

### GOD'S SALVATION NOT FOR HIMSELF.

In one view, God is himself the end of all his works; and he saves men for his own glory, and not for their sakes. Yet, in the way in which many are inclined to regard him, as having his own ends in view, he has them not. Many appear to feel, that they are little indebted for salvation, because God has done what he has done in it, for his own ends.—But, however that may be, he did not save us because he would have been the poorer without us. He did not even create the worlds, to fill any chasm in the measure of his own enjoyment. His happiness was such as admitted of no additions before a single creature breathed. And if for any purposes he wanted creatures, he had an innumerable company of angels, before one of these miserable sinners existed. These attended his throne, swift to do his will. And if these were not enough, with him was the residue of creating power.—Every lost man he could have replaced by an angel, tall as Gabriel. Or if it was men that he wanted, he could have thrown aside this shattered race, and made another Adam, as holy as the first, and another race in him.

In creating the eighty millions of suns, each with its family of worlds and their inhabitants, he has not exhausted his strength. Indeed, in the new creations, which he works on man every day, he is exerting greater power, than is needful to create men out of new materials—if it is proper to speak of greater or lesser creating acts. The knotty, repellent subjects require more work than to make a new. Regeneration is carried by divine power against a world of resistance; and hence it is said to be effected by "the exceeding greatness" of God's power by which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. He does not, therefore, take up ruined men to repair them, as a matter of economy. For he is able, of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Nor does he save us to escape any imputation of wrong coming upon him, in case he suffers us to perish. If any suppose that God saves them, to save his own reputation, they greatly err. The heavenly hosts have such a view of the amiableness of his justice, and the glory of his holiness, that infinite reasons flood their minds in favor of his inflictions upon the wicked; and awake the amen of all heaven upon the utterance of the sentence. The apostle heard the voice of a great multitude as the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunders, swelling their alleluia over the judgments executed upon the wicked. And we should feel just as they feel about the punishment of sin, if we hated sin as they do. And all the disposition that men have, to regard God's punitive justice, as a blot upon his character, which they would fain conceal, comes from their love of sin, or their blindness to its horrid features. Did sin appear to us so hateful, abominable and killing in its nature, as it does to angelic minds, we should readily echo their alleluias, in praise of the judgments of God upon it.

And if this be so, there is no reason to think that God saves any, in order to save his own reputation, or to avoid an odium attached to punishing sin. Such is the nature of sin, that God effectually shows his goodness, in the justice employed to crush it and testify his abhorrence of it. His goodness appears to celestial eyes in nothing more, than in that "strange work," in which he rolls a mountain weight of curse upon the sinner. God is no loser, in respect to those that are finally lost. And if any are saved, it is the sinner and not God, that is saved. And their salvation comes of the mere good pleasure of his will.

But he does the work for his own sake, in this sense; that nothing, out of himself, is properly the moving cause of his acts of grace. He is bound to none. He is independent of all. He has mercy on whom he will. He takes occasion from the miseries of men, to show his compassion. And at the same time he lets them know, that he does it not for their sakes, but for his own. And he makes the sinner feel this, before he receives him.—"Therefore say unto the house of Israel; Thus saith the Lord God, I do not do this for your sakes, but for my holy name's sake."—He gives redemption as a free gift. He gives it in the exercise of compassion upon the miserable. He gives it not merely because an act of mercy is in itself delightful to him, but also because he loves holiness, and loves thro' his work of redemption to display his holiness and glory—because he has a divine complacency in that holiness, and he loves, through

the evolutions of the scheme of redemption, to open his very heart to the eye of a holy universe, and let them look in and see what it contains.

In the work of redemption, infinite kindness and love are pouring forth their treasures—mercy, an attribute nowhere else displayed, is put forth. Justice and holiness have sublime exercises in it. And in these exercises, God is well pleased, and a universe is instructed and edified. And in this complacency in his own works, and in the good diffused from himself, he has the end of redemption. And in this sense, he does the work not for our sakes, but for his own.—*Puritan Rerorder.*

### How Wonderful the Love of Christ.

The following we take from a work recently published, entitled "Calvary and its Victim," by Rev. E. W. Thayer, Paris, Illinois:—

It is a particular love. In us, a strong affection for one excludes equal regard for others. Not so with God; He can feel as deep an interest for us as it would be possible for him to feel, if we were his only creatures.—His love embraces us with an ardor unabated by any division or diversion of feeling. And then his tenderness is inconceivable. Were it revealed to our conscious perception, it would dissolve our souls. Flesh and blood could not support the sense of it. What affection is sometimes felt on earth! Husbands and wives, parents and children often manifest an undying love. Its strongest yearnings, however, can only express themselves in sympathy and willingness to suffer for the happiness of the beloved. How often do we hear the parent, standing over a suffering child, exclaim, could I but lie there in its stead, O how willingly would I consent! Such was the pity of Christ for us; a pity not ending, however, in mere sympathy and desire. Our fond hearts can know a parent's and a husband's love, though they cannot be told; but the love of Christ passeth knowledge. The pardoned sinner does not begin to know the length and breadth and depth and height of it. Angels, who see his unveiled face, do not understand it. It passes all conception of created minds.

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
Were the whole earth of parchment made,  
Were every single stick a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade;  
To write the love of God above,  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky."

Love is his whole nature, his single emotion. In him there is no justice but the justice of love, no wisdom but the wisdom of love, no act but the exercise of love. And the day is coming, when we shall be astonished beyond measure at the meanness and unworthiness of the comparison, when we have represented it by the yearnings of the parent and the affection of the husband. Do you wonder at his washing his disciples' feet? do you wonder at his tears and intercession? His unconquerable enemies he gave up with tears, as we do the dead, whose dear forms we feel forced to put away however, grievous it be to do so. Had redemption been impossible, he could but have abandoned us; but the possibility of delivering us awoke an eagerness of purpose which nothing could moderate. "For the joy that was set before him" of saving men, "He endured the cross, despising the shame." And the humble soul, that seeks him now, finds him overflowing with as strong affection as he exhibited when on earth abased. He deals as kindly, embraces the returning prodigal, wipes away the falling tears; "Fear not, only believe;" kisses the long-lost one; and nothing shall ever separate, nothing can ever cool the fervor of his love. What means this mighty and incomprehensible attachment! Oh! why such love to us? It passes knowledge. To all eternity it will be a novelty and a wonder that he should so cleave to worms of the dust.

When we once behold him as he is, and his love as it is, we shall embrace him with all the heart and soul and mind and strength. Our thoughts will never, through a ceaseless existence, wander from him, but feel a delight in him fuller and sweeter as ages roll away.—Love is all that lends happiness to our life here. Beyond the grave,  
"There is a life,  
Unmeasured by the flight of years;  
And all that life is love."

Love beams from the face of our Jesus in warm floods, as radiant light from the sun. It gilds heaven with its glory, and wraps the redeemed in ecstasies unknown. It throws into the shade the majestic and unfathomable attributes of Divinity, and its surpassing splen-

dors eclipse every other glory. Be astonished at this love. Weep to the praise of his mercy. Its tenderness is more than a match for a millstone heart. Obduracy cannot resist it; sin cannot have the ingratitude to rebel against it; a stone is dissolved by it into tearful praise.—A God who governs by such motives, and exercises such a sway, is a governor who will never lack subjects, animated by a devotion fervent and great as created natures can feel. What more can we say than Jesus said?—"God so loved the world"—"Greater love hath no man than this!" It baffles all our efforts to comprehend it, as much as the inscrutable mysteries of His being do.

### The Voluntary System.

It may be asked, is Christianity herself safe in the hands of the people? Objections are urged against the "voluntary system," on the ground that it tends to infidelity and atheism. Fears have been expressed by our brethren beyond the Atlantic that such would be our fate;—that religion would ultimately die out, for want of legal safeguards and protection. But what has she ever gained by such protection? It is a suspicious circumstance that her avowed and bitter enemies have strongly advocated her union with the State. And why do they wish the union? Rousseau unintentionally pays Christianity a compliment, by assigning his reason. It is substantially this:—As she came from the hands of Jesus Christ, she is annoying to the nations; she makes assaults upon human character;—she accuses men of sin, and threatens the guilty with a future judgment; and thus creates commotions and divisions among mankind. "Of all Christian authors," he tells us, "the philosopher Hobbes was the only one who fully saw the evil, and dared to propose a union of the two heads of the Eagle, and thus reduce the whole to political harmony." The evil, according to him, was in the spiritual nature and aggressive power of the Gospel. And the remedy was to be found in putting religion under the guardianship of human government. And an effectual remedy it has ever proved! It takes out of Christianity her life and soul, and leaves her as weak and inoffensive as her bitterest enemies could desire; and that, too, without imparting any additional strength to the secular powers. It is union which

"Not enriches them,  
But makes her poor indeed."

The truth is, that not only is the State the stronger, but Christianity is the purer and more powerful, when they are suffered to operate apart. It is better for both eagles, if I may borrow the figure, not to unite them in a common head, but to give them a separate and distinct existence, and open to their flight the whole expanse of the horizon. The bird of paradise can sustain herself upon her own unaided wing. She did so in the first age of the Christian era. The strong arm of government was indeed stretched out;—not, however, to shield the interests of the new religion, but to crush them; for this purpose Christ was crucified, and His disciples driven from city to city, and hunted through synagogues and dungeons and amphitheatres, into a bloody and dishonored grave. But was Christianity thereby extinguished? No! she gathered fresh energies in the sepulchre, and arose with her author, to claim the skies and rule the subjacent earth. From amid perils, imprisonments and deaths, she went forth in the greatness of her strength, to the conquest of the world.—But no sooner did she consent to lean upon human aid and power, and to creep for patronage and protection under earthly corselets and coronets, than she ceased to wield the energies of Heaven. When she placed upon her brow the diadem of the Cæsars, she seems to have acquired additional vigor; there was an apparent glow of health upon her countenance; but it was only the unnatural bloom upon the cheek of consumption, a bright hectic flush, indicating only weakness and decline. The imperial sword, raised in her defence, pierced her to the heart. Seated in the chair of State, arrayed in royal robes, and crowned with fading laurel, she began herself to fade. Rocked to sleep in the cradle of popular favor, she slumbered for ages, and if left solely to the care of kings and queens, would have slept the sleep of death. Were these high functionaries humbly and gratefully to regard her claims, they might indeed fulfil the beautiful language of the prophet, and become her nursing fathers and her nursing mothers; but when Christianity is decoyed from her own lofty position, to nestle in the arms of authority, and draw nourishment from the breast

of pride and ambition, the deadly poppy and the fatal nightshade are distilled into the milk on which she feeds, and with all the gorgeousness and splendor of her outward adorning, is but a sickly child.

"Sad to view  
Its visage pale and wan."

If we may rely upon a distinguished geologist, in his "first impressions" of England, a national religion, even at its best estate, is altogether vanity. In the technical language of his profession,—"It is no longer a living devotion, but a petrification, a fossil, existing, it is true, in a fine state of keeping, but still an exanimate stone." Everywhere and in all circumstances, religion, owing to the evil tendencies of human nature, is liable to degenerate into mere form; but where the church is allied with the State; where a religious profession is a passport to worldly preferment; where a "living" is secured to the officiating clergyman, independent of the voluntary contributions of his hearers; and where no farther attentions to the flock are expected, than what are requisite to prevent their going in quest of strange pastures, a strong temptation is presented to ambition, to avarice, to sloth and spiritual fraud. And it will generally be found, that the system which provides a "living for the shepherd, bequeaths a dying to his flock. Human nature must be entirely changed, if, in such circumstances, hypocrisy do not enter the sanctuary of the living God, and lay impious hands upon the horns of the altar.—*Rev. Dr. Neale's Election Sermon.*

### A Man, A Woman, and A Child.

A few Christian friends were recently admiring the character of one of their acquaintances, and descending upon his virtues and graces. One of them remarked, "I admire him for his manly firmness and independence in sustaining the cause of truth and righteousness in the community." A second friend, who acquiesced in the correctness of this estimate, added, "And I particularly admire him for his gentle courtesy of demeanor. He puts me in mind of a true, kind-hearted woman." "Yes," immediately replied a third friend, "and I admire him because he is guileless as a child." "Well," exclaimed a lady who overheard the conversation, "you have made him out a remarkable character. He is a man, a woman, and a child!" And so he was, in each of the characteristics named.

The best form of Christianity is that which presents the loveliest combination of its graces. Every true Christian is believed to possess the substance of every grace. Love, which is the general attribute, includes every form of virtue and goodness. But observation teaches that while many Christians excel in many qualities, and almost every one has something that may be admired, few possess a completeness of Christian character. This is the prevalent defect which mars the evidence of sanctification. A firm independence in bearing witness to the truth is worthy of all imitation. But why not let there be super-added kind-hearted courtesy, and guileless simplicity? How transcendently beautiful in this world of ruin is a spiritual temple, whose proportions are arranged according to the science of the Scriptures, and where each part is not only admirable in itself, but derives increased effect from the general harmony which pervades the whole? Few persons seem to possess at the present day, that completeness of character so necessary to the full illustration of Christianity. The combination of graces springs from Divine power and goodness, and is lovely alike to the eye and heart.—*Presbyterian Magazine.*

I SEE NO HARM IN IT.—We often hear professors of religion say concerning the practice of going to dancing parties and theatres—"I see no harm in it." They seem never to suspect, that the very fact that they can see no harm in things which to the wisest and best of God's people have ever appeared inconsistent with Christianity, affords painful evidence that they are spiritually blind—that they know nothing of true religion. Such persons ought to be alarmed for themselves.—*Presbyterian of the West.*

A HAPPY TEMPER.—An old Connecticut pastor, whose peculiarities of preaching were proverbial, and who was blessed with a temper of great value, was one day told by a parishioner that he did not like his sermons. "Well," said the old man, "I don't wonder at it; I don't like 'em myself."