

we shall perish together.—W. R. Maltby.

Even from a selfish point of view it is more profitable to help others up than to try to keep them down. Win the race by your own fleetness, never by trying to hinder others in their course.

I will tell you what to hate. Hate hypocrisy, hate cant, hate indolence, oppression, injustice; hate Pharisaism; hate them as Christ hated them—with a deep, living, Godlike hatred.—F. W. Robertson.

Perspective is a great remedy for small grievances. Many things that seem intolerable when they are near at hand will shrink into significance if we refuse to consider them until we reach the safe distance of tomorrow.

THE INNER VOICE

Have you ever found some strange, new way
You must walk and make a choice—
Where two roads meet and there you've
stood—

Soon you heard that inner Voice?
"Thy way, my child, I will bring to pass,
When committed unto me."
Thus trusting Him, He has never failed,
And you've been made to see.

Sometimes we come, as to a wall,
And there seems no way to go;
Again that cheering Voice is heard—
"Stand still, trust God, and know,"
The wall is now a resting place,
To see what God will do;
Fresh strength is gained, our faith renewed—
And He carries us safely through.
—Gertrude Pollock Litten

FAIR WEATHER FAITH

Remember that we have no more faith at any time than we have in the hour of trial. All that will not bear to be tested is mere carnal confidence. Fair weather faith is no faith.—C. H. Spurgeon.

THE CHURCH DYING FROM MORAL SUICIDE

Dr. Peter Wiseman

During the early centuries of the New Testament church she grew and flourished while the forces of hell beat upon her from without. It seems clear from this fact, if from no other, that no outside force can kill the church. If death should come to her, it must come from within, come from a heart enemy within the church.

What a comfort it should be to a denomination or local church—the fact that the forces of evil from without cannot defeat her, and that the dangers from within may be dealt with and eliminated. What are these dangers?

Division within the ranks of the church, if not healed, will surely kill. Christ Jesus knew this when He prayed for the sanctification of the church, His people, that they might be one as He and the Father were one. Division kills; Christ unifies and heals.

The various traits of carnality, if not purged, will surely kill. If sanctioned, allowed to remain in the heart, yielded to, it will naturally follow that they will surely ruin the work of God in that place and truly kill the church; for carnality kills. It kills unity, kills devotion, kills love, kills liberty, kills evangelism, kills missionary endeavor, kills prayer, kills the work of God.

The spirit or principle of totalitarianism within the church will ruin spirituality, and ultimately the work of Christ. The life is

about whipped out of some dear pastors by church bosses. Their superiors do not want a spiritual program, and they "sit on" any man who would work toward a spiritual program. Holiness with such leaders is associated with fanaticism, wildfire. They should know better but they do not. Sometimes prominent laymen get into the saddle. They get the ear of the higher-ups, and the poor pastor has to guard against doing what he really knows he should do and what the church really needs—that is, if he does not want to be moved. How often have I heard this sad story from good men of God, men who sincerely desired to do things for Christ and His church but were hindered, and that by church bosses, either from the ministry or from the laity—church bosses nevertheless.

Political manipulation for office within the church has done great harm to the spirituality of the church. It has killed the life of the Spirit within the church, for such manipulations are against the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It is a curse to the church. The Holy Spirit is not consulted in many cases, if any. Men have ambitions for themselves and others as they in return may help them, and they go to work very much like any politician outside of the church, save with a little religious flavor added. The whole thing is a human arrangement, a manmade affair, made by men who have not the mind of God, and, worst still, do not desire the mind of God. The results are moral suicide.

The Holy Spirit is grieved away by such principles. He who alone can make Christians, He who alone can make a church, He who alone can accomplish, He who alone can call men to the ministry and make a minister, He who alone can wisely and without error select men for sacred offices in the church, He who alone can carry on His glorious program through His church—He is grieved away. As a result, the church is left with a lot of externalism, a lot of machinery, but without the presence of the Holy One to direct and warm it all. The church dies spiritually. She dies by her own hand. She dies from within. She commits moral suicide.

SCRIPTURAL SECURITY

(Continued)

The Doctrine of "Eternal Security" Defined. The "Eternal Security" theory or the doctrine of "Final Perseverance" dates back to the fourth century and Augustine.

Briefly, it taught that some were unconditionally ordained to eternal life and others to eternal death; that some were saved because elected to salvation, while others were lost because they were rejected by Divine decree. The teaching was founded on the idea of unconditional election and reached its climax in the eternal security of the believer.

This doctrine was embraced by John Calvin (1509-1564) and from him received the name by which it is known in modern times, Calvinism. Here is a brief definition of the theory, as given by Calvin himself: "God, who is rich in mercy, from His immutable purpose of election, does not wholly take away His Holy Spirit from His own, even in lamentable falls; nor does He so permit them to decline that they should fall from the grace of adoption and the grace of justification, or commit the sin unto death, or against the Holy Ghost; that being deserted by Him, they should cast themselves headlong into the eternal destruction . . . so that not by their own merits or

strength, but by the gratuitous mercy of God, they obtain it, that they neither totally fall from faith and grace, nor finally continue in their falls and perish."

The opposite of this view, known as the Arminian position, is so called because of its being preached and taught by James Arminius (1560-1609), commonly known as Arminius. Arminius was professor of theology at University of Leyden, in Holland. He maintained that "Christ died, not for the 'elect' alone, but for all men without exception; and that none were chosen to eternal life but those who God foresaw would believe and obey the Gospel." The best form of Arminius' teaching was endorsed by the Wesleys, the Methodist church, and those denominations and groups that may be regarded as the offspring of the Wesleyan revivals. On the subject of the security of the believer, the Arminian and Wesleyan school of thought claim a gospel provision for the endurance and final salvation of every born-again child of God, but contend that such preservation is dependent on the faithfulness and obedience of the individual.

The modern version of Calvinism is presented in the language: "Once in grace, always in grace; once a son, always a son; once we are saved, we can never be lost." Great emphasis is placed upon the believer having eternal life "as a present possession." John 5:24 is a favorite Scripture quotation: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life . . ." (with resounding emphasis on the word 'hath')

Many able Bible expositors endorse this teaching and hosts of people embrace it. It may be somewhat surprising and illuminating to some, however, to discover that there is a great deal of confusion and disagreement in the camp of those who profess to believe the doctrine. Those who claim to believe that a child of God, once born into the family of God, can never be estranged from God and eternally lost, are split into at least three different factions of thought. Here, briefly, are the three positions:

(1) A person that is genuinely saved will never backslide—so-called "backsliding" being a sure indication of the lack of genuineness in the professor's conversion.

(2) A person may be saved and backslide, or get out of the will of God, but reconciliation and restoration will surely take place some time before the death of the prodigal.

(3) A person may be saved, backslide, and die in open sin and rebellion to the will of God, but because of being once born into the family of God, he will surely go to heaven.

Some claim acceptance of the first theory, others the second, but we shall endeavour to show, by a process of elimination, that to accept the "eternal security" idea at all, one must go all the way and consent to the idea that if one were really saved, backsliding might result, with subsequent sin of the darkest and most grievous kind, even to the hour of death, but through grace the "position" of the "once saved" is secure, and he shall be taken out of the mire of sin into the purity of heaven, be torn from the arms of Satan, and enfolded in the embrace of God. This is the only consistent conclusion for the adherent to Calvinism.

All that He blesses is my good,
And unblessed good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will. —Selected