

SELECTED ILLUSTRATIONS

From the Sky Pilot

SIN

David Rittenhouse, of Pennsylvania, the great astronomer, was skilful in measuring the size of the planets and determining the position of the stars. But he found that, such was the distance of those orbs, a silk thread stretched across the glass of his telescope would entirely cover a star; and moreover, that a silk fibre, however small, placed upon the same glass, would not only cover the star, but would conceal so much of the heavens that the star, if a small one and near the pole, would remain obscured behind that silk fibre several seconds. Thus a silk fibre appeared to be larger in diameter than a star. There are times when a very small self-gratification, a very little love of pleasure, a very small thread, may hide the light. The little boy who held the sixpence near his eye said, "O mother, it is bigger than the room!" and when he drew it still nearer he exclaimed, "O mother, it is bigger than all out doors!" And in just that way the worldling hides God, and Christ, and judgment, and eternity from view, behind some paltry pleasure, some trifling joy, or some small possession which shall perish with the using, and pass away with all earth's lusts and glory, in the approaching day of God Almighty.

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Dr. W. R. Dobyns relates an incident that gives us some idea of the burden of sin that broke the heart of the Son of God!

"Some time ago I noticed a stranger in my congregation who seemed to be oppressed by some great sorrow. In conversation with him he weepingly told me that his son had been guilty of a great crime and that he was on his way to see President Roosevelt and obtain, if possible, a pardon for his boy. There was a man who was crushed under the sin of just one soul. How infinitely more mighty and heavy was the load of sin laid upon the spotless soul of the Lamb of God."

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I knew of one who, while wandering along a lonely and rocky shore at the ebb of tide slipped his foot into a narrow crevice. Fancy his horror at finding he could not withdraw the imprisoned limb! Dreadful predicament! There he sat, with his back to the shore and his face to the sea . . . How he no doubt shouted to the distant boat! How his heart must have sunk as her yards swung round and she went off on the other track! His cries were lost in the roar of breakers! How bitterly he envied the white sea-mew her wing, as, wondering at this intruder on her lone domains, she sailed above his head, and shrieked back his cries! How at length, abandoning all hope of help from man, he no doubt turned his face to heaven and cried loud and long to God! All that God only knows. But as sure as there was a terrific struggle, so sure, while he watched the waters rising inch by inch, these cries never ceased till the wave swelled up, and washing the dying prayer from his lips, broke over his head with a melancholy moan. There was no help for him. There is help for us, in the Savior, although fixed in sin as fast as that man in the fissured rock.

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A lady caught a little creature which she thought was a chameleon, and attached it by a little chain to her collar, so that it could crawl about on her shoulder. The chameleon is a harmless little reptile, which changes from gray to green or red, and is considered very beautiful by some people. Instead of a chameleon, how-

ever, this lady caught a poisonous kind of lizard, and it bit her, causing her death. What a terrible mistake! And there are many who are taking the poison of sin into their lives, thinking it is a beautiful, pleasant thing. But some day they will find that they have taken something worse than poison into their lives.

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A wealthy contractor, who built the Tombs in New York, slept in it as a prisoner not long ago. In his prosperous days he did a business of a half-million a year, but when caught in hard circumstances he forged a note for \$2,000 and was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. The building of the Tombs was his last large contract, and into it he stepped as a prisoner. "I never dreamed," he said, "when I built this prison that I would be an inmate one day. But here I am. It is hard luck."

It is not hard luck, it is not luck at all, but it is the hard way in which the transgressor walks and which he builds for himself. Every man imprisoned in sin has built his own prison. The retribution which wrongdoing brings is not an arbitrary punishment inflicted by the revenge or caprice of an outside judge or fate, but it is just the necessary consequence of the wrong itself. Drunkenness shuts a man up in his own habits, as unyielding as stone walls and iron bars, and with him own fiery appetite, and what worse prison could he have? Yet he built it himself.

—The Sky Pilot.

SPURGEON AND THE BOOKWORM

Search the Scriptures diligently."

C. H. Spurgeon on one occasion went into Scotland and stopped at a wayside inn. There he picked up an old worm-eaten Bible. He held it up between himself and the sun, and there was just one place that he could see the light clear through. One worm had begun at Genesis, and eaten right through to Revelation. Mr. Spurgeon said, "Lord, make me a bookworm like that!"

Oh, that we all could just eat into the Bible a little section at a time! But if you study it word by word you will be enriched. Word studies of the Bible are like picking up pearls and diamonds.—A. C. Dixon. —Sel.

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN

You will seek above all else to please your Lord. You will avoid the indulgences and amusements which will be an injury to your body, mind or soul.

You will be careful of your influence, that the pull of it is ever churchward and heavenward rather than worldward and hellward.

You will take an active interest in all those activities which are set for the welfare and salvation of men.

You will not be satisfied with collective activity only but will plan as an individual to serve individuals.

You will place eternal above temporal welfare for yourself, your family and others.

You will not be satisfied with a "nominal" Christianity but only with an inner experience. You will know the Lord and will gladly pass on to know Him better.—Free Methodist.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION

One who is in the "valley of decision" where moral issues are involved should try to get the long view of the issues. And he should try to study consequences.—Sel.

FIVE THINGS A PREACHER NEEDS

By Rev. E. E. Shelhamer

In my private devotions I frequently pray about five needs, and if perchance others may be profited, I herewith mention them.

First, Purity. It is not enough to have at one time obtained the blessed experience of heart purity. No, I must meet the Lord frequently and feel His purity surging through my being. This will imply not only purity of heart, but purity in thought and deed. When I leave a person or a home I must leave it as pure as I found it; yea, in a better shape if possible. In short, I must be clean in spirit, in person, and in contact with others—a good representative of Jesus.

Second, Humility. Dear Lord, let me be truly humble, so humble I will reflect Thy humility; so humble that I will not be conscious that I am humble, and yet others will be reproved and inspired as they behold Thy gentleness in me. As Andrew Murray would say, "Let me have perfect quietness of heart, and never be fretted, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed; so that I expect nothing and wonder at nothing that is done to me, and feel no resentment at anything done against me; to feel at rest when nobody praises me and when I am blamed or despised. To have a blessed home in the Lord where I can go and shut the door, and kneel to my Father in secret, and where I am at peace as in a deep sea of calmness when all around and above is trouble."

Third, Charity. By charity I mean that I want to be so magnanimous that I will put the best construction on the deeds of others; saved from a critical spirit so that the reputation of others will be safe in my hands. Lord, forbid that I should find it easy while preaching, or in conversation, to go out of my way and cast a reflection upon another when he is not able to explain. Let me always practise the Golden Rule and "Do unto others as I would that they should do unto me."

Fourth, Chastity. I want to be so chaste that anything which savors of coarseness and suggestiveness will have no place in me. I must not shock the most refined with anything that borders on looseness and rudeness. Let me never use language or gestures in the pulpit which tend to cheapen the gospel of the Son of God.

Fifth, Brevity. Let me know when and how to quit. I fear that I sometimes preach people under conviction, then preach it off. Better not finish my sermon and have a fruitful altar call than preach ten minutes too long and lose one seeker. More than once have I started in the Spirit, and I fear ended in the flesh. In other words, I reached a climax and failed quickly to draw the net; some of the fish escaped. What a pity! Lord, have mercy! Once more I plead for Purity, Humility, Charity, Chastity, and Brevity.—Free Methodist.

"If you think your church the best

Tell 'em so.

If you'd have it lead the rest

Help it grow.

When there's anything to do,

Let them always count on you;

You'll feel good when it is through,

Don't you know?

"When a stranger from afar

Comes along

Tell him who and what you are—

Make it strong.

Never flatter, never bluff;

Tell the truth for that's enough.

Be a booster, that's the stuff;

DON'T JUST BELONG." —Selected