

But shall we now pause in abrupt dismissal of this grateful commemoration of a Saviour's life and work? Are we not more than warranted in hallowing under its name of Easter-tide those forty silently eloquent days, during which our Lord yet dwelt upon earth, instilling into those who were to be shepherds of his flock those things which he would have them do and teach?

Then, surely we would not omit from loving and reverent commemoration that last solemn day, when, his work accomplished, his mission complete, he led his loved ones to that green mount—mute witness of his many labors—and there with hands uplifted in an eternal benediction, returned to his Father in heaven. Surely we do well to keep thus vividly in view a day so definitely and accurately chronicled in the sacred record as to leave it also in no wise dependent on man's vague ordering of recurrence, but fixed and unchanging in its revolution with the great central truth!

Ten days pass—how easily is the record followed—and if with such glowing homage we hailed the advent of God the Son, shall we fail wholly to commemorate the coming of that Holy Spirit worshipped as one with the Father and Son, and who on that memorable day came upon earth, breathing the breath of life into the Church of God, and imbuing it with power from on high! Can we through prejudice or indifference withhold this tribute of love and homage to the Holy Ghost in his glorious personality, or fail to acknowledge in this observance of Whitsuntide a priceless opportunity to proclaim anew to a blind of careless world the reality and the ever present sovereignty of this the third person of the Godhead.

And thus are we brought, step by step, unto the meridian of this Suncourse of faith and worship—to the glowing Trinity Sunday, when, with hearts newly inspired through the commemoration of the coming of the Holy Ghost, we bow in adoration of the eternal Trinity, humbled in the light of its resplendent mystery, yet seeking grace humbly to acknowledge and proclaim its power. Thus is the fullness of the Church's homage reached; the praise and adoration of the seasons past gathered, as it were, in one glowing censer, wafting its fragrance before the tri-une throne. Thus is the seal set upon the revelation thus far committed to man; and we enter upon the peaceful serenity of the Trinity season, symbolic of the endless peace of the world to come, when, the lessons and warfare of earth alike ended, we shall rest in the joy of the tri-une presence.

This is the Church year in its greater lights; but, like the firmament, declaring for ever the glory of God in greater and lesser lights, so too would we acknowledge his glory on earth by the observance of days which, though of minor significance, yet none the less proclaim his greatness, his goodness, and his truth.

And surely, if we recall the daily offering of praise and prayer required of his chosen people, in the Church of his earliest appointment, and its specified days of special worship, we can scarcely believe that the observance of such days now, calling us together though on an average weekly, could be unacceptable to him, nor of an influence likely to undermine the Sabbath worship, as feared by those opposed to the encouragement of "holy days."

For instance, does there not seem strong and sufficient in time in that call which bids the Church of God assemble one day annually to offer special thanks for the wonderful conversion which gave to its ranks that noble warrior, Saul of Tarsus?

And may we not, furthermore, afford with very real profit one day annually to the contemplation, or at least passing remembrance of the life and work of each of that "glorious company of apostles" laboring so faithfully in the cause of Christ? For even apart from all higher motives, if a nation's heroes be held in loving and honored memory, and for centuries revered on days of special commemoration, shall we not clothe with similar honor these leaders in "the noble army of martyrs"—they who fought closest to the great commander when the struggle was hardest, who laid down their life on the field of battle, and to whom, humanly speaking, the Church owes to-day her very existence.

Ah, no; it cannot be denied that the Church, year in its fullness and beauty, offers man an inestimable aid in keeping ever within view the essential truths of the great plan of salvation, and golden opportunities for so intertwining the life of our divine Redeemer with our own daily, commonplace lives as to render it a living influence, will we but make it so. The real difficulty—as with every other grace held out to man—is man's own failure to respond to the opportunity offered, his own incapacity to grasp or appropriate the richness of the blessing bestowed.

Thus is the cycle of the Church year rounded, and the circle of fast and festival completed, till, like a bugle note, the solemn Advent season once more sends forth its call. It comes with the closing days of the world's year, but is the Church's new year. It comes with its blended tones of joy and solemnity, bidding us prepare heart and mind for the commemoration anew of the coming of that one whom all nations call blessed; but it bids us likewise prepare for that great and certain day when, in glorious majesty, he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And with this Advent call the Gospel story is begun afresh, and once again is begun that ceaseless cycle, following in its course the glorious Sun of Righteousness.

In conclusion, is it too much to suggest that they who heretofore, through prejudice or unfamiliarity with the subject in the light here presented, have been inclined to censure and ignore its claims, pause now, and if but for a year, adopt its guidance. Make for one year an experiment of its observance in the great work either of teaching, or giving, and at the end of that year answer honestly whether it has been found a help or hindrance.

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THE ONE GLORIOUS EXCEPTION.

(From a Sermon preached by Ven. Archdeacon Sinclair at St. Paul's, London, Eng.)

In every example of human virtue there is always imperfection. But I would appeal to the lovers of beauty to consider seriously whether there is not one glorious exception in which unblemished moral beauty and sublimity are divinely and incontestably united. In the character of our Lord Jesus Christ all that can stir our feelings of love or of reverence is brought before our observation. It would not be easy to determine whether in His heavenly mind there was more of the loveable and the beautiful, or of the awful and majestic. He went about doing good. You see him at one time healing the sick, the palsied, and the blind, at another exposing hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and unbelief; at one time tenderly taking little children in His arms to bless them, and again placing them in the midst of His company as emblems of the teachable spirit, and pronouncing them to be the special objects of their heavenly Father's love; at another, scourging with

indignant severity the money changers who profaned the House of God; on one occasion weeping at the grave of Lazarus, or lamenting over Jerusalem, and foretelling with patriotic tears the ruin of His country; at another, disregarding His own death of torture, so fast approaching, and exclaiming, "Not My will but Thine be done!" The same Divine Teacher Who told His over-zealous followers that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of, Who gave His back to the smiters, and His cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not His face from shame and spitting, yet showed Himself as remarkable for righteous indignation as for merciful forbearance, for indomitable courage as for inexhaustible patience, when He denounced woe and malediction on the scribes and Pharisees, the lawyers and courtiers, and the tyrant Herod himself.

In all merely human characters there is a tendency to some extreme, either of excess or of defect. If you are free from pride, you may be chargeable with meanness. Though you may be courageous, you may have little feeling. Prudence may degenerate into parsimony, and economy border on avarice. Generosity may lean towards profuseness, temperance towards austerity, faith towards superstition, zeal towards bigotry, self-respect towards Pharisaism. If you are easy in forgiving, you may be wanting in the virtue of moral indignation. In these and all other respects our Lord alone exhibited that golden mean, in which the beauty of holiness is perfect.

His actions and thoughts derive their chief glory sometimes from His human sympathies as the Son of Man, sometimes from His divine authority as Son of God. He Who was contented with having no place where to lay His head, was Lord of all. He Who submitted to be condemned as a malefactor, was Himself the Judge before Whom men and angels must finally stand. He Who prayed on the cross for His murderers, urging that they knew not what they did, possessed in terrible reality the attributes of Godhead which they denied Him, and will be seen by them and by ourselves hereafter sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Whenever you trace the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth from Bethlehem to Calvary, never forget the one great purpose of His Incarnation. That purpose sheds an unapproachable light on the beauty of His character. Without it, that character is but the portrayal of a sublime and impracticable enthusiast. He came to save a lost world, small as its importance might be in the boundless grandeur of that glorious universe of His Father, to Whom nothing in reality is either small or great. He came to reconcile the justice of the Divine Being with His mercy. He came to win for us the priceless gift of the Holy Ghost, that we might be renewed effectually in the spirit of our minds, and so divinely purified in all our tastes, feelings and affections, and so advanced in the manly strength of our moral understandings, as to be led on from one appreciation of beauty to another, from that which is pure and ideal in the material, to that which the material shadows forth of the spiritual kingdom, as to be prepared for those scenes of loveliness, of glory, and joy unspeakable, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.