

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B. MAY, 1890.

EDITORIAL.

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD.

1 TIM. I. 11.

Inspired writers use epithetical expressions, not to embellish their compositions, but to treat with justice the subject to which they add the epithet. When comparing something which is good in itself with another far above and beyond it, the latter is epithetically described. In 2 Cor. ix, the apostle dwells largely on the grandeur of those gifts made by the Gentile churches to relieve their Jewish brethren in the famine. He shows that besides the good done in relieving their bodily wants, it would deeply impress their minds with the grace of God, which could so effectually dispose even Gentiles to come to their aid, and turn the hearts of these outcasts from God to feel for their Jewish brethren in their distress, and prove themselves "friends indeed." As he dwells on these noble gifts he exclaims, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." The gifts of God's children were good but God's gift was unspeakable.

In this place Paul tells Timothy that the law, which some ignorantly desired to teach as the way of salvation and the Christian's rule of life, was good when used lawfully; good to regulate civil society, and especially to prevent or punish all such outlaws as lived contrary to gospel teaching. Paul did not condemn the law of Moses. It was given by God, and like the stars at night was glorious; but when the gospel came like the rising sun, it completely eclipsed the law, until it had no glory by reason of the glory that excelled it. 2 Cor. iii. 10 Paul looked at what the law did and then at what the gospel did, and was inspired to say, The good news or gospel of God—the gospel of the blessed God—yes, the GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD. We may think but little of the gospel, but the Holy Spirit shows in what esteem it is held by the "Lord of all," who has commanded it to be preached to every creature in all the world. He who died for every man commands this to be told to every man, with the terms on which He will save every man.

The glorious gospel has the five following divisions or points:

- I. The Truth of the gospel.
- II. Its Facts.
- III. Its Commands.
- IV. Its Promises.
- V. Its Threatenings.

We will consider these in their order.

I. *Its Truth.* Truth is something spoken; fact is something done. All facts are truths, but all truths are not facts. God exists, is a truth; God made the world, is a fact. The gospel has its great truth standing on the brow of Christianity. The belief of this truth saves men; its unbelief condemns men. This truth was something spoken. God sent prophets to reveal or speak other truths. This truth He did not entrust to flesh and blood to reveal. Neither man nor angel announced it. But God himself opened the heavens and spake it when Jesus was coming up out of the water in which He was baptized. While the Father was announcing it, the Spirit of God in the bodily shape of a dove, came from heaven and abode on Jesus. "THOU ART MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED," said the voice from heaven. Here is the truth of the gospel spoken by God himself to men, that they might believe it, and by believing might have life through the name of Jesus. When Peter confessed this truth (Matt. xvi.) Jesus said He would build His church upon it, and the gates of hades would not prevail against it,

Peter was himself a rock, but not a foundation rock. "Not on you, Petros," said Jesus, "I will build my church, but on this Petra I will build my church." The difference between Petros and Petra is that Petros is a moveable rock or stone, but Petra is a bed rock that cannot be moved. Peter showed himself a moveable stone in this same chapter. After Jesus had called him blessed and promised to give him the keys of the kingdom, he rebuked his Master when He spoke of His death and resurrection, and was by Him called Satan and severely reprimanded for his carnality and sin. Peter was a stone which was afterwards dressed and prepared for an important place in the church, but utterly unfit for a foundation for the church. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. iii. 11. We have no record of such another manifestation of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as at the laying of this corner stone by God Himself. There was the Father addressing His Son in the presence of the people, the Son obeying Him in that ordinance which to the end of time would bear the name of the Godhead, and the Spirit of God resting visibly on Christ. He was there and then divinely anointed and divinely proclaimed the Christ the Son of the living God. That great truth was announced by God that it might be confessed by men. It was put to Christ when on trial for His life by the highest functionary in the Jewish church. "I adjure Thee," said the high priest, "by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou art the Son of God." Jesus said, "I am," and for that confession He is condemned to the cross. He dies confessing it, and now comes the trial. If He is only a man, death will prevail, the grave will hold him. But He proves His divinity by His resurrection. This Petra (bed rock) passes through death and comes from the grave unbroken and unmoved. Death's power is broken and wasted on this rock. He is alive now and lives for evermore.

II. *The Facts* of the gospel are the things which Jesus did and suffered. After He had done His Father's will so completely—revealed His will to men and showed them the Father, that He was God manifested in the flesh, He died for our sins according to the scriptures. It is wonderful to see an innocent man die—to see him die willingly, die for others—not friends, but enemies—enemies by wicked works, so hardened as not to ask a favor. Yet He dies for our sins. His love to us was great enough, and no other sacrifice could atone for them. What must our sins be! What must His love be!! The Father gave His only begotten Son for such a death, and loved Him the more for laying down His life. John x. 17.

Christ was buried is another Gospel fact. The grave was the palace of him that had the power of death where he kept the bodies of the human family in peace. But one stronger than the strong man came upon him, bound him, entered his palace that He might divide the spoil. Christ was buried. Though perfectly sinless, His body lay quietly with the bodies of His brethren long enough to prove that He was both dead and buried, but not long enough to see corruption. Hungry worms would never feed upon that sinless body. God would not leave His soul in hades nor suffer His holy One to see corruption.

Christ rose again the third day according to the Scriptures is another fact of the Gospel. The facts prove true what God had announced at the Jordan. "Thou art My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." His resurrection declares Him to be divine and all His work perfect, well pleasing to God. It proves that He who was delivered for our offences was raised again for our justification. A full and free and perfect salvation is by Him provided and offered to the very chief of sinners.

III. *The Commands* of the Gospel. When God raised Christ from the dead He gave Him all authority in heaven and on earth, so that Christ commands men. 1st. He commands men to believe on Him, to believe that He is the Son of God. In believing that He is the Son of the living God they believe God Himself, for it was He who first spoke this. The great truth passes from the mouth of God to their ears and their hearts. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Jesus commands sinners to believe what His Father said of Him with all their heart. And to believe that He died for their sins, was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Believing the truths and facts of the Gospel with all the heart brings Christ near us. It is something in which Christ and the sinner are personally concerned. Here Jesus commands men to believe on Him. 2nd. Another command of the Gospel is *repentance*. Jesus commands sinners to repent or *determine* with all the heart to turn from sin to the service of God. This is a reasonable and plain command. When any wrong-doer is shown his wrong and how he can forsake it and do the right he can make the *determination* to do it. Christ commands all sinners to turn from their sins and serve Him, and they can *determine to do so*. He furnishes them with all the strength to carry out the determination; but the determination they must make or perish. The great goodness of God in giving His dear Son to die for them leads them to repentance, and they are to believe in that death of Jesus before they make the determination to turn to Him.

Confession is another command of the Gospel. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 10). The sinner who believes in Jesus with all his heart and repents, is to confess with his mouth the Lord Jesus or to declare before men what God said of Jesus, that is to confess that Christ is the Son of the living God. This is called "the good confession." Christ made it and died for it, and it is a blessed arrangement that the sinner who lives by Christ's death should make it when giving himself to Christ. The Eunuch made it when he believed, and Timothy made it before many witnesses, and the one who now makes it and holds it fast till death Jesus will confess before His Father and the holy angels.

Baptism is another command of the Gospel. After men believe and repent and confess the Lord Jesus they are to be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is the only command in the Bible that is to be done into the three glorious names. Men are to do it, not because they look for a virtue in water or anything of the kind, but because the Lord Jesus Christ commanded it. He did it Himself and commands them that believe on Him to do it as He did it before them. "Blessed are they that do His commandments."

IV. *The promises* of the Gospel. Jesus makes great and precious promises. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. (Mark xvi. 16). This promise was to last from the time Jesus gave it till the end of time, and it never did, never can, fail. A man may be baptized who does not believe with all his heart in Jesus, to him there is no such promise; but the true penitent believer who is baptized has Christ's promise, which will stand though heaven and earth pass away.

When men who were pricked in their hearts, under the Gospel, asked "What shall we do?" the Apostle, speaking with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, answered, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts ii. 38). Here was the precious promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit on the plain conditions of the Gospel made to them, to their children and all afar off, even as many as God