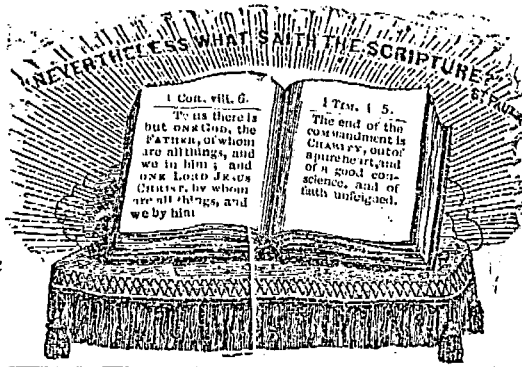


# THE BIBLE



# CHRISTIAN.

TRUTH, HOLINESS,

LIBERTY, LOVE.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER, 1846.

No. 9.

## JESUS THE MEDIATOR.

Men have imagined, in their ignorance, that they could not sufficiently multiply the objects of religious adoration. But in the simplicity of that mighty universe, which man's imagination cannot grasp, there is but one such object. Men have fancied that they could not interpose too many friends and advocates between their insignificance and the high majesty of heaven; they have crowded the access with numberless mediators to solicit benediction for them, and have filled churches and altars and cloisters with the images of saints who might pray for them, until the face of the great Supreme has been hidden, and their dependence on him forgotten. But the simplicity of God's government rejects this crowd of suitors, whom man would thrust forward to shelter his weakness, and appoints *one mediator between himself and his offspring*—one, to be the medium of his communications to them, and of their approaches to him. There is One on the throne, and One before the throne. When the suppliant draws nigh, his devotion is neither doubtful nor distracted. He knows that there is but One to be addressed; he feels that there is but one by whom he may obtain access; and his soul is absorbed in a single undivided act of trust and praise.

The title of Mediator is in four several passages ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament. In order to understand clearly its import, we must consider that a Mediator is one who acts between two persons or parties. He is the medium between them, the medium of intercourse or communication. And as such an one among men is needed, not in the ordinary current of affairs, but on occasions of difference or dissension; it has happened that the name is most usually given in the sense of a peace-maker, or one who effects reconciliation. In this sense it is doubtless applicable to our Lord; for one important object of his mission and religion is to reconcile men to God; that is, to render them his friends by doing away their dislike to his holy law, and uniting them to him in love and obedience. Hence God is said "to be in Christ reconciling the world to himself." And to this end, it is written, "it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and, having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself."

It is not, however, in this sense only, but in a more extended sense, that we are to understand this title; as indicating not only one who makes peace, but one who, in a general sense, is the medium of communication between God and men. This is the meaning which the word bears in the New Testament. Thus Paul says, speaking of the law (Gal. iii. 19), "it was ordained by angels, in the hand of a mediator." What is meant by Moses being thus called the mediator of the law, may be learned from his own language in speaking of the same transaction (Deut. v. 5): "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord." In this instance the name is manifestly given him, not in the restricted sense of a peace-maker, but in that of his being the medium of communication. In no other sense is it applied to Moses.

It is obviously in the same sense applied to Christ in the epistle to the Hebrews (viii. 6), where he is styled "the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises," than that of Moses. Now as Moses was mediator of the ancient covenant, inasmuch as through him it was communicated to the people; it must be in the same sense that Jesus is called the "Mediator of a better covenant."

This example serves to define and settle the term in its application to our Lord, and teaches us how to understand it in the other passages in which it occurs. Thus when the apostle contrasts the mildness of the new dispensation with the terrors which accompanied the introduction of the old (Heb. xii. 24), he mentions "Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant"; evidently as the chosen messenger of love by whom it was brought.

In the same sense we are to understand him (Heb. ix. 15) where he speaks of the Mediator as having died that he might certify the new covenant and render it "of force"; as all testaments he adds, are required to be ratified with blood. So also are we to interpret the title in 1 Tim. ii. 5, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." It has pleased God to have intercourse with his creatures, to establish with them a covenant, and pledge to them his promises. He through whose instrumentality this is done, is for that reason called "the Mediator between God and men." "The law came by Moses," who was thus mediator of the old covenant; "but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," who was thus mediator of the new. By the same channel of mediation, God has also appointed that his offspring shall have access to him, through him "come to the Father," and "in his name" address their praises and supplications. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

There are thus two divisions under which the office of mediator presents itself: the one, as bringing down to men the messages of God; the other, as bearing up to God the offerings of men.—H. Ware, Jr.

## THE USEFULNESS OF CARES.

It is well for us to have cares. There is no one indeed who has them not, if he is disposed to see them; but for any one, who is not so disposed, it is happy if there are those which will force themselves upon his attention. For serious cares of any kind make the mind serious, which so far is a great good. Without them it becomes light and giddy. There are persons, who constitutionally seem almost incapable of being led, in the wantonness of their prosperity, to do or wish ill to any human being; whose feelings towards others appear all to be feelings of a superficial, indeed, but as far as it goes, a genuine kindness; but for whom we see, that the wish which a true friendship would dictate, would be that they should have some of those "changes," for want of which "they fear not God." They are the spoiled children of prosperity. There is nothing substantial in their character. There is nothing deep in any of their feelings. The business of their lives is a weak and capricious self-indulgence. The Scriptures, which subject the human character to so rigid an analysis, are faithful in exposing this tendency. "He gave them their request, and sent leanness into their souls." What a just as well as strong picture this of the condition in which a luxuriance of outward blessings is contrasted with that dearth of all that is best in the mind and heart, with which we sometimes see it followed. "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." How many the instances in which this sentence has been executed; in which minds not absolutely ill-disposed, nor capable under other circumstances of blessing and being blessed, have been intoxicated and made merely giddy and frivolous by too much good fortune, as we call it, and seduced away from every strenuous and honourable application of their powers. "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved." How natural a boast for a mind inflated by abundance, and by the deference which it brings, and by the habit of seeing its own will a law; yet a boast how presumptuous, an expectation how fallacious, a confidence so sadly ill-adapted to prepare for the changes which time may bring. The very waywardness and eccentric humours, which such a feeling generates, are the occasion of more wants than any prosperity can supply; and the affluent circumstances, which to others seem adequate to obviate every wish, are but experienced by the possessor to increase their number. The feeling is as much at war with the spirit of self-discipline and improvement, as with that of content. "Be not high-minded, but fear," says the apostle, using the self-same

expression with that in our text, and conveying a lesson the most needful to be observed by all who are intent on growth in grace. But how little consistent with this humble and sanctifying spirit of self distrust, is that vain elation of the mind which we are now considering. And what a stubborn and impracticable religious insensibility does it threaten to create. "When thou shalt have eaten and be full, then beware lest thou forget the Lord." This is an admonition, called for by well ascertained tendencies of human nature. Jeshurun, when pampered, was restive and untractable; "then he forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation." "They were filled and their heart was exalted, therefore have they forgotten me." This is the history of many an envied, but unhappy man's experience; and if it would be going too far to infer that this kind of prosperity is therefore not to be desired, we needs must own that it is not every mind which has the strength to bear it.—Palfrey.

## CHILDHOOD.

BY REV. R. C. WATERSTON OF BOSTON.

There is a feeling of general interest manifested towards children. There is something fairy-like in their aspect. They are the poetry of real life. A thousand playful ways arrest our attention, and win our heart. Flowers are attractive, but as they spring up and bloom, their beauty is ever the same. The violet, the lily, and the rose, are this season what they were last—they repeat themselves; but with children there is something new. Every child has some way peculiar to itself; an individuality which takes us by surprise. When we look at children, we always wonder what they will do next. There is also an innocence about them which gains our respect. We can hardly think of them with suspicion. We acknowledge and feel their purity and goodness. The father gazes upon his child with honest joy, and the mother presses its hands in hers, or meets it with a loving caress, feeling that it is a gift from God, and worthy to have come from the Great Giver. The wise forget their learning, and play and frolic before the new comer. The weakest rules the strongest. The infant rides upon wise men's shoulders, and makes them smile and talk in its own language. Thus, before Innocence, Strength and Wisdom willingly yield, and the little child prophesies what it may yet accomplish.

What can be a more interesting sight than to see a circle of admiring children around an infant, while they, by their simple words, are eager to win one recognizing glance? What more striking, than to see the grand-sire forgetting the infirmities of age while he becomes the companion of youth? And who that had the pencil of a Raphael, or an Angelo, and could hope to depict the blessed Jesus, would not, of all others, select that scene where he stood surrounded by his disciples, and, in earnest inquiries respecting who should be greatest, with a godlike majesty and celestial tenderness, took a little child, and placed him in the midst of them, as a living type of a Christian's power?

There is a sympathy which warms us in the presence of the young. He must have a narrow heart who does not feel it. "Any man," it has been well said, "who has a proneness to see a beauty and fitness in God's works, may find daily food for his mind even in an infant." This sympathy is generally felt. It is manifested in an interest which is almost universal. It appeals to our gentler nature, and that nature answers in accents of love.

When we look upon a child, we see the miniature of humanity—the very picture of our former selves. A thousand memories start up, strange associations fill our minds. We live again in the past. Dim remem-

brances, like half-forgotten dreams, creep over the mind; we seem looking over the edge of time into a pre-existent state. Thus, in connection with these sympathies, there is a powerful influence exerted by childhood—an influence which tends to soften and humanise. It lifts us out of the dusty world. It imparts innocent joy. It awakens salutary reflections. It brings before us humanity surrounded by loveliness. We look, then, upon a mind as upon a landscape over which hangs a golden haze. There is no hardness or sharpness of outline. Hope waves bright visions of the future. Imagination hovers around, and pictures the possibilities of coming events. All glows with sunny anticipation. The mother toils with a cheerful heart; she watches in the lonely night; she is subjected to drudgery by day; yet she meets all without a murmur—nay, feels that the child, for whom she thus labors, is her choicest blessing. The father is filled with new power, while a noble purpose animates his mind. He thinks of his home, of the little peattles who will climb his knee; and with this thought his labors grow light. He cares not for toil when he toils for such an end. He becomes a better neighbour, a better citizen, a better man; thus peaceful homes are the safe guard of the Republic, and children the guardian spirits of Humanity.

## CHARITY.

THE INTENT OF CHRISTIANITY.—The religion of which Jesus Christ was the founder, is graciously designed by its divine author, not merely to be carried into society, but habitually to be practised; and, therefore, it is absolutely necessary that there should be some common bond by which the several individuals that compose the community might be united together, so as most effectually to answer the great end of their social connection, viz., the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind; and this bond, the apostle informs us in our text, is Charity.—*Charity, the bond of Perfection: A sermon by the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, curate of Brixton, Surrey, England.*

TRUE CHRISTIAN CHARITY.—Christian Charity must show itself towards our neighbour, by a peculiar affection for all that bear the moral image of God, notwithstanding they may differ from us in *dime*—in their worldly circumstances—or their religious sentiments; any opportunity of contributing to their happiness must not be omitted, whether they be Jews or Samaritans, Africans or Indians, Barbarians, Scythians, bond or free; the Great *Largiver* having constituted them neighbours, and made of *one blood*, all the nations of our *MEX.* Pure Christian Charity does not wear the badge of any particular sect or nation, but considers all mankind as flowing from a common parent, and is ever ready to relieve the miseries of the afflicted, and patiently to bear with the infirmities and follies of those about us—to forgive those who injure us, and to pray for those who spitefully use us, "That we may be the children of our Father which is in Heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.—*Ibid.*

PUTTING ON CHARITY.—We must, further, put it on [Charity] as our armour of defence, against the evil spirit of contention, wrath, bigotry, superstition, and all the enemies of religion and peace. In a word, we must ever be so solicitous to shine in this grace above all others, that it may form and govern our tempers, mark our conduct, and give a visible distinction and superiority to our character; so that all who observe us may see, and know, that we are indeed the genuine disciples of that most illustrious Exemplar of Divine Charity—Jesus the Son of God.

To some, however, it appears, alas! far more desirable to distinguish themselves by a violent zeal about their own fancied notions, or party peculiarities, and to abuse all those who will venture to differ from them; and this is erroneously called a zeal for God, and appears to have prevailed among the Corinthians to such a degree, as to occasion the Apostle Paul to say so much about Charity in this Epistle.—*Ibid.*