

Christianity.

O peerless force uplifting man
From selfishness and sin,
Opens the gates to righteousness,
And points to peace within!
The value of this gift is known
From age to age, unique;
Unnumbered millions have been blest—
'Tis heaven for all who seek.

To worldly "wise and prudent" ones
A stumbling block 'twill prove,
But every weary, sin-sick soul
May safely claim Christ's love.
The glorious fruits of righteousness
Have been, and will be hence,
Till time shall end, its life, its peace,
Its praise and its defence.

O love of Christ! teach thou my pen
In burning words to trace
Salvation given, to sin-cursed world,
Resulting all from grace!
It gives to man unfading hope
In realms of bliss above,
It makes of earth a paradise.
It proves our "God is love."

The Outlook.

God's Promises.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The solvency of a bank and the strength of a government give their value to the notes they issue. So it is the infinite solvency of the divine Ruler that makes all God's promises to be "exceeding great and precious." And on them rests the true Christian's assurance and his peace of mind in the darkest hours. It was happily expressed by an old Negro on a Virginia plantation whom a friend of mine once asked: 'How is it, Caesar, that you are always the happiest man on the plantation?' 'Because, sah, I always lays flat down on de promises, and I prays straight up.' Humble, happy soul, he was not the first man who has eased an aching heart by laying it on God's pillows, or the first who has risen up the stronger for a repose on the unchangeable words of the infinite love.

God's promises are as 'great' as their Giver. Open thy casket, my brother; pour out the golden ingots stamped with the image and superscription of the King! Count over the diamonds that flash in thy hand like stars! Compute, if you can, the worth of this single jewel. 'He that believeth on Me shall have everlasting life,' or this other one, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' Then remember who it is that made these promises and to what poor, unworthy creatures they are given. When Julius Caesar once gave a man a great gift, the man said: 'This is too great for me to receive.' And the noble Roman replied: 'It is not too great for me to give.' The smallest promise in our Bible casket is too much for us poor sinners to deserve; yet the largest promise is not too large for our heavenly Father to make good.

He seems to act meanly by His children, and wonders that we so often act meanly toward Him.

Many people commit the grievous mistake of forgetting that nearly all of the divine promises are conditional. God as a sovereign has a right to prescribe the terms on which He will bestow His priceless blessings; the Bible sparkles with promises of salvation; but to whom? Are they made to any man unconditionally? Not that I can discover. God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, and makes repentance of sin one condition of salvation. Another condition is faith on the crucified Son of God. 'He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ hath everlasting life'; 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in * * * the only begotten Son of God'; 'he shall not see life'; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' These terms are explicit enough. Is it not strange that anyone should expect to be saved who is nullifying all God's promises by refusing to comply with God's terms? Salvation is a matter of covenant. God lays down His conditions in the Gospel. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and he that cometh to Christ shall in no wise be cast out. Observe how thickly the precious promises are strewn around one spot—the cross of Calvary; there they are as sparkling as the diamonds in the sands of Golconda. My friend, if you desire the benefit of these promises, which are large enough to awaken the envy of an angel, you must go to Calvary for them; that is your hill of hope and your mount of mercy. Every drop of sacred blood from the crucified Lamb of God is an infinite invitation of divine love. The cross itself—in its stupendous signification—is one eternal, unchangeable promise, 'exceeding great and precious.' But to be saved you must go to the Saviour; and your going to Him in sincere penitence and faith is your part in complying with God's sovereign conditions. This age has discovered many new things, it has discovered no new terms of Salva-

tion. They are as old and as glorious as Calvary.

As we have said of the promises of full salvation that they lie beside the cross of the atoning Jesus, so it may be said of the promises in regard to prayer; they are to be found beside the mercy seat. 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' There is no receiving without the right asking; no opening to us unless we knock with the right spirit. If you have ever gone to that mercy seat and come away empty, it was because you asked amiss. If you regarded iniquity in your heart; if you carried only the cravings of pride and selfish lusts instead of the supplications of submissive faith, then the very promises became warnings to seal your lips. God makes His own conditions. To penitence and faith He gives liberally; to selfishness or unbelief, nothing. He loves to give when we will let Him give, and is never better pleased than when we importune Him with His own words and plead before Him His own promises. Yet there is a fearful amount of skepticism, even with many professed Christians, in regard to the answering of prayer.

Good people often forget that there are many sincere and proper petitions that we cannot expect to see answered at once. Many a faithful mother's prayers for her children have brought down precious blessings upon them long after the sod has grown green over her slumbering dust. The first martyr, Stephen, prayed during the agonies of death for his persecutors; when he was in Paradise the young blight who was an accomplice in his murder became a trophy of redeeming grace. Let desponding parents and desponding churches remember that God often puts perseverance to the test, and delay does not mean denial. God sometimes puts a long date to His promises. David does not come into his promised kingdom for many a year, and Abraham does not see his promised son until he is an old man. The young grain that is now gladdening the fields with green aleph under snow and frozen clouds all through the long winter. How often I think of the reply of the simple-hearted old nurse to the mother who was worrying over her sick child: 'Ma'am, you jist trust God; He's tedious, but He's sure.' I don't believe that there is such a thing in the history of God's kingdom as a right prayer offered in the right spirit that is forever left unanswered.

For honest, fervent prayers are often answered in a different manner from our expectations. God blesses the good intention, but does not grant the strict letter of the request. Jacob, when he blessed the sons of Joseph, laid his right hand on the son who stood at his left side. So our heavenly Father takes off the hand of his blessing from what we asked for, and lays it on another something that it is more for our good to have. Paul besought God three times that the 'thorn in his flesh' might be taken away. God heard him and answered him, not by removing the thorn, but by the sweet assurance, 'My grace is sufficient for thee'; and Paul's victorious patience has been a lesson for millions of suffering saints to this present day. God works on long lines, but with an unerring hand. In this life we look at the weaving tapestry of His providence on the ravaged side; in eternity we shall see the tapestry beautifully finished, without one thread of His promises broken.

Heaven itself is now only a promise to the best man or woman on this wide globe. No human eye sees it; no human ear listens to its far-away songs of rapture; no departed friend comes back to us in shining raiment to tell us just where and what it is. God keeps His great secret well. But, O impatient brother, mark you this: 'A promise is left us of entering into that rest.' God has said that; and is not that enough? On that promise millions upon millions have pilloved their dying heads and fell asleep in Jesus. All that I ask is that the lamp of that glorious promise may light me through the dark valley until the lamp is swallowed up in the blaze of heaven's glory, as the stars of night vanish with the coming of the conquering orb of day.—*Independent.*

Christian Character.

The most precious possession, the grandest treasure, which any man, woman, or child can possess, is a good character. Without this, no other possession can be of any great or permanent value. By 'character' we do not mean 'reputation,' though that, too, is of too great value to be lightly esteemed. A man's reputation is the opinion which is held of him by others. His character is what he is in himself, in the innermost depths of his being. It is that which will abide and stand

out to view in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

It is an inspiring truth that every one is, in a most real sense, and in a surpassingly important measure, the architect of his own character. We are too apt, most of us, while recognizing the fact that the powers of both body and mind may be trained and cultivated and developed to an almost unlimited extent, to think of the character, on its moral side, as something fixed and stationary. But a little reflection will show that this is a great and deplorable mistake. It is doubtful whether any other faculty of body or mind is more susceptible of modification and development by self-culture, than the moral nature. Is it not a most inspiring thought for every Christian, especially every young Christian, that with the help that is always freely bestowed upon those who earnestly seek and strive, his or her possibilities of moral growth, progress in every moral and spiritual excellence, are practically unlimited.

The very idea of moral culture presupposes, of course, right moral principles to be cultivated. If the roots of character, in other words, the ruling motives of the soul, are bad, no amount of culture can ever make the fruit good. The bramble bush will never bring forth grapes, under any pruning and culture whatever. We assume, then, that the moral basis is sound, that the heart is right, that the individual desires above all to do right and to do good, that, in a word, the birth from above has made the man or woman a new creature. If this is not the case it ought to be so, and a radical change is the first and greatest need.

But this, though the first and indispensable thing, is not everything. In the production of a good and noble character. How many do we daily meet whom we believe to be Christians, sincerely anxious to do right and to be useful, who yet fall short of the noblest standard of character, or life. They need heart culture. There can be no doubt that the man whose heart is right, but whose life-course, from faults of disposition of defects of training, may be sadly crooked and inconsistent, stands, nevertheless, on an immeasurably higher plane than his neighbor whose life, by reason of happier constitutional or educational causes, may be comparatively free from gross irregularities, but whose heart is dead to all the best and noblest impulses. We repeat, the highest moral law demands imperatively the right feelings and motives. These, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, through living union with His Son, alone can give.

Soul-culture is a process which must be mainly performed by the individual upon himself. The influence of another can be only indirect and partial. The first and great agency in carrying it on must be a habit of conscientiousness. The great question to be asked first of all and always, before deciding upon any course of conduct, should be, Is it right? Not, Is it expedient, or customary, or profitable, or pleasant, or easy, or fashionable, but, Is it right? Will it be pleasing to the Master? Let but the habit of first of all putting to oneself and answering this question in every doubtful case, be once formed, and the foundation is firmly laid for a noble superstructure of character. Let this practice of setting conscience on the throne, making the Christian conscience the arbiter of conduct, its dictates the law of life, be once firmly established and the result cannot fail to be a continual progress in the true higher life.—*Can. Baptist.*

The Record

They are making up the minutes of the convention for the printed volume soon to appear, said one in passing persons busily engaged at a writing table.

'O, go and tell them to put in something very nice about Mr. A,' said another.

They can only put in what is in record, was the reply.

This conversation, half in jest, was the occasion to us of earnest thought. Only what is in the record—so it must be in the final judgment of every life. There can be nothing better put in than we have ourselves written in daily acts and the spirit in which they were done. Doubtless there would be were it possible, for the heart of God is very tender toward His children, and He desires for us the very best. But the books are to be opened, and we are to be judged by what is written therein. Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. The deeds done in the body are the ground and measure of the final estimate.

We see how perfectly just and righteous the judgment will be. It will not be influenced by favor; nothing

will be inserted, nothing erased. Inasmuch as ye did or did not, will silence ever accusation of unfairness. How different from its present seeming the life we have lived will appear to us then; how different the lives of others whom, with our beclouded sight, we have so imperfectly understood. What wonderful books those will be! How their pages will startle us, standing out in clear, bold characters, which others, as well as ourselves, may read in the flaming light of God's presence. And we are writing these books day by day. A page is turned each twenty-four hours; tomorrow cannot alter that what today has written. It stands for eternity. What? The record of my sin? Must that remain forever against me? No, no. If that were so, surely we would all cry out for the rocks and mountains to cover us from the face of mortals and of God. But, thanks be to Him who hath loved us and hath washed us from our sins in His own blood, it is written: He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. With the poor simple boy who knew very little, but knew enough to believe in Jesus, we may say: The good red hand that was pierced for me has been drawn over the page of my sin, and God sees nothing but the blood—that covers all. It is written: Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more forever; I will blot out thy transgressions. But what of the service of my life, the use of my time, my opportunities, my wealth, my influences, in return for love like that! According to the record will be the reward. Star differeth from star; some works are gold, silver, precious stones; some are wood, hay, stubble. And not even the love which saves us from eternal death can change the records of our works. It is a serious thing to live. It is so heartless and mean to live selfishly when we might live so gloriously for Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. We cannot explain how heaven can be a place of perfect happiness with any regrets in the memory, but surely there must be regrets for lost opportunities of loving, giving, and serving when we thoughtlessly indulged our ease.

Living for self and thinking of self, And of nothing on earth beside, Just as if Jesus had never lived, And as if He had never died.

Wrong and Right Views of Afflictions.

Everywhere God has placed objects of beauty. The leaves of the trees are not formed in their texture and outline by chance. They present a varied and yet always a symmetrical and beautiful aspect. Hills and valleys, lakes and rivers afford pleasing pictures. Even the bleak and cold season is not without its beauty. The snow flake, and the ice on our window panes cause delight and symbolize purity. Go into the caverns of earth and there stalagmites and stalactites say that God is good. For every sense there is a delight. The fragrance of the rose and pink delight the sense of smell, while for our ears there are furnished the richest melodies of music.

But how prone we are to be un-mindful of these and other every day blessings. How often we look at the dark background of the picture instead of the picture itself. We do not consider as we should that the background is needful in order that the objects to be seen and enjoyed may be set out in pleasing relief. Loss of property, sickness, and death are but the background of the picture. We should observe the picture itself. But, "alas," says one, "in my case there is no picture. I have little or nothing for which to be grateful. I have worked hard and deprived myself of many comforts that I and mine might have a competence. Now it has disappeared as the frost before the sun."

Ah, my friend, are you not looking at this misfortune, or supposed misfortune, in a wrong light? Was it not God that gave you the strength, which together with the natural blessings he bestowed on you, enabled you to accumulate that property? Now you have lost it, possibly by some fault of your own, but at any rate God has permitted you to be deprived of it. But have you a right to complain? Has not He who gave, a right to take his own again? If a friend loans you a hundred dollars or the use of a farm for ten or twenty years without interest or rent, will you complain if he requires his own again? Then can you murmur against the providence of God because he takes from you, what he has lent you? Shall you not rather thank him for the loan so long?

There are others who have been bereft of parents or brother or sister, a life-companion or a child. Some of you regard these dear ones as with God and not as dead. If they were

Christians, that is right. But some cannot or do not acquiesce in the providence of God. It seems to some very unkind in God that he should have allowed their dear ones to be separated from them by death. We would not always blame grief. The nature of man is such that at times sorrow fills his heart. Even Jesus wept. He sympathized with the sisters of Lazarus. But may it not be that we allow our griefs to banish the love of God and our bereavements to hide the reasons for thankfulness? It was God that gave you that child, or father or mother. Should you not thank him for giving you the child, or parent so long, rather than murmur because he has taken his own again? All these weeks or years God loaned you the dear one, and perhaps you forgot to be grateful. Cannot you thank him now even as you thank your neighbor when you return the article you have borrowed?—*Free Baptist.*

A Remedy for the Blues.

I take a walk, said one young woman, vigorous of mind and body. If the trouble comes from indigestion, as it usually does, there is nothing like a ten-mile tramp to put your internal organs to rights.

The reply of a Boston maiden may be deemed characteristic: I sit down to the hardest mathematical problem that I can find.

I go into one of the alcoves in the reading-room, says another, the possessor of that Boston patent of nobility, a share in the Athenaeum, with the new magazines or a pile of local histories.

I suppose the saintly-minded would say that the best plan is to go to see some one who is worse off than yourself," said a young woman of feeble constitution, but brilliant mental endowments. I only add this misery to mine, and the sum total is suicidal. I just think, it isn't illness and it isn't death; nothing else matters. Or I try to bring myself to the admirable frame of mind that Dolly Madison attained at eighty. My dear, when you have reached my age you will learn that nothing matters.

I sweep my room, said an energetic little house-wife, usually to the indignation of the maid, who has just completed the same task.

Perhaps the best suggestion of all came from the tired little book-keeper: I try to do something for somebody else. For, as the Salvation Army leader phrased it, If you make other people 'appy, you've a 'appiness in your 'art that don't come in no other way.

But whether caused by a derangement of the liver, by some one walking over our future grave, or rising like an exhalation without known cause, it is safe to insist that the blues should be struggled against. There is a certain critical period in the life of every man or woman, at or near middle life, when he or she becomes morally tired. It may be that it is because then the ambition of youth is stilled in its wild pulsation, and the vague sense of the future holding a beautiful something is seen to be only a mirage.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Perfect Wisdom

Would give us perfect health. Because men and women are not perfectly wise, they must take medicines to keep themselves perfectly healthy. Pure, rich blood is the basis of good health. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the One True Blood Purifier. It gives good health because it builds upon the true foundation—pure blood.

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TO THE ELECTORS. OF THE County of Carleton

GENTLEMEN: I have accepted the nomination tendered me by the Liberal-Conservative convention and am a candidate for the representative of this, my native county, in the approaching election for the House of Commons. I am strongly of the opinion that one of the most important questions in Canadian politics is the Prohibition of the sale, manufacture, and importation of intoxicating liquors, and will, if elected, vote for a prohibitory law, and do what I can to have such a law enacted. I am in favor of the Fiscal and Trade Policy of the present government. As I did when I had the honor of being your representative in a former parliament I will if elected vote for such measures as I believe to be for the best interests of this County and the Dominion, regardless of party.

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