

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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POOR, BUT RICH.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be:
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hop'd or known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heav'n will bring me sweeter rest.
Oh! 'tis not in grief to larm me,
While thy love is left to me;
Oh! 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmix'd with thee.

Soul, then know the full salvation;
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy, to find in every station
Something still to do, or bear.
Think what spirit dwells within thee,
Think what Father's smiles are thine,
Think that Jesus died to save thee,
Child of heaven, e'erest thou repine?

Haste thee on from grace to glory,
Arm'd by faith, and wing'd by prayer,
Heaven's eternal day's before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall pass thy earthly mission,
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise!

Author unknown.

NO SACRIFICER, NO ALTAR IN THE REFORMED CHURCH.

§ XXIV. The sacrifices under the law given by Moses, as the apostle to the Hebrews has clearly shown in chapter X., were shadows of good things to come; they were typical of Christ: they looked to him as the substance,—as "the Lamb of God, who truly taketh away the sins of the world"—"who, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God." By his stripes we are healed: in him we have complete redemption. The Jewish passover was prophetic, directing the eye of faith forward to the death of Jesus Christ, in the fullness of time to be offered *once for all*: and in the Lord's supper we look back to the same all-sufficient sacrifice. It being full and complete, and offered for all, it needs not to be repeated; and no act of man, whether priest or layman, can, by words spoken, or money given, add any thing to its efficacy, or render it more perfect, or more extensive, or more availing. "By one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." The pretence of thus repeating his death evidently implies that Christ's sacrifice was not full and complete. It implies that he should offer himself often—that "he must often have suffered." Heb. ix. 25, 26. Protestants choose to rely on the sacrifice which Christ himself made for their sins, rather than on this mercenary traffic of the priests. It seems that, according to their own views, in taking money for masses, they sell Christ to be crucified afresh. The traffic is certainly lucrative in a high degree: what Judas received was as nothing, in comparison. In saying this, I pretend not to judge of their sincerity or their devotion, nor whether or not they are accepted of God. It is worthy, however, of repeated remark, that the most of their doctrines and practices, which, in our view, are departures from the word of God, are wonderfully adapted, certainly, if not designed, to add power to their priests, and wealth to their church. How vast, beyond what human language can express, must be the power which can change a piece of bread into the eternal Son of God, and offer him, at pleasure, an expiatory sacrifice for any man or for all men! And what reasonable man, if he can, indeed, bring himself to believe such doctrine, would not, at his death, gladly leave a part, or, if needed, all, of his estate, to rescue his own soul from future punishment? The Protestant, like the martyr St. Stephen, will, at his dying hour, look unto the "Lord Jesus" rather than to any pope or priest, to "receive" and save his soul. How, indeed, a mass offered for an individual, can be considered as the identical sacrifice which Christ offered for all men, cannot, without flight from Rome, be imagined.

§ XXV. The doctrine that the Lord's supper is an Expiatory Sacrifice, making satisfaction for the sins of men,—the same as that which was offered by Christ himself, leads, of course, to another doctrine, equally erroneous,—that the man who administers the sacrament is a priest in the sense in which Christ himself is a Priest. This too, we reject. In our Prayer-Book, and in the offices of our Church, the word *priest* is, indeed, often used, but not in that sense—not as designating one who offers a real sacrifice, making expiation for sin. With us, the word means the same as presbyter or elder; it means a minister of Christ, ordained with power to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ in that sacrament. He pretends not to repeat, but to "show forth, the Lord's death"—to do in remembrance of Christ what he commanded.

The Pagans had priests many, and sacrifices many, and idols and gods unnumbered; but they were all abominations in the sight of the true God, the Lord Jehovah. Under the Mosaic Dispensation, there were, indeed, priests and sacrifices of truly divine appointment; but, as above observed, they were typical; they were prophetic symbols of the one only true Priest and true Sacrifice—of that "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." The law, as St. Paul says, "was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;" and it is desirable that Christians should profit more than they generally do by its instruction. "It had a shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the

things." It could "never, with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year, continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." In the holy scriptures, the ministers of Christ are not called priests; but he is himself so called. Aaron was a priest, as Moses was a mediator; both typical of him whom God hath ordained to those high and holy offices. And they who are blest with a true knowledge of him need no other, and acknowledge no other priest or mediator.

§ XXVI. One of the distinguishing peculiarities of the Christian religion is, that it has but one Priest, and needs no other. In religions of man's invention, they have priests taken from among men. The priests appointed according to the law given by Moses, as we have in the last section seen, were types prefiguring the Saviour, and designed, as were the other parts of that law, to prepare mankind, God's chosen people especially, for the advent of the Messiah, and for the gospel dispensation. Man can offer nothing that will take away the sins of others, nor can he redeem his own soul. We have one Priest, who is "the Lord from heaven," the eternal Word and Wisdom of God. "This Word, being made flesh, and dwelling among us, offered himself to expiate our sins. And having made this 'one sacrifice for sin,' perfect and complete, there was no need of its being repeated. He then ascended into heaven, where he now sits at the right hand of God, as our Advocate with the Father, and the only prevailing Mediator between God and man. He is in himself sacrifice, and priest, and altar. And as we need no other propitiatory sacrifice, and no other priest to offer it, so of course we need no other altar, whereto make atonement for the people. In this, also, we differ from the Romanists, who have what they call altars, at which their priests officiate, and on which they pretend to make an expiatory sacrifice. In the scriptures, the board on which the bread and wine, in administering the Lord's supper, are laid, is not called the altar, but the table: the same is true of our Prayer-Book, properly so called, which ends with the Psalter, as may be seen by "the table of contents;" and also in the offices which follow the Psalter, for ordaining deacons, and priests, and bishops, and for consecrating a church, it is often called a table, but not an altar. In the office of institution recently added to our Book of Common Prayer, the word *altar* is used, not certainly in the sense in which the Papists use it; nor is it, I trust, from any change in the doctrines of our Church on this very material point, but rather in compliance with what seems to be becoming common language, without any regard to doctrinal propriety. We pretend not to offer on that board any expiatory sacrifice; we offer devoutly "our alms and oblations," and with great solemnity the "gifts and creatures of bread and wine, . . . according to Christ's institution, in remembrance of his death and passion."

And here I have occasion to introduce a question (in my view) of much importance, respecting which I fear that there may be some difference of opinion among the clergy of our Church: it is, whether any doctrine of Christ, or religious propriety, requires that our ministers or people should worship with their faces towards the communion-table, rather than in any other direction, or whether the practice of so worshipping has not arisen from the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and does not countenance that doctrine? The Papists, we know, are consistent, however idolatrous, in doing it: they have constantly before their eyes, and on the table, a cake of bread, which they avowedly worship as their God. But we have no such image or visible Deity on our communion-table; nor can we give any good reason for supposing that God is there present more than in any other part of the church. Christ has, indeed, positively declared that he is in the midst of his people who meet to worship in his name; but I would not infer from that gracious promise, though it is undoubtedly fulfilled, that the minister is bound to pray with his face to the congregation; yet I do say that, if God is particularly present anywhere, it is among his people, rather than upon the table. In regard to this question, it is fitting that all things be done decently and to edifying. Decency may require that the people should face the minister, when he preaches, and perhaps when they pray, though this last may well be doubted. Both decency and convenience render it fitting that, when the priest officiates in administering the Lord's supper, his face should be towards the table, where his business is, except when he speaks to the people. In administering baptism, when he says, "Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin," it is decent and fitting that he should turn his face toward the water, and even touch it with his fingers.† And so in the

* That is, of the P. E. Church in the United States.—Ed.

† The venerable author here gives us his sense of what is decent and fitting, but about which there is no direction given by the Church, and opinions may differ. We entirely concur with him when he says that the minister should turn his face towards the water at those words; we think it is a very natural, even as it is a common practice in Clergyman to extend their hand towards the water; but we question the fitness, and still more, under present circumstances, the expediency of touching the water with the fingers, inasmuch as that would seem too much like imparting to it a virtue, and giving it a holiness which would make it desirable to preserve the water, and to sprinkle oneself with it:—we know the superstitions which are continually acting in the Church of Rome with "holy water"—let us keep far from that which would favour them.—Edwton.

Lord's supper, when he come to the consecration of the elements, it is convenient and fitting that he should remove from the end of the table where he has performed the foregoing part of the communion-service, and "stand before the table," wit his back to the people, that he may more conveniently "order the bread and wine;" and "with more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take to cup in his hands." In all this there is no unfitness, nor any thing like idolatry or superstition.

Some have urged, in justification of their table worship, that the table is in the rubric called "the holy table." Is this a good reason for worshipping towards it? Can the Church, by a word, create an object of worship? It is a holy table in a scriptural sense of the word holy, and so are all other parts of the church; but things sanctified and to be considered as holy, are not, therefore, things to be worshipped. If they were so, the bodies of living Christians would be the most suitable objects of adoration. We are repeatedly told from the highest authority, that their bodies are holy, being the temple of the Holy Ghost dwelling within them. St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Here, again, is much better reason (if either of them be any reason) for the minister's worshipping towards the people, than towards the table. Indeed, if in worship we turn towards any thing, because we deem it holy, it must, in the nature of things, be in some degree idolatrous. It implies that the God whom we worship is particularly in that place, and the turning to it for that reason, because of its holiness, is, of course, an act of adoration. The Bible is called holy, and more truly so called than any table. And once we, then, turn toward the Bible when we pray? It has been observed of the Papists that in their churches they appear to be very devout; and has it not also been observed that when they are so, their eyes are steadfastly fixed upon some image or picture? The Pagans are still more devout in the presence of their idols.

The time was when God did visibly manifest his presence in his temple at Jerusalem, and towards that temple were all his people commanded to worship; but now, under the Christian dispensation, "the hour," as Christ told the Samaritan woman, John iv., "is come when we shall neither in that mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Whether the worship of which in this section I express my disapprobation, is worshipping the true God in spirit and in truth, I leave with the reader to judge. In what is the chief point will, I trust, a vast majority of our Church agree, that we have no sacrifice, priest, or altar, in the sense claimed by the Church of Rome. I would suggest the propriety of adhering, in this and other things, to scriptural language, more than some Christians do. They who prefer calling "the Lord's table" the altar, ought at least to understand what they mean. When our ministers, as some of them do, call upon those who are to be baptized or confirmed, to "come forward to the altar," I would affectionately ask them whether the word *chancel* would not be more suitable?—The late Right Rev. Bishop Griswold, on the Reformation.

MINISTERIAL ZEAL AND MODERATION.

While we are permitted, however, to exult in these thoughts, we must remember, with a heightened sense of responsibility, what we have in charge—THE INTEREST OF CHRIST ON EARTH, to the promotion of which "one thing" we have vowed "as much as in us lies wholly to apply ourselves, laying aside the study of the world and of the flesh." If the times are difficult and there are many adversaries; if at the same time, a great spirit of religion has been awakened in the world and different parties are seen emulous of each other in seeking to advance the Kingdom of God; if the Clergy of the Church of England are posted in a conspicuous station, and are eminently as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid;—if our brethren in other quarters, strong in the power of faith, are doing great things in the cause,—striving successfully against the tide of worldly opposition, and surmounting, in some instances, the threatening waves of trouble; if the present conjuncture is highly critical with reference to the ecclesiastical affairs of these Provinces, and consequences of vast importance to future generations in this rising country may depend upon the foundation now laid for the Church,—then, amidst all these incitements to vigilance and zeal, it will be required of us that we be found *with our loins girded and our lights burning, and like unto men that wait for their Lord.* And if the signs of the times appear pregnant with great events, and the astonishing advances of science, more especially in its practical application to the purposes of international communication, seem destined, in the hands of Providence, to open the way for a new and marked era of the Gospel, which, according to the anticipations of many religious persons, may be preceded and introduced by scenes of trial and sore tribulation in the Church,—if we are solemnly called upon, not simply as the soldiers of the Cross, but as the leaders of the battle, *to take unto us the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.*

Having touched, however, upon the signs of the times, and the prospects of the universal

Church of Christ, I feel it necessary to advert to the extreme diffidence and reverent caution with which we should pronounce upon yet unaccomplished prophecy, and indulge our speculations, too apt to lead to presumptuous error, upon the magnificent future of the Gospel victorious in the world. *It is not for us to know the times or seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.* And hence I take occasion—looking at certain incidental effects which are connected with great efforts in religion, in modern, as they have been in earlier times, to recommend the Christian grace of moderation: a holy moderation and sobriety in all the varied exercise of ministerial duty; in the methods adopted for the propagation of the Truth of God—yes, and in the very preaching of the blessed Doctrines of Grace. If what I recommend seem to be the cowardly accommodation to the world for which the fervent Paul would have *withstood us to the face*, or the lukewarmness of spirit which Christ will indignantly reject, then, my brethren, stop your ears against my words. But in that combination which is charged upon Christian teachers of the qualities of the serpent with those of the dove, great discretion and great gentleness appear to be implied: and it is known to have been a distinguishing characteristic of our own reformers that they shunned some extremes to which others in the heat of the struggle were carried away. The mild and moderate Melancthon, among foreign reformers, was not found to turn his back in the hour of danger. In the religion of the Gospel, as well as in other things which engage the mind of man, there are certain bounds, within or without which, that which is right cannot stand. Although it is most certainly true, that we can never be too religious or too devoted, yet it is equally certain that in the development and the exercise of the religious affections, there is often, through the infirmity of nature, a tendency to religious irregularity and to what may properly be called religious excess. In those points, especially, which create parties and party-names within the bosom of the Church itself, the most vehement and eager spirits on either side will not be found, I believe, to be the nearest to the truth; and the approximation of parties to each other, each losing something of its own and borrowing from its opposite, is, according to my own convictions, the issue for which we should devoutly pray, and for every manifestation of which (and there are not a few) we should render thanks to our God.—From Charge to the Clergy, by the Right Rev. G. J. Mountain, D. D., Lord Bishop of Montreal, 1838.

THE POOR IN SPIRIT.

MAT. v. 3.

In St. Luke we read that the Lord said, "Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." But it is a general rule in the interpretation of Scripture, that when in two parallel passages, one is more full and explicit than the other, the former shall be deemed to give the true meaning of the latter. Accordingly, let none suppose that merely because they are poor, in any sense of the word, therefore they are blessed, and that the Kingdom of God is theirs. Many make themselves poor by extravagance and imprudence; many by negligence and sloth; many by intemperance and profligacy; and many who are very poor, may yet be very far from the Kingdom of God. Christianity is a religion both for rich and poor. It is designed to make the rich poor in spirit, and the poor of this world "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him." No man will be condemned simply because he was a rich man. No man will be saved simply because he was a poor man. If a man be not in Christ, as Noah was in the ark, neither can riches ransom, nor can poverty rescue him from sure destruction. Although the poor in this world's goods are not those who are exclusively meant by the poor in spirit, yet they may become such, and may help themselves and the rich to understand the character of those who are poor in spirit. Take then the case of a very poor man, merely to illustrate who are the poor in spirit. Suppose that of one born poor, and on whom the heavy hand of poverty presses all through life. There are many such; and to them poverty is no disgrace. Yet they commonly feel its weight. They know in their own feelings and experience what are the common necessities of life. They know by observation what are the common comforts of life. They find themselves often debarred from the latter, and often straitened for want of the former. They strive and toil from day to day, and yet they cannot altogether emerge from poverty. Their spirit, especially if not sustained by religious principle, becomes gradually broken and depressed. And yet theirs is not true poverty of spirit, for this relates to spiritual things. The man who is become truly poor in spirit, feels that he was born poor; even though a prince by birth, yet one of a sinful race, destitute of all merit, and laden with a debt of guilt in the sight of God. And then he is also brought to feel, that in himself he is poor in regard to comfort, even the common consolations essential to peace and happiness. It is a great comfort to be at peace with God; but the man who is becoming poor in spirit is learning that he is a wicked sinner, and that "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." It is a comfort to have health and strength; the man poor in spirit knows that his soul is diseased and feeble. He also

feels indigence in regard to things, which are as the common necessities of life to the soul. He knows what it is to hunger and thirst after righteousness. What the very poor man often experiences, in the literal sense, to want food, to have none at home, and no money, and no credit to procure any, this the man poor in spirit feels and comprehends in a spiritual sense:—to want pardon, righteousness, and spiritual blessings, with no merits to procure any, and no credit, because no ability to repay God. The man who experimentally understands this, has truly begun to be poor in spirit.

Take another case to illustrate poverty of spirit. Behold a man once rich, but by one of those reverses of fortune, so common in this our day, become suddenly very poor. Far be it from me or any one needlessly to wound his feelings; yet no case will better than his illustrate poverty of spirit. Yesterday he thought himself rich: to-day he knows himself poor. He sees himself fallen in the estimation of the world, who in every age love to bow down to the golden image, which the God of this world has set up. He finds that all his former comfort from worldly treasures, worldly honours, worldly friends, is gone, and that he must find other and better comfort, or go comfortless. He also begins now to be straitened for the very necessities of life. And to him, nursed in luxury, and once living in affluence, the privations of poverty come with ten-fold hardship. His case, however, is only our illustration. He may go through all this, and yet not become poor in spirit. Yet he may strikingly illustrate the character of the poor in spirit. For a man who once, with the Laodiceans of old, thought himself spiritually rich, and in need of nothing, may discover that he is spiritually miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. The man who thought he had righteousness enough and to spare, that he was moral, decent, virtuous, amiable, and therefore sure of heaven, may discover that his premises and his conclusion are alike unsound,—that he has not fulfilled the whole moral law, that he has done many things which he ought not to have done, and left undone many things which he ought to have done,—that his fancied virtues have been alloyed with imperfections, that he has been utterly destitute of the love of God, and a despiser of the merits and righteousness of Christ, that he has been deceiving himself, fancying himself very rich, and, lo! he was all the while very poor. Behold him stripped of his self-righteousness, emptied of pride, abased from self-exaltation, feeling and confessing himself a poor, needy, helpless sinner. He is becoming poor in spirit. St. Paul is an example. Once he thought himself as rich a man as any in all Jerusalem; rich in parentage, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; rich in education, brought up in the school of Gamaliel; rich in good works; "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless;" rich in the honour and estimation of the Pharisees, rich in his opening prospects, altogether a rich man. But God's converting grace came, and he became poor in spirit. All was gone,—parentage, education, good works, worldly honours, and opening prospects, he counted all things as dung and as dross; what things were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ. He became poor in spirit.

I would hope, my dear brethren, that you now understand who are the poor in spirit—not necessarily the poor in this world, but those who once thought themselves rich, but now feel that they are poor, that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, that they have no power of themselves to help themselves, nothing to be proud of, nought wherein to glory before God, that they are unprofitable servants, and miserable sinners.

In all this, I speak of the man as he is in himself, and not of what he becomes in and through Christ. His poverty in himself, in fact, constitutes his need of the riches of Christ. The more he knows his own poverty, the more is he prepared to welcome the riches and all-sufficiency of the Saviour. Hence, poverty of spirit is to be a habit, a temper, a progressive state of mind, and to mark the Christian's course and advancement in the spiritual walk. The most advanced Christian is not he who is the most elated, the most confident, the most superior to others in his own esteem; but he who is the most lowly, the most broken in heart, poor in spirit, abasing himself before God, confessing himself the chief of sinners, esteeming others as better than himself.

The world, I am aware, do not, and cannot, approve this very humbling doctrine. Some of us remember the time when to us also it would have appeared to present too humiliating a view of human nature. Yet let not the world confound things that differ. There is a difference between those who are poor in spirit, and those who are poor-spirited. A man may be a miser, and as such a poor-spirited man. He is far enough from being poor in spirit, or a true Christian. The true Christian's soul is large, liberal, and generous, "given to hospitality;" "ready to distribute;" "A man may commit mean and base actions, betray a friend, divulge a secret, forge, lie, or steal; he may crouch to those high in station, use flattery, intrigue, and artifice; all this is being poor-spirited surely enough, but it is not being poor in spirit. Christianity has as high, yea, far higher notions of honour, integrity, and true nobleness of character, than the world. The Christian, of course I mean the true Christian, may be poor and distressed in worldly circumstances, while he may be and is poor in spirit, feeling himself a sinner, helpless and wretched in himself; and yet he is not poor-spirited; he will resort to no base method of relieving his

* 1 Cor. iii. 16.

† Ordination of Priests.

* sunt certi denique fines

Quos ultra citaque nequi consistere rectum.

† Luke vi. 20.

‡ James ii. 5.

§ Isaiah vi. 21.

* Rev. iii. 17.

† Phil. iii. 6.

‡ Rom. xii. 13.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 18.