

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

A SUFFERING WITHOUT SHAME.

For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed unto Him against that day. (II, Tim. i: 12).

We here have Paul's reasons for not being ashamed amidst his great sufferings. He says Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and tells what position he held in the gospel. I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. Besides being a preacher and a teacher of the Gentiles, he was an apostle of Christ, an office held by no other but the twelve.

He was the chosen vessel to bear the treasures of eternal life of Christ to a dying world. Such a friend with such a treasure to men, might be expected to receive from men every mark of affectionate respect, but the very reverse was the fact. When He who made the world came into it, the world received Him not. He came in His Father's name to save the people, but they did not receive Him. If another came in his own name him they would receive. The disciple is not above his Master, and those who preach nothing but the gospel of Christ need not be surprised or discouraged to meet cold indifference or bitter persecution from the people they are so anxious to lead to the Saviour. Were Paul to add circumcision or anything else which was popular to the gospel of Christ, the offence of the cross would cease, and Paul would be applauded instead of persecuted. But he gloried in nothing saving the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and cheerfully accepted the consequences, a part of which he enumerates in the words following, "In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned. Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without that which cometh on me daily, the care of all the churches." II. Cor. xi. 24-28.

When we consider that every convert is surrounded with temptation, and every church beset with danger, we may see that the constant care of the apostle and his intense anxiety for the salvation of all, was not among the least of his sufferings. Still he was not ashamed. At that time he was Paul the aged, and instead of enjoying the rest which weary nature craves, he was chained as a criminal in a Roman prison, in a loathsome cell, so obscure that Onesiphorus had to search very diligently to find him. (v. 16). His Asiatic brethren in Rome had turned away from him, giving to his enemies their strongest argument. "See," they could say, "how his friends stood by him until compelled by his treachery to abandon him to his fate." He was constantly bearing in His body the mark of the Lord Jesus. Gal. iv. 17. Perhaps these were running a race the result of incessant beatings, which made his presence offensive, and may have been the thorn in the flesh. II. Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9, with Gal. iv. 13, 14.

He knew quite well that shortly he would be taken from prison and publicly and ignominiously beheaded; nevertheless, he was not ashamed for the following reasons.

I. I know whom I have believed; and

II. Am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed unto Him against that day.

I. I know whom I have believed. The Christian course begins with *faith* and proceeds to *knowledge*. Man takes the same steps in coming back to God, which were taken going away from Him. He first *disbelieved* God, and then desired the forbidden fruit, then put forth his hand, took and ate it, and knew the bitter fruits of sin as an outcast from God. He returns to God by believing with all his heart in Jesus the Son of God, then he loves Him, and follows on to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, which is life eternal. John xvii. 3.

Paul says, *I know whom I have believed, not what I have believed, but whom I have believed; a Person, not merely a fact or a truth, but the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.* (Gal. ii. 20). He had trusted Him for everything, and found Him faithful. He experienced His forgiving love and the hope of eternal life, a hope that maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us, (Rom. v. 5). What a position the intelligent Christian holds. If asked for his belief he replies, I believe a *Person, Jesus the Christ the Son of the living God.* If asked, Do you believe this statement or that he answers, If Jesus has said it, I believe it, for "whom God had sent speaketh the words of God." I believe with all my heart that He is the *Son of God*, and all He says is true, all He does is perfect, all His commands are binding, and all His promises certain. I cannot part with anything He says, He is everything to me. I know whom I have believed; and

II. Am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed unto Him against that day.

Nothing is here said of Christ's *goodness* in keeping what Paul had committed to Him, but He speaks of His *power* to do it. Many friends are kind enough and good enough to be trusted, but are often *unable* to do for us what they wish to do and even think they can do. Paul is persuaded that Jesus is *able* to keep the precious deposit, and to keep it all the time it needs keeping.

But *what* did Paul commit to Jesus? Christ, when He sought Paul, gave *Himself* for him; and in return he gave himself wholly to Christ—body, soul and spirit. He did this for at least three reasons. 1. Jesus claimed him as the purchase of His blood; 2. Paul could not keep himself; 3. Because of the irreparable loss of being at last a castaway. Is it not hard to keep the body in subjection to the law of God? to keep the feet in the narrow way? to govern the eye, the ear, and the hands? to keep the tongue from evil and the lips from speaking guile? to honor God with all our members? Is it not hard to so control the soul and to love only what is good and to hate and shun the evil? and to keep our words, thoughts and actions in complete obedience to Christ? Many are afraid to begin the Christian course when they feel their weakness, and put off repentance from time to time, in the vain hope that after a while they will become strong enough to resist all temptations, and prove an honor to Christ and His church when they join it. Paul committed all to Jesus and was persuaded that He was able to keep all in safety. He was persuaded that He who could reconcile such a rebel to God by the death of the cross, could, by His life in heaven, save him from all iniquity, and make him more than conqueror. The life which he now lived in the flesh was a life of faith on the Son of God, and the strength by which he expected to gain the victory over all his enemies was not his own strength but the strength of Christ, which He would graciously supply even till death, when he would rest from his labor in the presence of his Lord. For him to live was Christ; and to die was gain. It was a gain to himself to die, but a gain to Christ and His people to live.

But Paul looked beyond death when he committed all to Christ. Till then he expected to glorify Christ in his body and spirit which were Christ's. But the last enemy which tries all men stood before him, and very soon soul and spirit would leave his body to sink silent in death. The grave would claim its victim, and corruption accomplish its inglorious work. But he whom I have believed will not forsake even my body, but over it keep faithful vigils until the grave be made its refining crucible, and all that is dishonorable and dying be purged, and it fashioned like His own glorious body. "For so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." I. Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.

When the resurrection day arrives, and all enemies shall be put under Jesus' feet, and death is swallowed up in victory, the glorified apostle shall receive from the Conqueror's hand what he had so confidently committed to His keeping. When he and all them also who love His appearing shall receive their crowns of righteousness, they will be fully prepared to glorify God with their bodies and spirits, which are God's. Well may the apostle, in contemplating the resurrection and its glory, address his brethren thus, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." I. Cor. xv. 58.

Original Contributions.

"CAN'T SOMETHING BE DONE."

Bro. Capp, in his answer to the above question, has shown us in the January number of THE CHRISTIAN, that something can be done, and that something has been done, and also that something more must be done, and still further how that much more can be done.

That the cause of Christ has been signally blessed in our provinces the last few years, through the efforts of the Mission Board, is no secret. In view of what has been accomplished and the want of help to continue the work, ought to inspire every lover of the cause to do something to further this work.

I was very much impressed with a remark I heard a good sister make, a few weeks ago; she said, "it seemed very strange to her to hear people talk against the sects—of their errors and false doctrines, and at the same time are doing nothing themselves towards educating and supporting preachers who might teach the right way." This is remarkably strange! is it not? That a man will talk loud and write long against the errors of others, and don't feel ten cents sorry for their unfortunate condition. Just think of it, ten cents a year from every disciple in these provinces will educate two young men for the work of the ministry! This will give us plenty help and keep up a constant supply of laborers. I mean, of course, two preachers every four years—allowing that length of time for their course of studies. This much needed work is calling loudly for help. Bro. Capp says the help must come and Bro. Messervoy, of Halifax, has shown us just how it can come. His personal, practical efforts in getting a little from many, has given him from eighty to a hundred dollars a month towards the church building in Halifax. I know the work of educating our young men and the work of mission are as worthy as any other work, and for them the people are as willing to contribute. I am certain that a large majority of our people are willing to appropriate a portion of their means to this cause, when their attention is properly drawn towards it. What we need now is some one or