

THE DIVINE LOVE.

All the love there is in the universe proceeds from loving hearts. Love is not an abstraction, but is the actual manifestation of personality. Wherever there is love there is some person who exercises it, and without whom it would not and could not exist. As well might one expect to find sin in the world apart from sinful beings as to find love apart from loving hearts and lives.

The central source, manifestation and embodiment of love is God himself. He is so disposed in his infinite perfection that he must have objects upon which to lavish himself, and in order to have them he must create them and provide for them. His love is not an abstraction, nor can we conceive it as a mere characteristic or attribute, but are made acquainted with it in the exercise or bestowal of it upon the objects of his love.

A light gives light, and a loving person loves. We know that a light is a light, because it gives light, and a loving person will find objects to love and will love them. So far as we know, the universe is infinite. We do not know where its boundaries are or could be, and it may be that space is infinite in extent, peopled with worlds, as the habitation of the infinite God, even as eternity, which is time without beginning or ending, is the lifetime of the eternal God. He is everywhere and always, infinite and eternal, and it may be that it requires an infinite universe to satisfy and be the object of love of his infinite heart. Without a commensurate object love is bereft of its proper life.

When we read that "God is Love" we infer that the central and supreme purpose of his life is to bless and do good to his creatures. This he must do in line with all his other attributes, but love is the one which finds as its object the complete and ful-rounded well-being of his personal creatures. This is the attribute which has warmth, attractiveness, gladness, graciousness and tenderness in it, by means of which we are drawn to him and saved and brought in harmony with all his other attributes. God without love would have no attraction for us and no power to save us. But because he loves us he has done for us all that has been done in providence and grace, and we are drawn to him and are led to love him and all that he loves. When this is done we are saved, experiencing the power and meaning of the endless life.

If we have in our hearts the divine love, we shall know it and shall show it by loving, even as God loves. All the fire in the world comes from the sun, and all fire is alike in that it will set fire to and consume what is inflammable. All the love in the world that has a right to be called love is from God, and all is alike in that it loves what God loves. That which lacks this is not love, but is selfishness or lust or some form of evil impulse or emotion.

They who love in the divine meaning of the world seek the well-being of the objects of their love. They seek that there may be goodness, truth and purity developed, and this they seek attractively, sweetly, gently and in kindness and tenderness of word and life. Let this divine love be the ruling impulse of a life, and there is no limit that may be placed about the power of such a one to move the world to God.

Such love will be wide and large. With a nature derived from God it will seek the welfare of the world in a broad, Christ-like, missionary beneficence. Under the exercise of this divine quality the life becomes great and grand. There is nothing like the possession of such a spirit to attract and bless others, and to beautify and glorify its possessor.

The swelling of the buds shows that there is a directing force back of the winter's desolation. Over the bleak fields of death the same hand holds the new life in check until the waking of the everlasting spring.

EASTER GLADNESS.

The message of Easter is a very precious one in a sorrowful world like this. With most authoritative voice it calls us to be glad, and when it enjoins joy and gladness there is such an accent of reality and power in its voice that we feel it can realize for us what it commands. Since Christ came it is our right and duty to live in supreme joyfulness, although many Christians seem to fail to understand this. Gardeners uproot every sweet daisy that springs on the lawn, they seem to think that monotonous green is the ideal thing, and not the decorated sod as God designed it; thus many Christians forbid their experience to go beyond a sober tint, sternly suppressing the spontaneous, upspringing emotions of gladness which are the flowers of the soul. It is a serious error. Easter day proclaims that henceforth a pure mirth is possible to us, and every believer may walk in the sunshine.

A SEASONABLE PRAYER.

Our heavenly Father, in this land of sin where death throws its grim mountain wall across the horizon of the future and casts its shadow deep and dark over our life, we thank thee for the resurrection morning when Christ burst the bars of death and brought life and immortality to light. May that empty tomb assure us that death is conquered and can never slay us; and that out of its open portal may there pour a light that will scatter fear and gloom from our lives and brighten all our days with the glory of the risen Christ. May we see all things in the splendor of his presence. Fill us with such faith in his resurrection that it will beget a new and living hope in our hearts and inspire us with devotion in his service. Comfort us with the glorious hope of immortality, and may we be able even to part with our loved ones and know that we are separated from them only for a little while. May death lose its terror, and the grave become to us the green mountain-top of a far new world. And this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

EASTER JOY.

There is a peculiar gladness which comes to us with the springtide. Once again after the long winter the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of the birds has come. We are glad once more to go forth freely in the sweet air, and our hearts feel something of the thrill which comes to the trees as their leaves unroll; as the birds return to their nest and as all nature wakes and springs into new and exulting life.

But dearer even than this is the promise and the pledge which the returning life of nature gives us of our own immortality. Just as there is no death in nature, but only transition, so in our lives that which seems to be death is only change, only progress; only the putting on of a new strength in another and diviner sphere. Year by year, as Easter returns to the Christian, there is new joy of feeling that because Christ is risen he, too, shall arise and live for evermore in a land where there is no sorrow; in a land where there are no tears; in a land where there is no death.—The Christian Intelligencer.

MEN NEEDED TODAY.

Men of God are as needful today as when Moses stood aloft with God on Sinai, or Paul in the midst of the Aroepagus at Athens, and discoursed of the altar to "the unknown God." Every age must have its leaders, and as the leaders are so will the age be. God's men, men anointed for service, whose hearts are in his hands as the rivers of waters, are the saviours of their age, and are in the vanguard of heaven's worthies.

Christ rising from the dead gave a new spring time to the world and at each Easter season the world comes with all its garlands to commemorate the event.

KEEPING THE LORD'S DAY.

Some Bible Hints.

Whatever means more and better life, for yourself and others, is appropriate to the Day of the Lord of Life (Luke 6:9). "Six days shalt thou labor" is just as much a part of the Sabbath law as "on the seventh day thou shalt rest" (Ex. 20:9).

We are living in God's Sabbath, His rest day; and yet how busily He is at work! But He is at work for others (Ex. 20:11).

If we have the Lord's Day spirit (Rev. 1:10) we shall keep the day in the right way, as no amount of rules will enable us to keep it.

Suggestive Thoughts.

If we keep the Sabbath physically, it will keep us physically; and if spiritually also, we shall also be kept spiritually.

Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath; and so are we, if Christ dwells in our hearts. No one keeps the Sabbath if he thinks about its prohibitions rather than its privileges.

"Time saved" by Sunday labor is life lost.

A few Illustrations.

It has been proved by many experiments that workmen who labor seven days in the week accomplish less, in the long run, than those that rest on Sunday.

Sunday is not the week's dormitory, but the week's gymnasium.

Sunday is the day of the sun—new light, new fire, new life; and the sun is the Sun of Righteousness.

Sunday is a bridge over the dark river of bodily and mental ruin into which we should fall without it.

To Think About.

Am I using Sunday for myself or for God?

Is Sunday the joy to me it should be? Am I preparing myself for the endless Sabbath of heaven?

A Cluster of Quotations.

O day of rest! How beautiful, how fair, How welcome to the weary and the old! —H. W. Longfellow.

We cannot count the treasures of our Christian Sabbath. It spreads out over us the two wings of the archangel of mercy.—T. De Witt Talmage.

Jesus! let me hear thee speak; End in calm this busy week. —Benjamin Gough.

Each Sunday seems to crown the year.—Harriet Prescott Spofford.

For our country Christian Endeavor is always patriotic. Endeavorers love their country and are eager to serve her. How shall they go about it?

Some patriotic endeavorers may be set on foot in your town. If you have no village improvement society, why not establish one under Christian Endeavor auspices? Has your school-house a flag? Is there a public library? Are the temperance laws enforced?

As to larger fields, the first thing is to study. Perhaps you can form a Christian Endeavor Civic Club, to hold regular meetings, discussing questions of government and debating current questions. Have addresses by Christian office-holders. Take up a text-book on civics under some good teacher.

DAILY READINGS.

- M., Apr. 16. Keep Sunday by resting. Ex. 16: 5, 22-30.
- T., Apr. 17. By worship. Ps. 92: 1-15.
- W., Apr. 18. Polluting the Sabbath. Isa. 56: 2-7.
- T., Apr. 19. The reward of keeping. Isa. 58: 8-14.
- F., Apr. 20. Jesus kept the Sabbath. Luke 13: 10-17.
- S., Apr. 21. Hearing and teaching. Acts 13: 27, 42-52.
- S., Apr. 22. Topic—The Lord's Day: how to keep it holy. Luke 6: 8-10; Ex. 20: 8-11; Rev. 1: 9-18.