

RIGHT SEEING

Theodore L. Cuyler

"Thou has well seen." These were God's words to Jeremiah when He called him to his life-work as a "seer" or prophet to the people of Israel. He puts to the modest, self-distrustful young man the question, "What seest thou?" Jeremiah replies, "I see a rod of an almond tree." This is just what the Lord meant that he should see; the almond was a tree of rapid growth and early bloom; it typified speedy action. As the young Jew had shown his capacity for right discernment, the Lord commended his wise answer, and said to him, "Thou hast well seen."

There is a right way and a wrong way of looking at almost everything. To a man who has no eye for beauty one of Claude's landscapes is merely so much paint and linen canvas; to another it is a masterpiece of golden sunlight bathing field and forest with its glory. To many it was predicted that Christ, the Messiah, would be as "a root of dry ground, having no form or comeliness. When they shall see Him, there is no beauty that they should desire Him; He will be despised and rejected of men." When He came, therefore, to His own, they received Him not. As many as beheld Him rightly and received Him, to them gave He the privilege of becoming the children of God. He is to them the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Christ never changes. The difference between the thoughtless sinner and the same person after he is converted, is, that he looks at Him with a new eye, and sees Him to be the very Saviour that he needs.

Some people look at God only as a consuming fire, and are struck with despair. Others go to the opposite extreme, and see in Him nothing but pity and pardoning mercy; they easily slide off into Universalism. But the man who imagines God's mercy at the expense of His justice, and who does not believe that He will punish sin as it deserves, has not "well seen." He will be cured of his delusion on the Day of Judgment. Those wise men at Westminster saw the Divine Being, our Heavenly Father, in the right proportions of His attributes when they framed that wonderful answer to that question in the Catechism, "What is God?"

In nothing are we all apt to make more terrible blunders than in looking at God's providential dealings. Even some Christians have a heathenish habit of talking about "good luck" and "windfalls" and "bad fortune," and other expressions that convey the idea that this life is a mere game of chance. Blind unbelief may be expected to err, and to scan God's work as either a riddle or a muddle. A Christian, who has had his eyes opened, ought to know better. Yet how often do we all regard God's dealings in a wrong light, and call them by the wrong name! We frequently speak of certain things as afflictions when they are really blessings in disguise. We congratulate people on gaining what turns out to be a terrible snare, or a worse than loss. Quite as often we condole with them over a lot which is about to yield to them mercies more precious than gold. Old Jacob probably thought that he was a fair subject for commiseration on that evening when he sat moaning in his tent-door; but the caravan was just approaching which brought him Simeon and Benjamin, and glorious tidings about the long-lost Joseph. He had not well seen what sort of God he was serving.

Let us hesitate before we condole with a brother who is under the chastisement of our loving Father in Heaven. Be careful how you condole with a man who has lost his money and saved his good name, or congratulate the man who has made a million at the expense of his piety. When a Christian is toppled over from a dizzy and dangerous height, and brought down to hard pan, he is brought down to the solid rock at the same time. In the valley of humiliation he has more of the joy of God's countenance, and wears more of the herb called "heart's-ease" in his bosom, than he ever did in the days of his giddy prosperity. Sickness has often brought to a man spiritual recovery; suffering has often wrought out for him an exceeding weight of glory. The writer of this paragraph has lately been led through a very shadowy pathway of trial; but it has never been so dark that he could not see to read some precious promises that glowed like diamonds. The adversary tries hard to break our lamp, and to steal our diamonds in those dark passage-ways of trial. We need good eyesight in such times of trouble, so as not to stumble, or to lose sight of the Comforter, or of the bright light which shines at the end of the way.

I have seen people condole tenderly with a weeping mother whose child has flown away home to heaven; but they never thought of condoling with her over a living child who was a frivolous slave of fashion, or a dissipated sensualist, or a wayward son, the "heaviness of his mother." A hundred times over have I pitied more the parent of a living sorrow than the parent of a departed joy. Spare your tears from the darlings who are safe in the arms of Jesus, and spend them over the living who are yet dead in sin and sheer impenitence. Let us learn to see things rightly, and call them by their right names. We too often drape our real blessings with a pall, and decorate our dangerous temptations with garlands. The sharpest trials this nation ever knew have turned into tender mercies. Garfield in his grave has done more for us than Garfield could have done in the presidential chair. Satan outwitted himself when he armed one of his imps to be an assassin.

Let us all pray fervently for spiritual discernment. Lord, open Thou our eyes! Then we shall see this world to be a mere training-school for a better world; we shall see a Father's smile behind the darkest cloud; we shall see in duty done our highest delight; and at the end of the conflict we shall see the King in His beauty, and know Him even as we are known.

"GOD IS FAITHFUL"

(I Corinthians 1:9)

Yes, we know that God is faithful, but what a comfort it is just to be reminded of the blessed fact. Let friends fail and relatives forsake us, our God is faithful. But to what is He faithful? Two words give the answer—His promises. Therefore, if we would really appreciate His faithfulness, we must first know His promises. There is no surer way to grow spiritually than to search the Word for God's promises, to rest upon them when you have found them, and then to praise Him for faithfulness to them. A promise a day, treasured in the heart and believed, will give you a grip on God's faithfulness that you will never lose. —Clipped.

BY-LAWS OF THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CANADA

Article I.—

The annual session of this Alliance shall begin on the first Wednesday of July at 10.30 a. m. and shall be a prayer and praise service. The first business session of the Alliance shall be held on the same day at 2.00 p.m.

Article II.—

A majority of the members of the Alliance present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article III.—

Each session of the Alliance shall be opened and closed with prayer.

Article IV.—

The election of officers with the exception of Superintendent shall take place at the first business session of the Alliance. The Superintendent shall be elected the following Friday in the morning session.

Article V.—

(a) All members of the Alliance present shall be eligible for office. The voting shall be done by Ballot and the Recording Secretary shall count the ballots, and declare the results to the chairman.

(b) The officers of the Alliance with the exception of the Superintendent shall be elected to office by a majority vote and the candidate receiving the next largest vote shall be the Vice or Assistant where one is required.

(c) A two-thirds favorable vote will be necessary to elect the Superintendent.

Article VI.—

All correspondence addressed to the Alliance shall be examined by the Superintendent and Secretaries, and shall be presented to the Alliance at their discretion.

Article VII.—

All committees shall be appointed by the chair unless otherwise ordered.

Article VIII.—

At the first session of the Alliance a Nominating committee shall be appointed. The duties of this committee shall be to recommend to the Alliance the personnel of all standing committees.

Article IX.—

A special session of the Alliance may be called by the request, in writing, of any two ordained elders together with the consent of the superintendent and recording secretary providing the pastors and churches be notified by the recording secretary at least ten days prior to date of meeting.

Article X.—

The Alliance Executive shall be authorized to transact business for the Alliance between its annual sessions, providing such transactions do not include the purchase, sale or mortgaging of properties.

Article XI.—

The Superintendent and Recording Secretary shall be authorized to sign all legal documents for the Alliance and that the Alliance assume all responsibility.

Article XII.—

These by-laws may be added to, or amended by two-thirds favorable vote at any annual session of the Alliance, providing such additions or amendments do not conflict with the Constitution of the Alliance.