

The virtue of Jesus' death goes back to Adam's time, and through it God could be merciful to him and to the race who need His salvation. We may therefore understand how God could spare Adam's life so long, and how He will yet make all alive who died in Adam.

Another matter and I will close this long article.

In the Saviour's teaching He often used the words *life* and *death* sometimes meaning *physical* life and other times *spiritual* life. Careful attention to the subject in hand, and the parties addressed, will help us to understand His meaning. To inquirers for salvation as in the 3rd of John He uses *life* in a *spiritual* sense with eternal added to it. In the 5th of John his enemies accuse Him of Sabbath-breaking because He had cured a man who had been helpless thirty-eight years. He defended His action as not only good, but also a proof that He had the miraculous power of God, and mentions a still higher proof at the 25th verse, that the time had come when the dead would hear His voice and live. He reaches the climax at the 28th and 29th verses, by declaring that His voice would call all that are in graves to the resurrection. I regard this as a description of what Jesus had power to do by speaking. He had healed the man, was calling back the dead such as Lazarus, the widow's son and the ruler's daughter, and would call all out of their graves.

But at the 24th verse is another case (call it 2nd). In this Jesus uses *life* with everlasting attached meaning *spiritual* life. It was necessary for the one who had it to believe in God who sent Jesus. Not so with either of the three in the first case. They had only to hear the voice of Christ. In the second case no particular time is mentioned: at all times, and in all places, he that heareth Christ's word, and believeth on him who sent Christ, hath everlasting life. But in the first case each has a particular time. There was a time when Christ healed the infirm man, a time when he raised dead persons, and there will be a set time for the resurrection. Each case has its peculiarities.

In the 11th of John, Jesus talks to Martha about life and death. She was deeply grieved about Lazarus' death. Jesus says, "thy brother shall rise again." She replied, "I know he will at the resurrection." Jesus then told her more than she ever knew about the resurrection, who was the cause of it, and what would happen to believers at it. These he divides into two classes, one class would be in their graves, and the other living at the time. Hear His sublime words, "Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" This then is the blessed destiny of all who believe in Jesus, whether in their graves or alive when Jesus comes. The living ones will not go before the dead. The dead in Christ shall rise first, then the living shall be changed, and all shall meet the Lord in the air, and be forever with the Lord.

Original Contributions.

WE MUST REAP AS WE SOW.

It is plainly seen in both nature and in grace, what the harvest will be. It is a mistake to suppose that we can reap only as we sow. Often we hear it said that "God will have mercy." This is true, but His mercy is manifested in the rich provisions of the Gospel. Surely His mercy is unbounded in the great scheme of redemption. But to suppose His mercy is extended in the salvation of man who rejects His offers of mercy, is an unfortunate mistake. Whatever God does for man, is done through the Gospel, as "it is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe it." There is no account of reformation or salvation in death or the resurrection, only what takes place in the body. Whatever the Gospel has made us here by our faith and obedience, such will we be in the future. Our reaping must be according to our sowing. But says one, "our cup will be full in the next world." That depends upon our faithfulness here. What do we mean by our cup being filled. If you

mean to say that if a man has two talents and he gains with them only one talent his cup of happiness will be full, I will object. The Bible teaches us that if we improve the talents we have we will be happy in the future, but it does not teach us that the man who gains only one talent with his two will have his cup of enjoyment full.

Right here is where we make our desire and wish the rule of Bible interpretation. When we come down to the close of life and look over the past, we see where we have been negligent, and indifferent, and have not been as faithful in sowing as we ought, but we trust in the mercy of God to forgive our failures and give us a harvest of rich, ripe fruit of labor, that we have never done. So my brother, your future will be just what you make it. It you fill the capacity of your opportunities you will have the fullness of enjoyment. But you can never reap what you have never sown. It is so easy for us to neglect the work of God, and be satisfied with half work and half heart, just enough work to secure an entrance into the everlasting kingdom, and then draw on the mercy of God to make up the deficiency by making every one filled with happiness who gets but standing room inside the city. We heard a good brother once say, "that his great anxiety was to keep out of hell." We will never be troubled with hell in the next world if we keep hell out of us in this world. Let us learn this lesson, that, "now is the day of salvation," that whatever God does in the salvation of man, is done now. He has given the Gospel to us that it might work in us now, a nature and character capable of enjoying that which He is preparing for us in the future. "The way to heaven is heavenly." The more heaven we get into us now, the greater will be our heaven in the future. H. M.

WHY DO PREACHERS PREACH?

As I sit down today to write to the readers of THE CHRISTIAN, there is a subject uppermost in my mind—a subject of importance to all who may read these lines. Why do preachers preach? Why do people listen? You may think this a very trifling matter to be concerned about: but if you will have a little patience with me I will try to show you that it is no trifling matter.

By a careful study of the word "preacher" I find it to be a translation from a Greek word which means "a herald" or "proclaimer." In early Greek writers such as Homer and Hesiod, we find the word used to denote a person of some importance. He summoned the assembly; kept order in it; separated the combatants in the arena, and had special charge of the arrangements at sacrifices and festivals. By some their office was deemed sacred, and they were thought to be under the special care of Jupiter. Hesiod, who lived about B. C. 800, tells us that Mercury was the herald (*Kerux*) of the gods. In later times the herald was used chiefly as a messenger between nations in time of war. In New Testament Greek, we find this word, or one of the family to which it belongs, is used to denote the preachers or public teachers of the gospel. From the foregoing you will get some idea of what was the original work of preachers. I do not intend to enter into the analogy; every fruitful mind will find some beautiful thoughts by a close comparison, but some one will ask; Are we not all preachers? to this I answer no, not in the true sense of the word. We are all workers together for the advancement of our Master's Kingdom and any one who has the ability and talent if he can gain the confidence of the people, may preach; but we are not all preachers any more than we are all elders or deacons. It is true that our actions manifest to the world something of what is in us. It is also true that our example may be more influential than many a sermon; but we find this is not included in a strict analysis of what a

preacher is. We have known men who were preachers who lacked the consistent life. Of course I do not want you to think that I am advocating the establishment of sacerdotalism—just the opposite. Just before I answer the question, let me state what I believe to be two facts. (1) That there is more preaching to professing Christians than to non-professors. (2) That the majority of sermons preached last year by the majority of preachers have been forgotten by the majority of people ere this. However humiliating it may be I think we must acknowledge the truth of these things. I think you will commence to see the reason for the question, Why do preachers preach? Just think of a preacher standing up week after week; warning the church to make their calling and election sure; of the danger of neglecting salvation, exhorting them to continue faithful and refrain from evil things and do good. And then to think that some of those very people will continue week after week doing things that are wrong and treating the preacher as though he were a liar, and the Bible as of no account, and that they could do about as they liked, or leave undone that which they ought to do.

Then think again of the many who attend the preaching who are not Christians; who are warned to flee from the wrath to come; who are told of the awful fate of the finally impenitent, and of the uncertainty of life. The love of God is told in tender tones, the finished work of Christ is explained, offering mercy and pardon to all. But alas! They treat the message with indifference. They will not heed the message. How many preachers have gone home after preaching, with a heart almost bursting; they have presented Christ in all His power to save, the invitation was given, nobody responded. Oh! how discouraging. This happens over and over again. Do you wonder then at my first question, why do preachers preach? Let me briefly give you a few reasons why. (I). They have faith in their message. They have the assurance that their work will not be in vain. That the word of the Lord will not return void, but will accomplish that whereunto it is sent. Let me illustrate from my own experience. Trusting in God, something over three years ago I began to preach the gospel. I preached in most of the churches in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. In nearly every place some were obedient to the Master, while others were encouraged. Since I settled here, messages like the following have come to me: "My dear husband, in dying, remembered you and spoke of you until the last." Another writes "Our daughter died happy, trusting in Jesus. She seemed to think that you had been sent here to lead her to Christ." These with others of a like nature coming from people who had confessed Christ under my preaching cause me to continue in the work. (II). We hope for the best. We hope there may be influences for good from our preaching that we cannot see now; sowing the seed we shall not fail to hold out our hands. We will plant and water the seed, God will give the increase. We hope to hear the Master say "well done" when we come bringing in the sheaves. We hope to shine as the stars in the firmament. (III). We love to tell the old story of the cross. We love God and we want others to love Him. We love mankind and want them to be saved. We are quite willing to bear reproaches and suffer wrong and be misrepresented, if like one of old "we can but save some." My article is getting long enough, but I have not said all I want to say. There are other reasons that you may think over at your leisure for preachers preaching. I do not aim to exhaust my subject, I only wish it to be suggestive to preachers and people. All being well I shall next month take up the other question, "Why do people listen?" W. H. HARDING.

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