

The Message of the Crucifixion to Us To-Day.

We acknowledge with gratitude the Post Card Messages from the Clergy which appear in these columns to-day. Those which may have reached us since Wednesday will appear in next Thursday's issue.

**Rev. Canon Noel,
Harbour Grace.**

The message of the Crucifixion to us to-day is the message of the ages' all along—a message of Love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It was conceived in love; it was borne in love; it is conveyed to us in love; its fruits are seen in love. "By this shall all men know ye are my disciples: No words of man can improve upon it. It is a message of pain that ends in joy. It is an inspiration to all who accept it and follow it. "Love Me as I have loved you." The world needs it to-day as it did of yore. May we not miss it.

**Rev. P. W. Browne, P.P.,
St. Jacques.**

In every human life there comes a Golgotha: the more closely we approach to the Standard of the Master, the more nearly will our Cross resemble the Cross of Calvary. The Crucifixion is the only preparation for the Resurrection in the spiritual life of the world: "If dying we mortally the works of the flesh, we shall have life."

**Rev. Edgar Taylor,
Channel.**

The Crucifixion to-day is a standing rebuke to self-seeking, and a mighty stimulus to the development of all that is beautiful in character, lovely in spirit, and holy in life. It ought to stir our conscience, kindle our love and arouse our enthusiasm to devote our one life to the salvation of the world—the one great purpose which was ever near the heart of our Lord. In this twentieth century the awful possibility and the imminent peril of crucifying Him afresh and putting Him to an open shame ought to alarm us to cry, "Lord is it I?"

**Rev. Harry Royle,
Curling.**

A synonym for crucifixion is sacrifice. Christ offered Himself for us. By the daily self-denials of His followers He is daily given up for us. Let us follow in His steps. Men make great sacrifices for home and loved ones; for country; for gold; for sport;—surely the Crucified One claims that we be crucified with Him, and is justified in His claim.

**Rev. A. G. Bayly, M.A.,
Bonavista.**

The Cross is God's effort to save man from himself. The form of the cross One nailed to the Cross is at once the emblem of man's sin, and the pledge of God's readiness to forgive the penitent. The cowardice of Pilate, the pride of those in authority, the malice and envy of bad priests, the heart of Herod, the thoughtless cruelty of the people, the covetousness of Judas, the lying of false witnesses are all shown up. So too is the weakness of friends who fail to comfort Him, or deny Him. If the contemplation of His life helps us to realize the heinousness of our own sins, and to give them up, then the Precious Blood will have been shed in vain for us. Sin given up are no longer our own. And there is nothing like the contemplation of Jesus Christ to make us sick of sin, and to bring us to true repentance. For this He endured the Cross, so that He might restore our lost manhood, and that in Him we might have forgiveness of sins, and grace to rise with Him to newness of life.

**Rev. Oliver Jackson,
Clarke's Beach.**

"True courage lies in pursuing, amid the dullness of the public, the deceleration of criticisms, the assaults of foes, and the treason of friends, such faith as still places the precious soul, the wondrous grace and the cosmic world, for ever and ever in these hands which twenty centuries ago were nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross."

**Rev. Frank Smart,
Heart's Content.**

The Crucifixion loudly warns men to-day against allowing prejudice to warp judgment, thus condemning

good men for actions we disapprove of. Humanly speaking the Crucifixion resulted from public clamour aroused by men acting in the interests of their Shibboleths.

**Rev. W. T. D. Dunn,
Lewisporte.**

The triumphs of wrong are only seeming, and are short-lived. Two nations combined to put Him to death. They seemed to succeed, but where are Rome and Israel to-day as nations? Right must win, even through seeming defeat. They crucified Him, and, in the estimate of Jew and Roman, He died as He deserved. Innocence was hung up for malfeasance! To-day, He is enthroned far above all principalities and powers, while they have no thrones.

**Rev. Robert H. Mercer,
Musgrave Harbor.**

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ shows that apparent defeat may be real victory. A man's mission may culminate in an eclipse of unnameable agony, in order that, according to the spiritual economy, it may accentuate the after-glow.

**Rev. A. Clayton,
St. John's.**

It is a very solemnizing thought that the Saviour's death was directly due not to the wounds inflicted on His hands and feet, but by those who nailed Him to the Cross, but to the mental anguish He endured, as in the Garden of Gethsemane and on Calvary He bore the burden of the sins of the world. All that He endured was for Love of your soul. Let this thought then be ever sharp and clear in your mind—that Christ was the victim of His own Love; a self-sacrificing Love; a Love stronger than death, which proves its strength by dying.

**Rev. Norman M. Guy, M.A.,
Grand Falls.**

The crucifixion of the Son of God comes to us to-day with the message of a rebuke, a challenge, a pledge, and a promise. It rebukes our indifference to the claims of God and humanity; the modern craze for pleasure; the spirit of materialism and compromise to characteristic of our age. It challenges us to measure up to the ideal which it inspires, and thus realize the possibilities of our manhood.

It is a pledge to us of the love of God; the forgiveness of sin and the power to begin again.

And so long as we keep an "uplifted Christ" in the centre of our spiritual vision it promises us an unbroken line of great lives, which shall lift man, lift society, and lift the world from the thralldom of selfishness into the liberty of the Gospel.

**Rev. C. A. Whitmarsh,
St. John's.**

The message of the Crucifixion to our day is the message to get back to fundamentals. The central message of the Cross is a call to sacrificial living—a practice which has little place in this luxurious age. The call of the age is to feed self. The call of the Cross is to sacrifice self, to stand in the place of the sinful, to feel for them, and if need be, to suffer for them and with them, until they are sheltered in the Crucified.

**Rev. J. S. Sutherland,
"The Manse," St. John's.**

To my mind there are three points in the message of the Crucifixion which are of special significance for us to-day. These are the awfulness of human sin, the wonder of God's forgiving love, and the redemptive power of suffering. The Cross was set up on Calvary by those whose conduct was determined by such common passions as religious prejudice, personal envy and worldly ambition. He who died upon it did so because of love for others, and oneness of purpose with God in His efforts to redeem mankind. History shows that he did not die in vain. His Cross has proved his throne. Through its influence Jesus draws men unto himself, and lift them from earth to heaven.

On the Edge of the World.

On that mystic plane that lies between Heaven and earth, where Souls pass on their way to incarnation, the Great Tribunal was assembled, and a multitude of Shining Ones filled the silent spaces with the faint beating of their wings. The Moment of Decision had come for a Soul that had known many births, whose pilgrimage had been long and arduous, and who had spent aeons of Nirvanic bliss as a reward of noble lives.

She stood—in shape like an angel, clothed in radiance—before the Great Tribunal of the Lords of Karma, whose judgment is unerring, and beside her stood two servants of the Lords. The Supreme Lord spoke thus to the waiting Soul.

"Child of earth and of Heaven, in thy last incarnation the debts of the far past were paid in full. In the new earth-life now about to open for thee—for not yet art thou freed from the Wheel of Birth and Death—Peace and Happiness shall be thy teachers, if thou desirest it. . . . Thou hast another great lesson to learn, and it can be learnt thus. . . . It can also be learnt in another way, by another and swifter path. And thine is the choice."

As He spoke the eyes of the Supreme Lord—those all-seeing eyes that were steadfast and passionless as Fate itself—directed the Soul's gaze to the two figures by her side, the servants of the Lords of Karma. . . . And she saw that the figure to the left of her bore in its hands a chaplet of roses, and the figure to the right of her a sword. . . . Lovingly the Soul's glance lingered over the chaplet of roses. . . . They were red roses, not deeply red, but of the colour often seen in the heart of a flame, the colour of love purified from the dross of passion. "Lord, if I choose the symbol of the roses, what will be my fate? And why is the other path symbolised by a sword?"

"Child of earth and of Heaven, if thou dost choose the chaplet of roses thy next life shall be lived as a man, strong in mind as in body, who shall radiate of his own health and happiness on all who approach him, so that they shall rejoice in his presence and be proud to be called his friends and fellow-workers. He shall be self-reliant, brave, determined, and thus all his work shall be crowned with success. . . . He will be a leader of men, and he shall lead them aright, inspiring them with energy, loyalty, devotion to the Cause which he shall serve. . . . A great gift of love shall be his—a noble soul will be his companion and helpmate, and all that man may know of wedded love and wedded bliss this man, as yet unborn, shall know."

"And the lesson to be learnt?" whispered the Soul. "Duty to his fellow-men, devotion to a noble cause; duty that is done daily, hourly; devotion of a lifetime to a great idea. That is the lesson he will learn."

The waiting Soul extended her hand towards the chaplet of roses, and almost, she touched the fragrant leaves. "Lord, and if I choose the sword?" she asked suddenly. "If thou chooseth the sword thou shalt be a woman, and thy feet shall be set in the grey places of the earth. Neither strength nor joy nor power shall be thine. . . . Thou shalt forever seek to give to the world a message that the world shall ever reject; thy days shall be full of strife and thy nights of unrest; in thy heart shall burn a fire that will almost consume thee; thou shalt be as a watcher in the night, waiting, ever waiting, for the dawn. . . . But for thee no dawn shall break; in the grey twilight shalt thou enter thy earth-life, and in the twilight thou shalt leave it."

"If I choose the path of roses, Lord, what shall be my name?" "Men will call thee 'The Beloved of the Gods,' so happy shall be thy life." The Supreme Lord made answer. "And if I choose the sword? If I choose to be this woman; ah, Lord! shall not my name be 'The Woman of Sorrow'?"

"Yea," spake the Lord; "but another name also shall men give thee, and this name shall be 'The Comforter.' " "The Comforter?" "Those who come into touch with thee shall feel His presence, and many, because of thy burning words and the light within thine eyes, will say, 'We have this day come nigh unto the Lord, we have seen His radiance upon the path.' . . . But to thee the path will seem dark; thy heart shall seem to turn His face away from thee."

In awe-stricken tones the Soul asked, "But why, O Lord, but why?" The Lord spake thus, "Those who are willing to become the Teachers



"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

and Helpers of Humanity must learn their lesson on the Cross—be this cross visible or invisible—for then only can they descend into Hades to preach to the souls in prison; then only, when raised to Heaven in the fullness of time, can they raise their brethren with them. . . . Only when this lesson has been learned does the Disciple become the Master. . . . If thou chooseth the life of Joy thou shalt give, freely, all thy possessions to the Cause which thou shalt serve. . . . And thus the lesson of perfect Altruism will have been learned."

"If thou chooseth the Path of the sword thou shalt have nothing to give but thyself. . . . Of life-blood shalt thou give that they may live. 'And greater love hath no man,' Choose now, O Child of earth and Heaven, choose the roses or the sword!"

"The Soul bent low before the great Tribunal. 'I have chosen, Lord,' she said, 'and grasped the sword.'"

On the great planet Earth a child was born. The home where it came was a poor one, a cottage on the high road, and the night was cold and bleak. To the eyes that only see the outside of things—to the father, who came in torn from his work, with his tool-bag slung over his shoulder; to the doctor who paid a hasty visit to the cottage on his way to the Hall; to the kindly neighbour who acted as nurse—it was a commonplace event his birth of a babe into a household that already had too many mouths to feed. . . . But to One who was invisible, watched it with eyes open to the spiritual realities, a radiance lovelier than moonlight or rosy dawn filled the narrow room, for above the new-born babe, partly incarnate in the frail body, partly enveloping it as a golden cloud, was the Soul of One who had chosen the Cross and the Sword for the love of suffering humanity. . . . And perhaps, there also, in that cottage on the high road, in the cold twilight of a December day, might have been heard a celestial choir singing the birth of a Heaven-sent Babe. —Jean DeLaire.

Perfect Through Suffering.

"Perfect through sufferings," may it be. Saviour made perfect, thus for me! I bow, I kiss, I bless the rod, That brings me nearer to my God.

"Perfect through sufferings," be Thy cross The crucible, to purge my dross! Welcome for that its pang, its scorn, Its scourge, its nails, its crown of thorns.

"Perfect through sufferings," heap the fire, And pile the sacrificial pyre; But spare each loved and loving one, And let me feel the flames, alone. "Perfect through sufferings," urge the blast, More free, more full, more fierce, more fast, It reck not where the dust be trod, So the flame waft my soul to God. —G. W. Doane.

The will grows by its own exercise; it increases like the snowball by its own motion. I believe that the weakest man has will enough for his appointed exigencies; if he would but develop it as he would develop a feeble body.—T. Thompson. Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute; What you can do, or think you can begin it. —Lord Chesterfield.

The Law of Renunciation.

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa was born in 1875 in the island of Ceylon. His chief studies, besides languages, have been in Comparative Religion. His attitude to life is cosmopolitan, combining "the other-worldliness" of India with the philosophy of action of Christendom. He is the author of a charming little book of stories and sketches for children called Christ and Buddha, and has just published a book on the spiritual life entitled In His Name.

The joy of life! Is it not everywhere? In plant and animal and man do we not see an instinct for happiness which impels all creation to rise from good to better, from better to best? Since God said "Let there be Light!" are not all men seeking to step out of darkness into light—blindly, dimly feeling that happiness must be their goal? Yet how few find happiness in life! It is easy to—

"God's in His heaven, All's right with the world!" But to sing so long one must be blind to facts. Life is a tragedy to many, and far truer is it described by Fenelon—

"Act First, this Earth, a stage so gloom'd with woe You all but sicken at the shifting scenes. And yet be patient. Our Playwright may show In some fifth Act what this wild Drama means."

Nevertheless, all feel that happiness must be the goal of life, and humanity never errs in its deepest feelings. But, then, why should not the attainments of happiness be easier than it is?

There is a philosophy of life which holds that man is an immortal soul, living not one life on earth but many, growing by the experiences he gains in them manifold capacities and virtues. This philosophy further postulates that all men are the children of One Father, who has created a universe, in order that, working therein His children may know something of Him, and come to Him in joy. According to this theory, the purpose of life is not to achieve a stable condition of happiness for any individual, but rather to train him to work in a plan of an Ideal Future, and find in that work an ever-changing and everlasting contentment.

From the standpoint of the Theosophist all men are indeed working for a foreordained ideal future; but they work at different stages according to their differing capacities. A recognition of these stages and the laws of life appropriate to each makes life less the riddle that it is. There are three broad stages on the Path of Bliss that leads to the Highest Good, and they are happiness, renunciation, and transfiguration.

The Stage of Happiness. God calls upon His children at this stage to co-operate with Him by offering their happiness as the aim of life. He has implanted in them a craving for happiness, and provides work for them that shall make them happy. Love of wife and child and friend, fame and the gratitude of men, success and ease—these are His rewards for those that serve Him.

Useful as men are in the Great Work at this stage, yet so long as a man deliberately seeks happiness, his capabilities as a worker are soon exhausted. For soon he "settles down in life"; the precious gift of wonder slowly fades away, his happiness ceases to be dynamic. Self-centred, he calls on the universe to give. But the Path to Bliss is by work, and if he is to go ever on he must fit himself for a larger work than has so far fallen to his share. Hitherto he has measured men and things by the standard of his little self; henceforth the Great Self must be his measure. He must break the sway of himself and realise that evermore what is important in life is not he, not his happiness, but a Work. Before this realization can begin there must be a conversion.

Conversion. In many ways are men converted from the interests of the little self to the work of the Great Self. Some, loving Truth in religious garb, open their hearts to a Personality that dazzles their imagination. Henceforth they must serve Him and be like Him, and gone for ever is the standpoint of the little self. Some study science and philosophy and discover a magnificent plan of evolution, with the inevitable result that they know that the individual is but a unit in a great Whole, and not the centre of the cosmos; and if they set rightly to study, they see, too, that there is a Will at work, and that cost what it will, they must co-operate with that Will. A few there are to whom comes some myтарious experience from the hidden side of things, and

life speaks to them a transforming message. Out of the invisible comes a "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and a persecutor of Christians is changed into an Apostle of Christ. When through conversion the new personality is ready for a larger work the tools he uses must be made pure. They are his thoughts and feelings, and slowly a process of purification is begun. Disappointment and pain and grief are his lot—the sad harvest of a sowing of selfishness in the unseen past of many lives, for we reap as we have sown. When the worker is ready, swift is Nature's response to free him from the burden of his past, in order that he may be fit to achieve the great work prepared for him.

The Meaning of Pain. With some, sorrow hardens the character, but with those who are ready to enter on the second stage it ever purifies. Does not the very texture of the flesh of a sufferer who has in patience and resignation borne his pain seem luminous and pure, as though through every cell there gleamed the light of a hidden fire? How much more is it with mental suffering? Are we not irresistibly drawn to reverence one who has suffered much and nobly, and sometimes to love, too?

The Stage of Renunciation. Life seems full of evil days to those that come to the end of the first stage, but its lesson is clear. That lesson is, "Thou must go without, go without! That is the everlasting song, which every hour, all our life through, hoarsely sings to us."

All great workers know that the Law of Renunciation is true and that "it is only with renunciation that life, properly speaking, can be said to begin." There are no great souls that are completely happy, can never be!

Take whom you will who has done a great work, and he knows that renunciation is the law. In bitterness of heart Broken cries out, "I've had my heart broken ages ago, when I was a boy, then mended, cracked, beaten in, kicked about old corridors, and finally, I think, flattened fairly out." But he persevered in his work all the same. There is no greater name in the world of art than Michel Angelo, "this masterful and stern, life-wearied and labour-hardened man," whose history "is one of indomitable will and almost superhuman energy, yet of will that had hardly ever had its way, and of energy continually at war with circumstance." It is the same with all who have been great.

But through renunciation the soul on the threshold of greatness discovers life's meaning. If religious, he will state it "Thy will be done"; if scientific or artistic he will say "Not I, but a Work." He is now as Faust, who sought "happiness in knowledge, and failed; sought it in the love of Marguerite and reaped a tragedy; and only as he planned to reclaim waste lands for men, and lost himself in the dream of that work, found that long-sought-for happy moment when he could say, "Ah, tarry a while, thou art so fair!" So, renouncing, live the souls at the second stage, lovers of a Work. Sad at heart they are; but if they are loyal to their work, then comes to them in fleeting moments more than happiness, the joy of creation. Such wonders they now body forth that to themselves their masterpieces are enigmas. In fitful gleams they see a light, and know that now and then it shines through them to the world. But, alas! just as they have discovered what it is to live, what it is to create, they are old, and life comes to a close, before it seems hardly begun. Shall the path of renunciation bring nothing but despair?

"Despair was never yet so deep, In sinking as in seeming; Despair is hope just dropp'd asleep For better chance of dreaming."

C. JINARAJADASA.

possession, that wondrous joy which only those know who can offer all gifts of heart and mind and stand apart from them while a Greater than they creates through them. "Seeking nothing, he gains all; foregoing self, the universe grows I." Now has he found that life which he lost in the stage of Renunciation; henceforth, in all places and at all times, is he become "a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall no more go out."

The Path of Bliss. So life gives of its best to all—happiness to some, renunciation to others, and, to a few, transfiguration. What if now most of us who love Truth must "do without"? Let us but dedicate heart and mind to a Work, and we shall find that renunciation leads to transfiguration. There is but one road to God, for all to tread. It is the Path of Bliss. It has its steps—happiness, renunciation, and transfiguration. Whoso will offer up all that he is to Work, though he "lose his life" thereby, yet shall he find it soon, and "come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

With some, sorrow hardens the character, but with those who are ready to enter on the second stage it ever purifies. Does not the very texture of the flesh of a sufferer who has in patience and resignation borne his pain seem luminous and pure, as though through every cell there gleamed the light of a hidden fire? How much more is it with mental suffering? Are we not irresistibly drawn to reverence one who has suffered much and nobly, and sometimes to love, too?

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The Stage of Transfiguration. "Hope just dropp'd asleep for better chance of dreaming"—that, truly, is death. The great worker leaves life but to return again, with every dream old and new nearer realization. He returns with the inborn mastery of technique of the genius to achieve creation is now his sure and priceless work he only dreamed. The joy of

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All great workers know that the Law of Renunciation is true and that "it is only with renunciation that life, properly speaking, can be said to begin." There are no great souls that are completely happy, can never be!

Take whom you will who has done a great work, and he knows that renunciation is the law. In bitterness of heart Broken cries out, "I've had my heart broken ages ago, when I was a boy, then mended, cracked, beaten in, kicked about old corridors, and finally, I think, flattened fairly out." But he persevered in his work all the same. There is no greater name in the world of art than Michel Angelo, "this masterful and stern, life-wearied and labour-hardened man," whose history "is one of indomitable will and almost superhuman energy, yet of will that had hardly ever had its way, and of energy continually at war with circumstance." It is the same with all who have been great.

But through renunciation the soul on the threshold of greatness discovers life's meaning. If religious, he will state it "Thy will be done"; if scientific or artistic he will say "Not I, but a Work." He is now as Faust, who sought "happiness in knowledge, and failed; sought it in the love of Marguerite and reaped a tragedy; and only as he planned to reclaim waste lands for men, and lost himself in the dream of that work, found that long-sought-for happy moment when he could say, "Ah, tarry a while, thou art so fair!" So, renouncing, live the souls at the second stage, lovers of a Work. Sad at heart they are; but if they are loyal to their work, then comes to them in fleeting moments more than happiness, the joy of creation. Such wonders they now body forth that to themselves their masterpieces are enigmas. In fitful gleams they see a light, and know that now and then it shines through them to the world. But, alas! just as they have discovered what it is to live, what it is to create, they are old, and life comes to a close, before it seems hardly begun. Shall the path of renunciation bring nothing but despair?

"Despair was never yet so deep, In sinking as in seeming; Despair is hope just dropp'd asleep For better chance of dreaming."

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