

than a martyrdom ; it has more than an ethical meaning ; it was a sacrifice for sin.

The New Testament teaching is unqualified on this point. Peter says (1 Peter 2: 24) "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." And Paul (Gal. 2: 20) speaks of "the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Vicarious sacrifice, the taking upon ones self, voluntarily, as Christ did, the sins, sufferings, and sorrows, of others, is the highest form and expression of love. Robert Browning in one of his poems "The Spanish Gipsy," says that if we deny that God in Christ suffered on Calvary for the sins of the world, we refuse to God what is universally considered the highest form in which love can express itself.

We know too from the history of Christianity that this Gospel of sacrifice is the only Gospel that has any power over the hearts and lives of men. What we need is not merely a great teacher, or an eminent example of righteousness, but a Saviour. If Christ has not to begin with doing something for us, he can not do anything in us.

3. Names applied to this service.—

There is a good deal at times in a name. Some of the names applied to the Lord's Supper are specially suggestive.

1. It is spoken of at times as a *memorial* service. Christ said, "This do in remembrance of me." This service is one of the means of keeping alive in our own hearts and in the world what Christ has done for us by his death.

2. It is called the *Supper*. The body has need of food to strengthen it, and keep it in order for work. The soul must have food too, and this service is part of the soul's food. The Lord's Supper is one of the divinely instituted means of grace, and whoever keeps away from it is wilfully depriving himself of spiritual nourishment.

It would be good if young people could be brought to look at the matter from this point of view, and thus be led to connect themselves with the Church at an earlier age than is generally the case. We do not require to be perfect before we partake of the Lord's Supper ; indeed this supper is one of the means of helping us towards perfection of character.

3. It is sometimes termed the *Communion*. In it we hold communion with God the Father,

with his Son, Jesus Christ, and with our fellow-christians. (1 Cor. 10: 16, 17.) The very act of uniting with the people of God in the celebrating of the Lord's Supper is an acknowledgment of them as brethren (Gal. 2: 9), and involves the acting towards them in every relation in a brotherly spirit.

4. It is called a *Sacrament*. This word is derived from the Latin "*Sacramentum*," a military oath. In taking the communion therefore we take an oath of allegiance to Jesus Christ. If we would have Him for our Saviour we must have Him also for our Master. Obedience in all things is not a matter of choice with the christian. It is a duty ; he must obey.

Judas.

This man affords us a terrible character study.

We learn from him how often a man's advantages become his disadvantages.

We learn from him also the evil of covetousness. No passion will sooner and more completely destroy every trace of human feeling in the heart.

We learn another important lesson from him, viz., that it is possible to be deliberately and intentionally bad. Apologists have been found in the present day even for Judas. We cannot agree with their estimate of his character. Weakness often leads to wickedness, but both Scripture and human experience teach us that there may be wickedness without weakness. Milton makes Satan say, "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

In the Lord's Supper we have a simple and beautiful symbolic representation of the process of salvation. For the sake of brevity and convenience, let us express the matter in the following form.

1. As they were eating the Passover. Compare the Passover (Ex. 12) and the Lord's Supper: the bondage, the deliverance, the first born, the blood sprinkled, etc.

2. Jesus took bread,—the gift of God,—to signify himself and his doctrine. John 6: 51.

3. Blessed—Thanked the Giver of all good.

4. Brake—To signify his sufferings. Matt. 27: 35.