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## Our Ideas of God.

IN the volume of lectures by three professors of the Union Theological Seminary, entitled "The Christian Point of View" the thought is enlarged upon that the religious problem of the day is "What thin, we of God?" Within the life-time of middle-aged men the question has shifted from what truth can be proved from the Scriptures to what truth can be proved about the Scriptures, and now it is what can be proved about God. We are getting back to essential and fundamental things. No arguments perhaps can demonstrate the existence of God, but men are so made that like the writers of the Scriptures they spontaneously make the grand assumption of His existence. But the exigent question is what kind of a being is He? What are His relations to the universes? What are His moral qualities? What conception are we to form of His character?

The Christian answer to these questions has been obscured from failure to view the Old Testament in its proper perspective. Too many of our theological treatises assume that Jacob and Joshua and David had the same conception of God as the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the author of the Fourth Gospel. They do not see that in the progress of revelation the minds of men took in larger and truer ideas of the Most High. And this disclosure culminated in Christ, who gave the supreme revelation of the Father. No matter how much we think of the Old Testament we must not exalt it to such a place that we contradict the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews, or make it a work of supererogation that Christ came to reveal God to men.

Slowly the best religious thought of our time is coming to see that we can and must place the utmost emphasis upon the assertion of Jesus, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and measure the Old Testament idea of God, and the ideas that science and philosophy form of God by the idea that Jesus gives us of God. When one has the solution of a vexing problem, it is very easy by the aid of the new light to harmonize the facts that baffled and puzzled. We grope through nature and philosophy up to God and do not find any satisfying view of Him. We come nearer to a conception in which we can rest in some of the Psalms and in Isaiah, but the revelation is shadowy, incomplete and unsatisfactory. It is only when we come to the New Testament that we find a disclosure of God that meets the wants of the reason and the moral nature so perfectly that in accepting it reason herself becomes true in her action, and the moral nature purified. We cannot escape it. We must judge everything that preceded Jesus by the standard of Jesus. Nay, further, we must estimate all other knowledge of God from whatever source by the revelation of Jesus. The teachings, the life, and the spirit of Christ are the touchstone by which all other values are recognized.

And we suppose that it cannot be contradicted that if from any source there should come to us a loftier, purer, higher conception of God than Jesus has given us, Jesus would be superseded. His claim ultimately rests, not upon miracles or any external credential whatever, but upon the character of the revelation of God He made in His life, His teachings, His death and resurrection.

The phrase, "Back to Jesus," has become the watchword of a school, but what we really need to do is to go forward to Jesus. He is far in advance of the ripest and richest religious thought. As yet our churches have hardly begun to get a view of His revelation of the Father. We are still confusing it with the pagan ideals, with Hebrew partial glimpses, with the theories of science and philosophy. The world today is asking, as never before, the question of Philip: "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us." And the answer to it is the reply of the Redeemer, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

## What God's House Stands For.

As our loved ones make our homes dear to us, so God makes His house a glorious place to His people. The Psalmist loved God's house because God dwelt within it. "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts!" The centre therefore of our interest in God's house is God Himself.

Next to this comes the idea of meeting with God in His house. We meet to adore Him, to reverence Him, to learn to love Him more, to hear His voice and to learn His will. This is all delightful to our souls and increasingly so the more God is loved and the Christian life appreciated. Then look at the idea of God meeting with us. How marvelous it is that such unworthy ones as we are should be privileged to have a visit from Him, that He should trouble to seek us on purpose to give us His blessing.

Then we meet in God's house to have our souls fed. This is the most soul-satisfying thing of all. My old friend Mr. Prattley, here, said to me yesterday, "I am so ill in body that I cannot go to church and I miss the services so much that I do not know what to do. I'm past seventy-four and am getting near the time of my departure for God's house above, and there I shall be satisfied." Yes, the old man was a faithful attendant at the meetings of God's people whenever he was well enough to go to them, but now his ailments severely try his patience, so much does he love to hear the preaching of the Word.

The gladness of meeting those that love our God is soul-strengthening also, for in our battles with sin and sinners we get so tried and tried at times that the sight of our brothers and sisters makes us thank God and take courage as it did Paul at Appi Forum.

The House of God is to His people their workshop. Here they attend to the King's business, here they get directions for the preaching of His Word, here souls are gathered and garnered.

But the work does not stop here, for with the inspiration derived from the services of God's house His people go forth to serve and save those not of the "Household of Faith," in the doing of which they prove that they are real sons and daughters of a dear heavenly Father.

## Licensed to Legally Kill.

Come, soldiers of freedom,  
Of freedom from ruin,  
Enlist for a warfare  
That surely must come;  
For drink is enslaving  
The nation at will.  
By law it is licensed  
To legally kill!

The dead are around us,  
The dying we see;  
Ruin's sorrow is flowing  
To you and to me.  
Its crime, woe, and ruin  
Society fill,  
Yet, still it is licensed  
To legally kill!

There never was such a foe  
To virtue as this,  
Destroying both earthly  
And heavenly bliss;  
No anguish so bitter,  
As that from the still,  
And yet it is licensed  
To legally kill!

Not bullets, but ballots,  
Our hands shall employ,  
That even more surely  
The foe shall destroy;  
Then rally, ye voters,  
No pausing until  
No liquor is licensed  
To legally kill!

Let him who doubts that the Bible is not the Word of God stop entirely criticising the Book for a while and give all that time and energy to earnest, fervent prayer to God Almighty for Light on the subject, and see what the answer God will give.

Be patient and prayerful and earnest and sincere in your desire to know the exact and absolute truth about the Bible and give no thought nor time nor energy to criticising or even reading this old Book; but silently and patiently LISTEN for the message about it that will surely come from the great God. Hold your peace and keep cool and calm and serene until you get your answer from God. You will not have to wait long to find out from the Omniscient One all about this old Book that has attracted and held countless millions of minds for ages and is this very minute the most sought for Book in the whole world. Certainly a Work that is as old as the Bible, that has had in all times, and has this very day, millions of earnest readers, is worthy of the prayer I ask you to make to God about it.

## Notices.

The Albert Co. Quarterly Meeting will hold a joint session with the Westmorland Co. Quarterly at Hopewell Hill, Dec. 9th and 10th. In addition to the usual devotional and business features of the Quarterly, the programme provides for an address on Tuesday, p. m. by Rev. N. A. McNeill, subject, the Obligation of the Church to give the Gospel to the World; a sermon in the evening by Rev. M. E. Fletcher and an address by Dr. Manning. On Wednesday morning an address by Rev. D. Hutchinson—subject "Women in Missions," followed by a Missionary Conference; on Wednesday afternoon the Sunday School Convention.

F. D. DAVIDSON, Sec'y.

The Home Mission Board of New Brunswick will convene in its quarterly session on Tuesday, December 2, at 2.30 p. m., in the Foreign Mission Rooms, St. John. An urgent invitation is extended to the pastors of the Province to meet with us in order to arrange for the presentation to our churches of the claims of our Home Mission work.

B. N. NOBLES, Sec'y.  
Carleton, November 19.

## NEW GROUND.

It may interest some of your readers to know that a Baptist Home of Worship is to be dedicated at Graves' Settlement, about four miles from Petitcodiac, on Sunday, 16th inst. The services in the Petitcodiac field are consequently cancelled for the day to permit the pastor and choir to assist, in accepting this addition to our denominational work. The singular feature is that only two of the six or seven forming the building committee and board of trustees, are members of regular Baptist churches. It is practically new ground thrown at our feet, and we must accept it and care for it as a trust from God. Pastors McNeill, E. C. Corey, H. H. Saunders, D. Brown and others, are expected to be present and participate in the exercises. Pray for this new addition to our denominational strength.

N. A. MACNEILL.

To save the best is the business of the church of Christ. Each member of the church must do his part in the work. "What am I doing?" each one may well ask.

Some one has described men's clubs as "places where the women cease from troubling and the wicked are at rest."