

THE LORD IS MY BANKER

"I have been travelling for a large wholesale drug company in St. Louis for a number of years, and I have met all sorts of customers, and have had a varied experience with many of my patrons. On one of my runs in the southwest I had one very particular old friend whom I will call Brother Benton, because everybody in the section calls him by that name. He nearly always had an order for me; but whether he did or not, I always felt better after making my call, on account of his cheerful ways and pleasant words. I could see my customers only twice a year, at best, and I looked forward to my visit with this old customer as one of my best days.

"On one visit, I sold him a much larger bill than he had ever made before, but I did not hesitate to recommend the House to fill the order. I had learned that he was universally loved and respected in his town as a sincere Christian. He would not keep ardent spirits, nor would he hear for one moment of giving space in his house to tobacco in any shape. 'My Bible,' said he 'condemns both whiskey and tobacco and I will have nothing to do with them.' No amount of persuading or liberal discounts could induce him to deviate from his rule.

"About six months after I had sold him the large bill, I was notified by the House that the bill was unpaid, and that I should call as soon as possible and collect it. I hastened to look after the matter. I found a new face behind the counter, and I learned that a short time after I sold that bill, my old friend had taken the smallpox and he and his family had been under quarantine for a long time. His sickness had lasted for several months and he was still confined to his home. I did not see him but he sent me word that the matter would come out all right in the end.

"He suffered more losses than he thought, and six months went by and the bill was still unpaid. I wrote the House and told them the condition of things, and they were holding up all proceedings against him. Six months went by again, and I was ordered to go at once and collect the bill or enter suit. I had some rebellious thoughts. The night before I arrived at his town I spent several weary hours rolling and tossing on my bed trying to contrive some plan to avoid closing out my old friend. He lived eight miles from the railroad, and I must see him on the morrow. I knew that if I brought suit, in all probability others would do the same, and a good man would go to the wall for no fault of his own. While tossing on my bed, I must have fallen asleep. I thought I had called on my old friend, and we were sitting in his family room, with all his family around him. He turned to me and said, 'We are just about to have our morning prayers, and we shall be glad to have you join us.' I replied, 'With pleasure.' He said, 'We will read the 23rd Psalm.' He began to read, but I was astonished at the words I heard. I had learned that Psalm in Sunday school when a boy, and while I had not read my Bible as much as I should have done, still I will never forget that 'The Lord is my shepherd.'

"The words were read in a clear voice, and my heart rejoiced, though I had never heard it that way before. He read: 'The Lord is my banker I shall not fail. He maketh me to lie down in gold mines; He giveth me the combination of His tills. He restoreth my credit; He showest me how to avoid lawsuits for His Name's sake. Yea, though I walk in the very shadow of debt, I will fear no evil for Thou are with me; Thy silver and Thy gold they rescue me. Thou preparest a way for me in the pres-

ence of the collector; Thou fillest my barrels with oil; my measure runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will do business in the name of the Lord.

"Having read this Scripture, he knelt down and prayed. I thought I had never heard such a prayer in all my life. He fairly took my breath from me when he asked his Heavenly Father to bless me, his friend.

"With his 'amen!' I awoke with a start. I concluded that I would call on my old friend early in the morning at his own home. I arose in time to procure a team, and was knocking at his door just as the sun was coming above the eastern horizon.

"He met me at the door with a hearty handshake and said: 'Come in, come right in; we are just going to have morning prayer, and we will be glad to have you join with us.' He took me into the room and introduced me to his wife and children. He took up his Bible and said, 'We will read the 23rd Psalm.' He read it in a clear voice but read it as it is written in the Book. I cannot tell you my feelings and thoughts as he read. We then knelt in prayer, and he humbly made known his wishes, but it did not sound like the one I had heard in my dream, though he appeared to go over the same thoughts. He told the Lord he owed some money, and that it was past due, and he asked Him that a way might open to pay it that same day. He then prayed for me; and while on my knees I resolved that for one time in my life I would disobey orders.

"After prayers we both went directly to the drug store, and just as we entered the door, a young man met us, saying, 'Brother Benton, father sent me over here this morning to tell you that he would take the house and lot you spoke to him about some days ago. He told me to hand you this money, and that he would pay the balance on the delivery of the deed.

"The old man took the roll of bills, and tears began to roll down his cheeks as he turned away. He wrote the young man a receipt for the money and gave it to him. He then turned to his ledger and began to figure. He then turned to me and said, 'Will you kindly receipt this bill? I saw that he had added all the interest on the bill. I told him I was ordered by the house to remit the interest. He declined to receive it, and said he desired to pay all his just debts. I took the money and sent it in.

"The House wrote him a very complimentary letter, thanking him for the remittance. In a great measure my dream had come true.

"At the time I was tossing on my bed, my old friend was on his knees in his closet, pleading with his Banker for a loan. I am very much gratified to know that he got it, and ever since, in all my discouragements, I apply the 23rd Psalm as the remedy."—*A Tract.*

COMMUNION WITH GOD

My child, it is not necessary to know much about Me; it is sufficient to love much. Speak to Me as thou wouldst to a mother, if she drew thee near her.

Are there any for whom thou wouldst pray to Me? Repeat to Me the names of thy relations, thy friends; after each name add what thou wouldst have Me do for them. Ask much, ask much. I love generous souls who forget themselves for others.

Tell Me of the poor whom thou wouldst relieve, the sick whom thou hast seen suffer, the sinners thou wouldst have converted, those who are alienated from thee, whose affections thou wouldst regain.

Are there graces thou wouldst ask for thyself? Write if thou wilt, a long list of all thou desirest, of all the needs of thy soul, and come and read it to Me.

Tell Me simply how proud thou art, how sensitive, egotistical, mean and indolent. Poor child, do not blush; there are in Heaven many saints who had thy faults; they prayed to Me and, little by little, their faults were corrected.

Do not hesitate to ask Me for blessings for the body and mind; for health, memory, success. I can give all things, and I always give when blessings are needed to render souls more holy.

To-day what wilt thou have, My child? If thou knewest how I long to do thee good. Hast thou plans that occupy thee? Lay them all before Me. Dost thou wish to give pleasure to thy mother, to thy family, to those on whom thou dost depend? What wouldst thou do for them?

And for Me, hast thou no zealous thought for Me? Dost thou not wish to do a little good to the soul of thy friend who perhaps have forgotten Me?

Bring me all thy failures, and I will show thee the cause of them. Hast thou not troubles? Who has caused thee pain? Tell Me all, and thou wilt forget; and I will bless thee.

Dost thou dread something fearful? Is there in thy heart a vain fear which is not reasonable, but which is tormenting? Trust thyself wholly to My care. I am here. I see every thing. I will not leave thee.

Hast thou not joys to make known to Me? Why dost thou not let Me share thy happiness? Tell Me what has happened since yesterday to cheer and console thee. An unexpected visit which did thee good; a fear suddenly dissipated; a success thou thoughtest thou shouldst not reach; a mark of affection, a letter, a gift which thou hast received. I have prepared it all for thee. Thou canst shew thy gratitude and give me thanks.

Art thou resolved no longer to expose thyself to this temptation? not to finish this book which excites thy imagination? no longer to give thy friendship to a person who is not godly, and whose presence disturbs the peace of thy soul? Wilt thou go at once to do a kindness to the companion who has hurt thee.

Well, my child, go now; take up thy work; be silent, humble, submissive, kind; and come back to-morrow and bring Me a heart still more devout and loving. To-morrow I shall have more blessings for thee.—*Tract.*

THE BIBLE

A noted orator asked Dickens for the most pathetic story in literature, and he said it was that of the Prodigal Son. Mr. Coleridge was asked for the richest passage in literature, and he said it was the first sixteen verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew. Another asked Daniel Webster for the greatest legal digest, and he replied that it was the Sermon on the Mount. No one has equalled Moses for lay, nor David for poetry, nor Isaiah for visions, nor Jesus for ethics, nor Peter for holy zeal, nor Apollos for fiery oratory, nor Paul for logic, nor John's statements of sanctified love. What a ridiculous statement that to study the Bible "marks a step backward in education!" God's Word is the very greatest of all books, and its Author the very greatest of all teachers. We do well to stay close to its pages. It is *The Book*.—*Christian Witness.*

The Bible is a window in this prison world, through which we may look into eternity.—*Timothy Dwight.*