latter never would have made such a record. Carey's stability was seen in his persistent endeavours to arouse from indifference and reclaim from opposition his brethren respecting the work of the world's conversion, the feasibility of which they did not recognize with him. In thus resolutely meeting the seemingly insuperable difficulties in his way, he uttered those immortal words: "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." That is the motto of Christian stability. In all the history of those who have excelled in usefulness, there cannot be discovered the instability of those who have not excelled. Our Saviour who with unflinching constancy "went about doing good," even until He could say to the Father who sent Him: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do," claims our imitation, and in responding to this claim we must accept the inspired injunction: "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."—*The Watchman.*

## JESUS WEPT.

A vast deal of error and of practical mischief comes from seeing one side of a truth while failing to recognize the other side. There was wonderful breadth and significance in the remark attributed to Robertson, "Truth does not lie in a compromise between two sides, but in a comprehension of both."

All this in a singular degree applies to the nature of our Lord's being. The Unitarian is right when he asserts the perfect humanity of our Lord, when he says that Jesus of Nazareth was a man. His error lies in denying, what is equally apparent on the face of the New Testament, that he was also God. On the other hand, many evangelical believers who hold with admirable tenacity to the truth of our Lord's divinity, yet do not accept the fact of his manhood, and are shocked when they hear attributed to him any limitation, any human liability.

When we are told, in those most touching, wonderful, unparalleled words, "Jesus wept," there is given a profound declaration of his perfect humanity. His tears were the expression of pain and grief. He sorrowed over the bereavement of the sisters, even though he felt in himself an assurance that his prayers would

be answered, and that the brother would be restored to the weeping sisters. He sorrowed over this instance of the ravages of death, the result of sin. He wept as he thought that, universal as was the reign of death, no less widespread was the dominion of sin; and that the death of the body was but a feeble type of the death of the soul.

And his tears were an indication of sympathy. To weep for men is one thing; to weep with men is very much more. He had made himself our brother, our fellow in suffering, in shame. The other day, an estimable lady, the sister of one who had plunged himself and all who loved him in shame and agony, said, "I have suffered the pains of bereavement; but that is as nothing to this." He stooped down and became the brother of those who were under condemnation. When he wept, he said to us, "I am of your kin; I share your lot, sad as it is."

He was a real man; there was no sham, no disguise. Sometimes sovereigns have disguised themselves; George III. used to go about among the cottages of the peasants, dressed like a solid, plain farmer; but he was not a farmer; he only wore the farmer's clothes. We read in "The Arabian Nights" how the Calif and the Grand Vizier used to put on the disguise of merchants and to go about the city of Bagdad at night, to see how matters were going. But they had laid aside nothing of their former state. They were not merchants. But He was a man; the Word was made flesh; or, as in the Revision, "became flesh." To him, pain, sorrow, loneliness, hunger, weariness, desertion by friends, the endurance of ingratitude, meant just the same to us. He was in all points tried like we are.

We have not alone his pity, his love, his kind wishes; we have his sympathy. In every one of our trials, he feels with us just as far as a sinless being can do so. He has first trodden the path to which he calls us. It is his blood that marks the prints where we are bidden to place our feet.—*Nat. Baptist.*

## SYSTEMATIC BENEFEICENCE.

The easily perceived growing interest in nearly all the churches on the subject of systematic beneficence is a matter for the greatest gratification. For when those who believe in Christ and belong to our Churches can be taught to see as they ought to see it, that one and all we are not our own, but belong to Christ and are the stewards of his grace and bounty, God's kingdom, it appears to us, comes within the sphere of human observation. If, for instance, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church really believed that they were responsible to God for the use of their income and the profit of their business, does anyone suppose that even one of our Connexional benevolences would be thwarted in its purposes by the lack of means to carry on its work? We have not a doubt that here is the weak spot in our Church life and evangelizing work. We are, indeed, well persuaded that the most important work of the Church at this time is to teach and train the membership in this fundamental truth of the Christian life and activity. Our enterprises of benevolence and evangelism have grown to that proportion that they can no longer rely on irregular and impulsive giving.

Systematic beneficence is the practical recognition of the most important fact in Christian living; that we are not to live unto ourselves, but unto Christ who died for us. "Ye are not your own." We, who have chosen Christ and call ourselves by his name, are really his, pledged to do his will and carry out his work in this world. His claim is first, not second. He does not ask us to bestow on his service what we have left over from our daily needs. This would not be an expression of love or gratitude at all. Any beggar might expect as much. Such giving confirms and perpetuates selfishness; what we need is to be lifted out of our selfishness into the "mind" which was in Christ when he became poor that we might become rich. We must recognize God's claim on us. His bounty of which he makes us partakers in the order of his providence is entrusted to us for his service; it is not our own in such a way that God has no claim on us to use it for his service in this world. The conversion of the world, care for the poor and the sick, the orphaned and the unfortunate, the education of the ignorant, are plain duties of our life.

Until one recognizes God's claim and methods of carrying forward his work, to give with true Christian liberality seems an unpleasant burden, an unnecessary self-denial. But when the duty of living unto Christ and the law of systematic beneficence are understood and accepted, giving becomes a royal means of grace and is a constant source of happiness. For to know that we are actively co-operating with Christ in carrying forward his work is the

highest joy of a redeemed soul in its probationary state. God makes self-denial fruitful of spiritual blessings; and not infrequently he entrusts with a greater share of his bounties. The more this subject is studied in the light of God's Word and the experience of Christians that have adopted the plan of systematic giving, the stronger will be the conviction that God's blessing attends those who honor him with their substance.—*Central Advocate.*

## TWO PATHS.

A biography of the son of a small farmer who lived in the stormy times of Charles the First has just been published in England. John, on coming to man's estate, met a woman whom he heartily loved.

"We were not afraid to marry," he wrote, "though we had not so much property as a dish or spoon between us."

John was soon converted to his wife's religious belief, and was not afraid to preach it, though he was sent to prison for doing it.

"If I am set free to-day, I will preach the gospel to-morrow," he told the judge. He kept his word, and was twice sent back to jail, where he remained for nearly thirteen years. There he worked day and night making shoe-laces to support his family, and writing the gospel which he could not preach. The book which he wrote, "The Pilgrim's Progress," has been read all over the English-speaking world, and has been translated into eighty languages.

About the same time a German lad of seventeen in a Moravian settlement in the wilderness of Pennsylvania felt "called of God" to preach to the savages. A nobleman who was visiting the settlement was pleased by the boy, and offered to take him to Europe, give him a training as a skilled artificer, and establish him at Utrecht. An assured career and a fortune opened before him; the luckiest of men. He consented, and sailed in the suite of Baron S—. As the ship passed down the Delaware, they saw the boy, pale and haggard, gazing at the shore.

"David," he was asked, "Do you wish to return?"

"Yes."

"For what purpose?"

"To tell the Indians of God. That is my true work."

"Then, in his name, go back, even now."

He was sent ashore in a bateau, returned home, entered into the lodge of an Indian chief for two years, to learn their language and customs, and then gave up his life to preaching to them. No missionary has ever exercised a more powerful influence on the Indians than David Zeisberger. He founded forty Christian villages, and brought thousands of savages to Christianity and civilization.

A hundred years later a small company of men, old and young, was gathered in a large room in Philadelphia. Before them lay a paper, a protest against tyranny. If they signed it, it was at the risk of their lives, and of the property which would keep their children from beggary. Not a man drew back. The result is the Republic of the United States.

Young men of the present day, in choosing a career, ask themselves, "Can I grow rich by these means? How much will it be worth a year to me?" John Bunyan and David Zeisberger would seem fools in the eyes of the wise men of this generation. Yet it is only the men who struck out a higher purpose in life than money, and who obstinately followed it, that are reckoned among the world's leaders.

Only spiritual things last, and sacrifice is one law of spiritual happiness and attainment. There are two classes of men; those who live for the gratification of self and those who live for the good of others, and the two pursue different ways, leading whither? ending where?—*Youth's Companion.*

## EXALT GOD!

Suppose, beloved, it should ever be for Christ's glory to leave you in the dark, would you not rejoice to have it so! A little while ago it was so with me. A few years ago I remember preaching to you from the text, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and I think that if ever the soul of mortal man did know the bitter meaning of that cry, I did. I preached hearing the clanking of my own fetters while I spoke to you. It was sad work. That night, ere I went home, I knew the reason. There came into the vestry a man as nearly insane as man could be. Despair hung like a cloud over his countenance, and, as he took my hand, he said: "I never met a man before who seemed to know where I am. Talk with me." I saw him the next day, and several days, and saved him, by God's help, from self destruction. Then did I rejoice, because I saw that Christ was glorified. I would

lose my Master's company, dark as the day would be to me without it—lose it, aye, by the month together—if it would make him glorified in the heart of one poor, down-cast man, or bring a single sinner to his feet. Love Christ and be willing for him to give you the cold shoulder instead of the kiss of his lips, if he might the more be glorified. God brings us to reach that state of self-denial, to be willing to forego that greatest luxury of heaven for which angels themselves do pine, the presence of the Lord, if thereby Jesus may be the better served.

I like the valor of that soldier who helped to fill the ditch with his dead body, that his captain might march on to victory. Throw yourselves into oblivion, that Jesus may triumph. It were a small sacrifice for all the church to die a martyr's death, if Jesus were but raised one inch higher among men. Let us exhibit the self-denying that is born of love.

Suppose that it should also happen that some of you are going to be deprived of all privileges of hearing the gospel, because you are going away to a foreign land. You are extremely sorry. But suppose that Jesus means to make use of you to advance his glory among the heathen, by naming his name where it was never known before. Then you may rejoice in banishment, rejoice to deny yourselves gospel privileges, rejoice to be scattered far and wide, by mount and stream and sea, so that you may bring forth a harvest to his glory.

Brethren, if you should be sinking lower and lower in your own esteem, be not sorry for it. If Christ is rising higher and higher in your esteem, count it all gain. Sink down, O self, to death and the abyss! Sink, sink, till there is nothing left of thee! Go down, pride, self-conceit, self-trust, self-seeking! Go, even though your going should cause despondency, so long as Christ is crowned. Sink, sink, soul, if Jesus rises! If thou canst trust him better, love him better and admire him more, so let it be. As you come to this table, say, in your hearts: "Lord, make me glad or make me sad, so long as thou art exalted! Lord, make me have thy presence or let me be without, so long as thou art exalted and extolled."—*Spurgeon.*

## A "HOLY OF HOLIES."

The Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, in a delightful contribution to the *Independent*, describing "A Sunday school at Home" in his childhood, mentions the evening song and prayer service, and then beautifully and tenderly says:

"Beyond the 'Holy Place' was the 'Holy of Holies.' For fifteen years that I can remember, it was my mother's invariable custom to take the children into her own room after the regular Sabbath evening song and prayer I have described. In the darkness, in the twilight, or in the moonlight, we followed her, and there, seated together without a light, she would talk in a tender way, about eternity and duty, about our faults as children, her anxiety about us, her intense desire for our salvation, how we ought to be more patient with each other, more gentle with each other, more cheerfully obedient to father, more guarded in our speech, etc. Then we knelt together, and she prayed; and how she could pray! Living with God seven days, and through all the nights, when she brought us, her children, to the mercy seat on the Sabbath evening, was not heaven opened, and did not the place seem holy ground, and can any one wonder that her children cannot recall those scenes without a thrill and flood of tears, and a vow of renewed consecration?"

Let us add one to the questions: Who shall say that the tremendous power and usefulness of the Bishop of Chautauqua is not due principally to those holy hours with the sainted mother? Other mothers and other children profit by their example.

## HIS OWN STUFF.

Some time ago the *Interior* told the following: A plain-spoken man, but of small judgment, walking home with a young preacher, at the close of a morning service, in one of our towns said to him, "I noticed that you omitted the reading of the Scriptures." "Yes," said the young minister, "I made the introductory services as short as I could, because my sermon was so long."

"But why," was the answer, "didn't you not leave out some of your own stuff?" But why would not the minister substitute the reading his own "stuff" for the chapter in the Bible? He no doubt, on the same occasion, substituted hymns of human composition, which are oftentimes called "stuff" by those that use them for the word of God given in the Psalms of the Bible and with his command to use them in praise. Why not!—*Christian Instructor.*

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