

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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LESSONS FROM CRUCIFIXION.

When Paul said crucified with Christ, he evidently referred to a religious experience very different from and profounder as a work of grace than regeneration. That he was speaking of the second and subsequent work is evident from the figure he uses, and that which it stands for.

In the first place it is well to recollect that the Word of God calls regeneration a birth. If it is a spiritual birth as Christ distinctly affirms it to be, then it cannot be a crucifixion for several reasons.

One is the striking difference in the two figures. We could never understand spiritual things if God likened what is called our conversion, to such widely dissimilar and hopelessly irreconcilable occurrences as a birth and a death. A cradle and a cross are very different things indeed to look upon; and the sensations born of the two are about as wide apart as it is possible to conceive. Moreover, we do not remember ever to have seen a man get into a cradle, nor has any one on earth ever beheld a baby nailed to a cross. The cradle is too small for the man. The cross is too large for the child.

A second reason for seeing the distinctive teaching of the figure is, that a human being has to be born before he can be crucified. The spirit calculated on our using the minds God gave us, and that we would remember that birth precedes death, and so, when he was speaking of regeneration or the new life, he was referring to one thing, and when he was dwelling upon crucifixion, that most fearful of death, that he was teaching another and very different thing. Evidently the Spirit was presenting two very dissimilar spiritual facts and occurrences, when he made John say, "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, which were born," etc., and later inspires Paul to write, "I am crucified with Christ."

A third fact confirming the thought advanced in this article is seen in the peculiar suffering spoken of in the verse when the Apostle says he is crucified.

The hasty reader sees the reference to pain, recalls certain moments of anguish and grief that he experienced in seeking pardon or salvation, and hastily concludes that it is another allusion to or description of regeneration and goes on his way. But let the reader have this settled forever by the facts that regeneration or the new birth are attended with birth throes, but the suffering Paul mentions in Galatians, second chapter and twentieth verse, is death pangs. There is a vast difference between birth pangs and death pangs. The very character of the suffering is different. Then in one a life is coming in, and in the other a life is going out of the world. Still again, with the birth of the child the suffering is mainly with the mother. And in harmony with this fact, the Bible declares that when Zion travails, sons and daughters will be born to God.

When it comes to death, the dying man has all the pain to himself. Crucifixion puts its every pang undivided on the crucified. Some who are invincibly opposed to a second instantaneous work of grace, making the heart pure and holy, have endeavored to find proof of the growth theory, or a gradual work, in the fact that crucifixion itself is not a sudden,

but a slow mode of death.

Our two-fold reply to this is that if they insist on this feature of the death of the cross, then we insist on their adhering to the figure throughout, and not be longer than six hours, or three days dying on the cross, or obtaining the blessing of holiness.

Our second answer is that crucifixion in the sense of being nailed on the wood is one thing, and crucified in the sense of hanging dead on the ghastly tree is another. One is beheld in the present tense, the other in the past. The process was over with Paul, and he says, "I am crucified."

Mr. Wesley said that sanctification was a gradual and instantaneous work. He did not mean to say that some obtained the grace by growth, over against another class who received in a moment. Indeed, he said he never knew one to obtain the blessing by the first method. He simply taught that man's part in the matter was a gradual approach, but the work itself, the divine part was instantaneous.

So, just as in crucifixion, there is a dying, and then a death; the limp, unconscious form hanging on the cross declaring that the work is over and done; so in sanctification we behold on the man's side a painful process, coming to and ending at last in a moment where God meets the perfectly devoted soul, the fire falls, the pangs end, the old man hangs dead, and the blessed and blissful Christian can cry, "I am crucified."

Just as we behold the victim nailed to the cross writhing and twisting in agony for hours, and then suddenly ceased from all motion and suffering, having entered upon the rest of death; so we can see, and do see around us today in our meetings, Christians passing through pangs analogous to that of crucifixion, suddenly at the altar or elsewhere find an instantaneous relief and deliverance, as sweet as it was sudden, and as abiding as it is profound. Groans cease, and tears are wiped away, the cramped, kneeling posture is given up, while with a leap of joy they are on their feet with shining face and lips overflowing with happy laughter or shouts of joy. The long, weary struggle is over, and they have entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

These things being so, how perfectly unphilosophical, unnatural and unscriptural it is to hear preachers and teachers declaring to sanctified people that there are other deaths and "deeper deaths" awaiting them. He who proclaims so unreasonable and absurd a doctrine can never have known the crucifixion that Paul speaks of in Galatians, or the death of the old man that so many of God's people feel to have taken place in their own individual cases at the end of a perfect consecration, and implicit faith in the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin.

We suspect that such teachers never knew the death of the cross. They were hung up on gum elastic bands and not on nails. They were tied to the beams with ribbons and not transfixed with spikes. They had soothing touches on the heads and not thorns driven in the brow. They had sparkling water given at every sigh, and not vinegar and then gall in the midst of bitter cries. The cross was not upright with them, but slanted so as to keep the weight of the whole man off from the suffering members.

The fact, the cross must have become a lounge. And the old man did not die, but had a fit.

This being so, of course such people must reach a deeper death, for they still feel something tremendously alive in them.

But how they discount the blessing of sanctification in doing this. How in addition to that, do they take the old-time attractiveness from it as the perfect rest, the peace that passeth understanding, the joy unutterable and full of glory, the sweet perfection to which we were urged to come as the culminating as well as the ultimate grace of the child of God in this life. With such a pure heart filled with perfect love we are told we are in condition to see God. We had the white garment for the wedding, we even rested on the word that "it is appointed unto men once to die," and that in the death of inbred sin, the sting of death itself was gone, and our own personal demise would rather be a departure than a death. When lo! we are told that this is but a series of deaths; that there are "deeper deaths" all along the Christian journey until the last breath is drawn, and the gates of the tomb receive us.

Such a view makes the holiness evangelist the most remarkable of all undertakers, as he is engaged in repeated burials of the same man. It makes sanctification the more unattractive and undesirable of experiences, as it introduces us to undying death agonies, and death that cannot be counted, and each one "deeper" than its predecessor.

It is true that Paul said, "I die daily;" but a mere glance at the chapter in which the words occur, show that he was making no reference whatever to sin. He was speaking of a martyrdom that might happen to him any day. He taught that sin could and should die once for all, while he Paul thought such men as Herod, Felix, Festus and Caesar might die any day.

This same Paul also wrote that he kept his body under and brought it into subjection. But he did not say that he kept the body of sin in subjection. There is a vast difference between a human body that God made and "the body of sin" that the devil manufactured. The former is to be kept under; the latter is to be destroyed. The apostle is perfectly clear in his presentation of these two utterly distinct facts.

So all these thoughts strengthen the conclusion that there cannot be a "deeper death" in the spiritual life—unless we go to hell.

After the blessing of entire sanctification, we may die daily in the sense of humiliations, mortifications, affronts, revilings, slanders and all kinds of private cuts and public shame but the old man of sin dies once. Not by section and piecemeal, but all over. The real crucifixion is a marvelous quieter, settler and deadener. He who can say with Paul, "I am crucified," makes no announcement for future funerals of the old man.—The Rev. B. Carradine, in Christian Witness.

Practice strict temperance and in your transactions remember the final account.

A Christian in earnest is always peculiar to men of the world. He has something which they have not, and which they cannot quite understand.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. STEELE.

The editor of Zion's Herald has asked for "a message to my friends on my 80th birthday, telling them how I feel, and what I wish most for myself and for them."

I feel a human loneliness, cheered by a divine companionship. I often repeat the couplet which Charles Wesley puts into the mouth of wrestling Jacob:

"My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee."

Whenever I read of any person with whom I was acquainted in my youth, or any allusion is made to any event of sixty or seventy years ago, and I turn to speak with some one of that period with whom to share my interest, and find no one, a painful momentary desolation is my experience. But there are blessed compensations. Just beyond the veil—a translucent veil, becoming almost transparent—are those whom "I have loved and lost awhile," Christian kindred and friends, college classmates whose names are starred in the Alumni Record and in that unpublished sodality, "the triangle," and behind these the crowd of believers with whom I have had delightful Christian communion in the fifteen churches of which I have been a pastor and the three universities in which I taught.

But there are regrets in my retrospect. I have failed to realize my ideals of Christian service. I am haunted by unspoken words and unwritten volumes. I cannot look up my past and say, as did Jesus Christ: "I always do the will of my Father." I may venture to say with His apostle: "I have kept the faith, I have fought a good fight," though not the best possible. Hence I can say with humiliation:

"Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death."

although Rabbi Fleischer has just now said on the Hebrew Day of Atonement: "The Jew's pure, uncompromising monotheism makes it difficult for him to conceive how, even to believing Christians, there can come mental satisfaction and spiritual consolation from a delegated, mediated, vicarious atonement."

Though I have reached the suburbs of heaven, the land of Beulah, the land of the midnight sun, with the celestial city in full view to the eye of faith, I daily and nightly pillow my head on the atonement, and read with ever increasing comfort my Saviour's words: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

"Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart."

If any epitaph is ever chiseled upon my tombstone let it be:

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,"

or one that I once read in the graveyard of Andover Seminary, written in Greek: "Christos ta parita," (Christ is all).

All I wish for myself on my completion of fourscore years is more love divine, excelling all earthly loves. I often awake in the night with an insatiable hunger for God, the living God. I thank Him for creating me with two infinite dimensions, desire and duration. Sixty years ago in his address at the Commencement of Wesleyan University, I heard Emerson represent the desire of the human soul as a goblet as big as the inverted sky, and all material good as a single evanescent dewdrop at the bottom.

Oh, what a blessing it would have been to him, and to the world, if he had added from personal experience the declaration that Christ can fill that vast receptacle. Poor man! He had not been to the upper room and received the Paraclete in a personal pentecost.

I wish for all my friends the gift of this divine person, who will impart what St. John of Ephesus styles "perfect love," and St. John of Epworth calls "Christian perfection," and St. John of Madeley describes as "a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity, for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relation, and, above all, love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator, Jesus Christ." What a power such a church would be.—Daniel Steele.

AN AWFUL DEATH-BED.

A young skeptic who was dying, said, "Begone," to a Christian, "I want none of your cant; I am not going to die, and if I were I would die as I have lived." The doctor came and he said, "O tell me, I am not dying; I will not die." "I cannot speak falsely to you; your spirit will soon be with your God," said the doctor. "I have no God, but the world; I have stifled conviction, I have fought against Almighty God; I have resisted my friends' pleadings, and now you tell me that I must die. Do you know," he hissed in an awful whisper, "what that means? If I die today I shall go to hell! Take it back! Tell me I'm not going to die. Father," he said, "It was you who taught me this; you led me on this way, and now I must die. Stand back!" he shrieked, "I will not die!" and a torrent of oaths issued from his fever parched lips, so terrible in their madness that it seemed like a wail from the pit of woe.

No wonder the poor mother was borne fainting from the room, and the father's brow was corrugated and great drops of agony rested there. In the midst of dire cursings his gifted son fell back a corpse.—Sel.

VOLUNTEER WORKERS.

We should never lose sight of the fact that our great host of Sunday school officers and teachers are volunteer workers. They are bearing the responsibilities of their high station without the hope of fee or reward.

It is fitting that this should be taken into account when we compare the work of the faithful Sunday-school teachers with that of professional teachers in the secular schools. It is the glory of the Sunday-school movement that it can command the services of such a vast number of men and women who labor with such a marked degree of efficiency entirely without compensation. No servants of the church should be held in higher appreciation. Just here it may be appropriately suggested that we, too, frequently reserve the little need of praise that is theirs until too late a day. There is a time and place for the word of appreciation and it is not the day or place of the funeral. The most useless praise is post-mortem praise.—Sel.

It is dislocation and detachment from the life of God that makes things ugly.—Emerson.