

minds of our ancestors in the faith. But we all know that these are formative principles with us—that without them we cannot exist. Further, when Kuyper speaks of the immediate fellowship of God with man, and of man with God, as being "a fundamental interpretation" of Calvinism, I would say that the same thing has always been claimed by Baptists. When he says, moreover, that Calvinism has neither invented nor conceived this fundamental interpretation, but that God himself has implanted it in the hearts of its heroes and heralds—that we face here no product of a closer intellectualism, but the fruit of the work of God in the heart—that it did not rise because the scholars led the people, but because it sprang from the hearts of the people themselves, that in every instance it exhibited the same characteristic, viz., the strong assurance of eternal salvation, not only without the intervention of the church but even in opposition to the church, that Calvin was not the author of this, but God, who through the Holy Spirit had wrought in Calvin, that which he had wrought in them,—he is giving utterance to the underlying principle of New Testament Christianity. It is stated by Christ in his direction to his disciples: "It is the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you," and by Paul: "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." It is the teaching of Peter: "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." It is the "we know" of John.

These have always been among the simplicities as well as a people. Our clear-sighted predecessors, hailed them with that peculiar joy which no one knows but he who feels it. Wherever these men appeared, at the Reformation, or before it, while perhaps they did not see all that we see, they caught the main idea of the Kingdom. God dealing directly with men, drawing them to himself, influencing them in the direction of righteousness, guiding them towards all truth. These men understood that salvation was not a thing to be doled out by priests nor withdrawn by the ban of the church, but given freely to those who believe by the immediate act of God upon the souls. With these others, Calvin doubtless sighted the morning star, Emmanuel, and steered his course by it.

His was the strong mind which gave shape to principles which were in his time, mostly in a state of chaos. This is the debt that we owe to the great Geneva teacher.

D. A. STEELE.

### Fleeing for Refuge.

The ancient Romans had what was known as *asylum*, or right of *asylum*. According to this law, one who had committed a crime might flee to a place of refuge, which was a sanctuary for all who came within its precincts. Once there, it was sacrilege to drag the offender away for punishment. The Greeks and other heathen peoples, also, had the same custom. Sometimes the place was a sacred grove, sometimes a city, a temple, or an altar.

This law prevailed among the people of ancient Israel, probably long before the days of Moses. The Mosaic law modified the custom, made it more just and more humane. It was doubtless impossible entirely to supersede the law of blood revenge that the Hebrews had inherited for many generations. But this law, when a murder had been committed, it was permissible, and even mandatory, for the next of kin to the murdered man to take summary vengeance in his own hands, and to slay the murderer. This custom tended, of course, to foster personal revenge, to engender family feuds, and, further, to brutalize the community. It was an extrajudicial execution, that was sanctioned by the hoary usage of the people.

The custom of furnishing *asylum*, or place of refuge, was to give the offender a chance for his life. The gods were supposed to favor the man who could succeed in escaping the band of the blood avenger and in laying hold of the altar. The abuses which this inherited heathenism tended to foster upon Israel caused a modification of the old custom by the Lord's command to Joshua to appoint six cities of refuge, to which one might flee who had killed another "unawares and unwittingly." These cities were not to be a place of safety for any and every criminal that might seek shelter within their precincts. A court of inquiry was also provided, by which the case might be investigated, and, if the case be found to be one of malice aforethought, the refugee was to be delivered up, even though he had reached the secret enclosure in safety. If it be found that the case be one of involuntary manslaughter, then the refugee was immune from punishment, except that he was to remain an exile of refuge till the death of the high priest. This in itself would tend to make men more careful, lest by criminal neglect or carelessness they cause the death of a fellow-man. Thus the law was a merciful advance upon the ancient custom—both toward the offender, because if the killing was accidental he could be protected from the violence of the blood avenger, and also toward the community because the right of a criminal to *asylum* was so modified as that the

willful murderer was delivered up to death, even though he reached the place of refuge in safety.

This ancient law of *asylum* has frequently been chosen as typical of the safety which comes to him who flees for refuge to Christ. The writer to the Hebrews probably had the ancient custom in mind when he speaks of those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." While the analogy is not complete, yet the need of fleeing from sin to the only refuge, the God-appointed place of safety, even to the heart of Jesus Christ, the Saviour, from which altar of sacrifice none can take the sinner away, nor deliver him over to the destroyer—all this has given the ancient cities of refuge an importance to the Christian thought far beyond their interest as a stage in the development of criminal law. The avenger, in the form of a broken law, a smiting conscience, an offended God, pursues the sinner. All things in heaven above and in earth beneath are in conspiracy against him who violates God's sovereign law. "Be sure your sin will find you out." The only safety is in flight. "Flee from the wrath to come." It is not cowardly to run from sin and its awful consequences. A broken law is behind you, a refuge before. Run! run! Christ is the only refuge. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," says the Psalmist. Not in six sanctuaries only may this safety be found, nor in sixteen, but

Where'er we seek him he is found,  
And every place is hallowed ground."

Our Lord has seen to it that we "have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever." When the sinner has sought refuge in him, no enemy can separate him from the protection of that fortress.

"Free from the law, O happy condition!"

"Sin hath no longer dominion over him." And, again, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.—Religious Herald.

### Essential Knowledge.

We live in a time of many books and of great scholarship. There is much reading and much learning. It is questionable, however, whether ministers know more of that which is to be used in and for the specific work of soul-saving than their predecessors of earlier centuries. After all the main qualification for true ministers of the gospel is, that they shall be men of God, saturated with the letter and spirit of his holy Word.

Too often a mistake is made right here, by and about ministers, that is not made by and about physicians, lawyers or engineers. A wide and varied culture is all right in its way, but the essential thing for each man is that he shall know well the main thing in his own particular work. A knowledge of Browning is well enough for the engineer, but nothing can take the place of a perfect acquaintance with the workings of his engine. It is well enough for the surgeon to study Kant, but if your life is in danger to ebb away through a wound, you want in him the skill that enables him to tie an artery without the peradventure of a slip. It is well enough for the lawyer to be interested in higher mathematics, but if he cannot properly draw up a will, or a deed, he is not worth mentioning the second time as a lawyer. It is well for the minister to be a cultured gentleman, with many gifts and graces, but his main duty is to direct men to the Lamb of God, who takes away sin, and if he fails here he is a failure as an ambassador for Christ. He who is to know the Holy Scriptures, and preach what they contain, as the message that comes from God to man, to make known the way of everlasting life.

There is nothing to equal an intimate knowledge of God's Word as a preparation for the work of the gospel ministry. It is one thing to know the Scriptures, and quite another and inferior thing to know a great many things about the Scriptures, as one may know many truths about God without knowing God himself, and thus remain without eternal life. Every great preacher of the gospel has a deep knowledge of the Bible. No skill in rhetoric or oratory can take the place of this mastery. Some flights of pulpit eloquence remind one of Ahimaz, who ran most swiftly, but who had no message for all his fine running. All the great and effective revivalists have been men who were full of the Scriptures. All the men who have built up their people in godly living have been saturated with God's Word. The men of prowess as great leaders in the critical times of the church's history have been men who have known God's Word as a part of their very life.

It is said of Thomas a Kempis, whose "Imitation of Christ" has had more copies printed than any book in the world, except the Bible, that he found no rest anywhere but in a corner with his Bible in his hand. Cramer and Ridley, who were burned for their faith in

Christ, could each repeat the whole of the New Testament by heart. Beza, when eighty years old, could repeat, perfectly, by heart, any chapter in Paul's epistles. Luther translated the Bible into his own German language, and Calvin wrote a commentary on the whole of the Bible. There have been times when men could not be ordained to the ministry unless they could repeat each Psalm correctly, and certain councils have decreed that none should hold church office unless they knew the whole Psalter by heart.—Herald and Presbyter.

### Losing Faith When Things Go Well.

People say, "It is easy to trust God when things are going well with us." That is quite true. But let us not forget that it is a great deal easier to stop trusting God or thinking about him when things are going well with us and we do not seem to need him so much as in the hours of darkness. There is a danger of losing faith when things go well. And it is this danger from uninterrupted prosperity the Psalmist is referring to when he says: "Because they have no changes, therefore, they fear not God." Certainly prosperity and untroubled lives have their own most searching trials of faith.

The disadvantages of having things go well.

One, as we have intimated, is forgetfulness of God. It is a strange perversity of human nature that we are so likely to leave God out of mind when things are going well with us, when we call upon him most quickly when in trouble. Another is pride and self-sufficiency. It does not take uninterrupted prosperity long to engender these feelings in most of men. It takes a large measure of grace to successfully resist the tendency. These are diseases that are common to the North, the dark, ice-bound regions of the earth; but let us not forget that there are a great many more that belong to the tropics. It is not well for us to live always in the sunshine. At least, it takes more grace to live well there amid the added, though unseen, dangers, "because they have no changes, therefore, they fear not God."

The advantages of having faith tested.

The Elomite saint must have looked into birds' nest when he used the comparison, "I said, I shall die in my nest." That is what a good many people say. They build each a nest for himself, and not for a summer, but for a life. They say that they shall die in it after many years of enjoyment of it. But they need the treatment the mother bird gives her young. Her first step is to make the nest uncomfortable. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest" she mixeth the thorny outside with the downy inside. So God by his testing providences makes the place of rest one of unrest to us, and thus lures us out to trust ourselves to his care and guidance over untried ways. And so he brings us to a stronger, maturer, more useful life. The wind roots the tree deeper in the soil. The stormy waves cause the anchor to take a stronger grip. There are advantages in disadvantages. Disappointments have proven God's best appointments. Financial ruin has proven a man's salvation. Sickness has brought to many people their highest health. The uses of faith testing have been corrective, instructive, sanctifying, satisfying. The trial of faith is often "found unto praise and honor and glory."—Treasury.

Every Christian worker may know, year by year, if he really desires to know, whether the trust committed to him is being kept. How is it with our evil habits? Are we waging relentless war with them? The soul cannot work in isolation, but Christ is ready to work for the soul if we will let him have his way. His victory is a victory that can only come to us through pain. It is only by surrendering ourselves, by suffering his Spirit to fill and drive us, that our consecration can be made perfect. It is only as we enter into his willing mind that the will of God can be done within us, and that means very much more in the way of sacrifice than we yet conceive. One day in which we yield our will to him is of more value than years of toiling self-will.

### Smile Through thy Tears.

Smile through thy tears, be brave!  
The night will soon be passed,  
And morning, like a wave  
Upon the sea-shore cast,  
Will sweep in brightness round thy soul at last.

Refreshing it with joy,  
And visions born of hope;  
The powers that destroy  
Our enemies, and open  
The heavens while we climb the lifting slope.

Smile through thy tears, be brave!  
The sorrows that you feel,  
Like shadows, soon they'll wave  
And vanish, and the wheel  
Of being, turning, hidden joys reveal.

ARTHUR D. WILMOT.