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Soul-Winning the First Duty.

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WHAT the Lord Jesus Christ put first His ambassadors and servants have no right to make secondary. Our blessed Master came into this sin-cursed world to seek and to save the lost. The ministry of His apostles had almost exclusively this one aim. To convert sinful men and women to Jesus Christ by the aid of the Holy Spirit was the master purpose of Paul and all his fellow-missionaries of the cross. The great Reformation of the sixteenth century was far more than a protestation against the errors of Rome; it is a direct bringing of beighted souls to the only Savior of sinners. The Wesleys and Whitefields, and that intellectual giant, President Edwards, made this their chief business. "My witness is above," said the seraphic Rutherford, "that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me. It were my heaven even to spend this life in gathering in some souls to Christ."

He that is wise winneth souls. This is really the chief end of the best preaching. The great commission of every preacher worthy the name is to bring sinful men to repentance and to a living faith in Christ Jesus and obedience to Him. Whenever and wherever Christ's ministers have most intensely and unflinchingly kept this grand purpose before them and worked up to it, there have the most powerful and permanent results been reached. The man who strives, with the Spirit's help, to save souls is the man who actually does it; the man who does not attempt this is never likely to accomplish it. He may utter from his pulpit much valuable and quickening thought; he may aid many social reforms; he may say many eloquent and plausible things about elevating humanity, and about developing the latent good that may exist in men, etc., but he does not awaken sinners. He does not draw them to the crucified Jesus as the only sacrifice for sin, and the only name known among men whereby they can be saved. If the heart is not changed the life will not be changed. If immortal souls are not brought to Jesus Christ by the truth and the accompanying Spirit, what is to become of them? The issue is—Jesus Christ or perdition! Every true minister is stationed at the parting of the ways, and his supreme office is to point men and win them to eternal life in Jesus Christ. An archangel could not covet a higher or a happier office.

This work of soul-winning is not to be accomplished only on the Sabbath by direct, pointed, instructive, earnest and loving discourses, well steeped in prayer. Every pastor should be a soul winner seven days in the week, and some of his best work is done outside of his pulpit. Napoleon used to ride over his battlefields after a fight to see where his shot had struck. A minister, by going about among his people, may discover where the arrows of Gospel truth have taken effect. If, during your pastoral rounds, my brother, you encounter those who are awakened, you will gladly converse with them immediately. In dealing with an awakened soul, your prime duty is to co-operate with the Holy Spirit and, therefore, seek earnestly His guidance. Endeavor to ascertain just what it is that is in the way of the inquirer, and what keeps him or her from surrendering to Christ. If it be some cherished sin, then that sin must be

abandoned, even if it be like plucking out a right eye, or cutting off a right hand.

The following article was read to the Baptist Ministers' Institute in German Street Baptist church a few years ago, by Rev. J. H. Hughes, and is now reprinted by request. It will be continued in next issue of this paper.

The Substitutionary View of the Atonement.

PART I.

Atonement for sin can only be the provision and outcome of grace, requisite in its source and sovereign in its exercise.

"Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious men;
And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan."

Law, as such, can make no provision for the transgressor. Its majesty cannot be upheld by condoning its infractions. Its majesty cannot be upheld by condoning its infractions. The normal mode of government administration is by law. Violation of law is sin, and the sinner forfeits protection from condemnation; and so far as law has to do with him, he is inevitably condemned. Therefore if a sinner against the divine government is saved, it must be by a provision of mercy in harmony with law, and such is the reign of grace. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." The divine government is on the shoulder of the Prince of Peace, and is a reign of grace, and "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The word atonement is best understood by dividing the syllables and pronouncing it at one time. It means reconciliation between alienated and divergent parties, in such sweet harmony and fellowship as blots out forever the past separation. In the economy of grace the atonement has a two fold effect: it acts God-ward and man-ward in procuring pardon for his sin, and justification and sanctification of his person. Of the atonement there are three different views held by theologians of different schools. The first of these we will notice is the governmental view, taught by Hugo Grotius, of Leyden; which represents Christ as dying to impress upon man the fact that the divine law must be upheld, and to teach him that sin is a dreadful thing, destructive of the moral order and government of the universe, and that God, by the death of Christ, shows His willingness to forgive the sinner for what Christ has done. This view is regarded by many as more parental and much milder than the substitutionary one, and is therefore largely held by the Armenian school of theologians in our times. But this is only a partial view of the sacrificial death of Christ. Again, there is the moral influence view which is held by the Unitarians, rationalists, and liberals of religious thought everywhere. They regard man as simply estranged from God through ignorance of morality; and all that he needs is a perfect teacher, and a safe example to follow, and that Christ was sent of God to be that true teacher, to draw men to Himself by the excellence of teaching and example; and that He died as a moral hero to seal with His blood the validity of His teaching; that His ministry and miracles set forth the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This view, though having a smattering of truth, degrades the sacrificial death of Christ—denies His propitiatory atonement, leaves man without redemption or the healing balm of life, it ignores his ruined state by sin, and need of regeneration. Such shallow views and experiences as these of man's moral and spiritual needs, and of the great mystery of God in the death of His Son, ("which mystery the angels desire to look into"), tend to exalt human nature, and foster the pride of self-righteousness at the expense of the glory that is due to Christ Jesus. The Atonement is the great problem of theology. It involves the incarnation, life, teaching, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of the Son of God.

But our task at this time is the discussion of the substitutionary element in His death. And in the investigation of this subject we are at once confronted with the mystery of His death. Apart from the substitutionary design of it, the question arises, how could He die? Death is the penalty of sin. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin, for that all have sinned; so death passed upon all men." But in the person of Christ there is an exception to this universal condemnation. It does not affect His nature or person; for "He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." In this respect He is the unique man. Here He stands alone among the race of mortals, the only immaculate One. Then what claim for violation had the divine law upon Him? How in the very nature of righteousness could He die? How could the holy, righteous government of God suffer Him to die, since death is the wages of sin? Is it not the obligation of government and law to protect the innocent, the obedient, and law-abiding? In what way then could Christ come under the sentence of death? If he only voluntarily died to get out of this world, he would have been guilty of suicide, and would have become a greater sinner than Adam, and all His ethical life and teaching would have gone for nothing; and yet he declares that his death was voluntary. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Again, when speaking of the purpose of his dying he says: "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father." We see by this statement that there was a special arrangement made for his death; not in the ordinary course of nature, not as a mere martyr, but for a special purpose—to save his sheep. "I lay down my life for the sheep." "His life and blood the shepherd pays a ransom for the flock." And only in this way is his death possible, and to be accounted for. Leave out the substitutionary intention of Christ's dying, and it is of all events the most phenomenal and explicable. But just here, in this seeming dilemma, the light of inspired truth shines upon our perplexed situation, and speaks with authority. Listen to its testimony. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." His soul was made an offering for sin." Daniel said, "Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself." "He was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." "He who knew no sin was made sin for us." Just in the same sense as the object of healing presented to the death-bitten Israelites, to look at and live, was made like the venomous reptile that stung them. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life." "He was delivered for our offences, according to the scriptures." "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." With these statements of Holy Writ, and many others like them that might be added, I cannot see how any one can get away from the substitutionary feature of the death of Christ; for this doctrine is emblazoned on the pages of inspiration, from Genesis to Revelation. In Abel's firstling of his flock offered to the Lord, we have a symbol of Christ as a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." In the sacrifices on patriarchal altars during the early centuries is pictured to us by the faith and devotion of men "of whom the world was not worthy," the substituted Lamb of Calvary: "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Look at Abraham on Moriah's craggy top, with Isaac as a lamb led to the slaughter for sacrifice; with the ram caught in