

dying for "a good man." But God's love did not take in *only* the good, the moral, the holy, the godly. If so, none could be saved. When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The revised version says, "His own love." Not the love of angels or inferior divinities. Not any mediator separate from His own infinite mind and loving heart, which wills the salvation of a lost race.

God's love formed the plan, provided the remedy, opened up the way, sends the invitation of mercy, invites rebels to return to pardon, peace, and eternal blessedness through the channel of His own love which He extends to us, supported by the strongest proofs of His desire to save all who will come to Him.

If God commends His love to us, is not the commendation good enough? Is it not a proof that He does not desire that any should perish, but that all should come to life—life eternal? Why not then receive His word? Why not accept the proffered grace, which brings and lays salvation at the door of every man? Why not touch (now) the extended sceptre of the loving Father? Why not now accept His love and the salvation which He so richly and so freely offers?

Old and young are pressing into the unseen. They pass in under condemnation. Jesus says, "He that believeth on the Son is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already"—remains under the condemnation which *was* the condition of all.

The door of mercy is open, God's love invites to enter. The door is passed by, the sweet voice of love is unheeded.

Indifference weaves a garment of peace and lulls to slumber and repose. The danger is not seen, the voice of warning is unheard. What shall the awakening be? Where will it be? Who will be the companions? What will be the surroundings? Shall angel choirs chant the sweetest music in a land of peace and joy and beauty? or will it be one loud, eternal wail of woe, in regions of eternal despair? where no ray of light or hope can penetrate the gloom of the land of night and death.

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"THE PENNY."

In the 20th chapter of Matt. we find the parable of the laborers. The householder agreed with the laborers for a penny a day. "When the evening was come the lord of the vineyard saith unto the steward, Call the laborers and give them their hire." And when they came who were hired the eleventh hour they received every man a penny. The first hour laborers complained because they worked so much longer and harder and received no more than those who worked but one hour. But the lord of the vineyard told them he did them no wrong, as he gave them what he agreed to give, and that it was perfectly lawful to do what he pleased, with his own.

From this parable many have drawn the conclusion that it matters not how much or how little we do in the vineyard or church of God, that we will receive the same reward. The man who comes in the last hour and gives one hour of his wasted, useless life to God will receive as much as the one who has worked all his life for God. If the parable contained such a lesson as this, it would be a complete contradiction of the whole tenor of the Scriptures, for the Bible abounds with the idea that every one is to be rewarded according to his deeds. This lesson is very plainly taught in the parable of the "ten pounds." Luke xix. 13. One gained, with his pound, ten pounds, which gave him authority over ten cities, but the second, with his

pound, gained five pounds, which gave him authority over five cities only. Each one was rewarded according to the labor bestowed. The one who works the most will receive the most, all things being equal. This is natural, sensible, and scriptural. What then does the penny mean—simply privilege and not reward. The Jew arrogated all the rights and privileges of the gospel. When the Lord gave the same privileges and rights to the Gentile as He did to the Jew, dissatisfaction arose, and the Jew complained because they, being the first called, and the chosen ones of God, ought to have the exclusive right to the honors of God. That there should be no distinction between the Jew and Gentile, in a point of privilege in the kingdom of grace, was the hardest lesson for the Jew to learn. Even after the reign of Christ was established, and both Jew and Gentile were members of Christ's church, they had trouble over this very thing, and allowed themselves to dissemble and thereby make divisions in the church. With this idea that the penny was the privilege alike to all in the gospel dispensation, settles the ensuing contradictions between the two parables, and also helps us to understand how the "first shall be last, and the last first." The Jew who was first chosen did not do as well with his choice and privilege as the Gentile. The Jew grumbled and rejected that which the Gentile gladly received. Those to whom the gospel came last, were the first to receive it. But to suppose that a person who is first in virtue, in good works, in an earnest, faithful Christian life, can be last in any point of view, is folly in the extreme. We fear, however, that notwithstanding the plain teaching of God's word, there are many who, on the false interpretation of this parable, suppose they can reject the mercy and love of God till the last hours of their life, and then accept the Saviour and be the first in the kingdom of God's glory. It is very strange, but nevertheless true, that many in the church of Christ are indifferent and quite thoughtless and careless in regard to the work of the Lord, in the salvation of souls, thinking all that is necessary is their entrance into the everlasting kingdom, that whoever gets there will get their "penny," and all that is necessary is that we hold our position in the church on earth. With this view of the subject it would be folly to make any degree of sacrifice for the cause of Christ, and some of our modern Christians (?) will smile at Paul when they meet him, because he gave up his position and all he had, and his own life, and counted it all but dross, and suffered all manner of persecution for the cross of Christ, and yet get no more reward, no better crown, no brighter glory, than the brother who took life easy, saved his farm and property, and laid up his thousands. Must others sail through bloody seas to gain the crown and only necessary for me to live in the cradle of ease?

How is a very pernicious sophistry in the theology of too many. The depravity of the human heart is seen in this selfish ungracious principle, i. e., in working upon religion and the church, as that by which we must be saved, and have no further need or use of the church than Noah had of the Ark after his safety was secured, and only necessary to get into it before the flood. If the church is only an ark of safety, why should I be in a hurry to get into it before the danger comes? This fallacy is also seen in the questions so often asked "Are you saved," "Is your peace made with God." If the questions can be answered in the affirmative, then our condition is considered about right. While it is true that we need to be saved and have our peace made with God, it is also true that our own peace and salvation depends upon our earnest faithful labors for the peace and salvation of others. To be at ease in Zion and at peace with God is absolutely impossible. I do not believe in this doctrine of being good, only so far as we are doing good. To be pure we must labor to make others

pure. There are persons who claim to be free from sin; to be holy and completely sanctified, who put one cent into the contribution box towards the salvation and sanctification of the lost and benighted sons of men. I am constantly meeting with persons who look upon the subject of conversion in this light, simply getting saved and getting right with God, and of course it matters not to them when this change takes place, any time before they die will do. I have heard preachers give as a reason why the matter should be attended to now was because we may die suddenly and not have time "to make our peace with God," making it appear in the same light that the "all in all" of our turning to God was our own salvation. No, indeed, my brother, this is a fatal mistake, and should be emphasized in sorrow and with tears. I am sorry for that boy who keeps right with his father so he will get the property when his father dies. He should love his father regardless of the property. We love God because He is love and He loves us; and because of our love for Him we love to serve Him, and the result is a reward in heaven. The sooner we get to work for God and humanity the better it will be for us. The more we do for God the more God will do for us. Is it not a sorrowful and lamentable condition, that in view of the price paid for our redemption and the unmeasurable incomprehensible riches of the inheritance of the saints in light, man will abuse the love and mercy of God by wasting his precious life in seeking things that must rust, and decay and vanish away; and then in his last moments tell the Lord he is very sorry "and if he had his life to live over again he would do better," etc., etc. Well, if such a person gets much of a crown, then we are compelled to believe in the doctrine of a "second chance."

H. MURRAY.

SHADOWS.

Life is full of shadows, and some of them will not flee away until the day of Christ, when the archangel's trumpet will awaken us from our slumbers. Moral evil is a shadow, throwing its gloom over all nations. It affects man's nature,—many times making him angry, covetous or unthankful. It blights a town and neighbourhood, producing deception, slander and fraud.

Moral evil is not only a calamity to be deplored, but a mystery; and we are apt to ask, Whence comes it? Its entry into the world is a dark impenetrable shadow, but there will be a morning when this mystery shall be cleared up; the eternal day will break upon everything dark in this world and the shadows which have saddened and bewildered us will flee away.

Personal sorrow is another shadow, even where there is health, when toil is accompanied with poverty. There may be scanty food and raiment, straitened homes and privations manifold—these will cause a man to feel gloomy. A dismal night has overtaken him—not a night of quiet slumber and rest, but one of weary watching. Happy is the man who, by faith in God, can in such a case retain the assurance that the day will break and the shadows flee away. The redeemed will find at the last day, to their unutterable joy, forever gone all disease which afflicts humanity, such as bereavement, breaking up of homes, premature decline of constitution, or whatever threw its shadow upon the spirit struggling in moral conflict. Therefore, child of God, although oppressed with sorrow,—take courage and look forward in holy expectation until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

But when the shadows of guilt have fled away before the smile of divine love beaming from the face of Jesus Christ, other clouds throw darkness upon us. Often there is a leaning toward the world and a faint following after holiness. Yea, sometimes a turning aside in forgetfulness of the heavenly cal-