

DUTY.

Daniel Webster, in his unabridged dictionary, says: "That which a person is bound by moral obligation to do, or to refrain from doing; that which one ought to do." The same man was once addressed as follows: "Mr. Webster, you are a great thinker, what is the greatest thought you ever had?" The unhesitating reply came, "My personal responsibility to God."

Did you ever think that God is bound by his own nature to do all He does? His perfect moral nature dictates His dealings with man. So, when He saw that the lost world could be rescued in no other way, He gave His only begotten Son. And, with Him, shall He not freely give the lost sinner all the help he needs?

In following this thought, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, that He might taste death for every man. The great work He did was necessary, and there was no other Name in heaven or among men whereby the lost sinner might be saved. Both the Father and the Son were impelled by the law of their own perfect moral nature, for they so valued the lost coin and the lost sheep (Luke 15), and loved the prodigal son, that Calvary has become the theme of both worlds for time and eternity. "We love Him because He first loved us." And, "we which live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again."

This brings us back to our duty or personal responsibility to God. Even the sinner is under obligation to obey his Creator and Redeemer. Because God willeth not that any should perish, therefore He "commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent." Again we read, "This is the condemnation, that light is come and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." God having done His part, the responsibility rests with the sinner. The Holy Spirit is doing His utmost to convict of sin and lead the prodigal home.

Then there is one thing more that faces every unsaved person. It is their duty to be useful in the world and help others. The first steps in the right direction are repentance toward God and faith in the Man of Calvary. This receiving of God (Jno. 1). Only the branches abiding in Christ brings power to become the sons of God in the Vine can bear fruit.

This was the thought in the mind of that prophet who said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. The ax is laid unto the root of the tree. Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down." Meaning wasted lives! Every unsaved soul is not only lost, but is living for naught.

"What about some of the so-called Christians?" Many of the unsaved vainly try to shift their responsibility to other shoulders. But every one must give an account of himself to God. Then, too, regarding the saved ones, their duty is to "live unto Him who died for them and rose again."

Jesus did the will of the Father perfectly. Paul was free from the blood of all men, finished his course and kept the faith. The Good Samaritan did his duty

by ministering to the wounded man that came his way. Duty is that which lies within our circle. Do you remember the Jewish law for the murdered man? From where his body was found, measurements were taken to learn the nearest village or town. That town was held responsible and made atonement for the sin of murder. The watchman on the wall, in Ezek. 33:6, was held guilty of the blood of any who might die unwarned. Paul, we think, had that in mind when he said, "I am free from the blood of all men." When we see the hearers by, we think first, "Was that person saved?" If we learn that he died in his sins we think: "Is it all his fault, or was his blood be required at the hands of some Christian?"

We go a step farther and see the heathen dying without hearing of Calvary, and this so many hundred years since the Babe of Bethlehem was announced by the angelic host, "Glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." It is certain that the fault lies with the church of God. She has not done her duty. Let's ask, "Is our church doing its whole duty?" And, "Am I doing all I should?"

Duty, to the true Christian, is easy because God "worketh in you to will and to do." As the Spirit wrought through Christ, inspiring His words and works, so He will through us while we "abide in the Vine." The words that we speak will not be the "letter that killeth," but will be spirit and life. Jesus said, "The word that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The Holy Spirit will give us the messages and then cause the hearers' hearts to respond to the Spirit-given messages. Our duty then, as Christians is to "tarry at Jerusalem" for the Pentecostal outpouring. Then to "go," filled with the Spirit, fruitful "in good works which God hath ordained that we should walk in them."

Strangest of all, we are rewarded for doing what we should have done. "Well done, good and faithful servant." We shall never cease to thank God for sending His Son, nor cease to exalt that wonderful Name. Why? They did what love impelled, while we receive all the glorious rewards of the overcomers because we do what we ought, the love of Christ constraining us, and making duty our highest joy.

H. C. SANDERS

"An old Testament writer declared that he that believeth shall not make haste, and a modern hymn admonishes us to take time to be holy. It is good counsel. It does take time to be holy. Holiness is not an accident nor a ceremonial habit or practice; it is an attitude of mind and heart, and a relationship of the will as it controls and directs the whole life, and the right attitude and the right relationship are matters of study and thought and prayer. Consider, hearken, reason, think, wait, watch and pray are all good Biblical admonitions. How can a man who is always in a rush of activity, who never takes time to think be right with either God or his fellow men? It is only where love abounds in knowledge and in all judgment that it is able to approve the things that are excellent."—Free Meth.

OTHERS MAY, YOU CANNOT.

If God has called you to be really like Jesus, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility, and put upon you such demands of obedience that you will not be able to follow other people, or measure yourself by other Christians, and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do.

Other Christians and ministers who seem very religious and useful may push themselves, pull wires, and work schemes to carry out their plans, but you cannot do it; and if you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent.

Others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do such a thing, and if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that you will despise yourself and all your good works.

Others may be allowed to succeed in making money, or may have a legacy left them; but it is likely God will keep something far better than gold, namely, a helpless dependence on Him, that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day out of an unseen treasury.

The Lord may let others be honored and put forward, and keep you hidden in obscurity, because He wants to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade. He may let others do a work for Him and get the credit of it; but He may make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing; and then, to make your work still more precious, He may let others get the credit for the work which you have done, and thus make your reward ten times greater when Jesus comes.

The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or wasting your time, which other Christians never seem distressed over. So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. He may not explain to you a thousand things which puzzle your reason in His dealings with you, but if you absolutely sell yourself to be His love-slave, and bestow upon you many blessings which come only to those who are in the inner circle.

Settle it forever, then, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that He does not seem to use with others. Now when you are so possessed with the living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life you will have found the vestibule of Heaven.—Selected.

"The feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace belong to the same man whose hand wields the sword of the spirit, and whose head is protected by the helmet of salvation."