

THE CHRISTIAN.

"FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD."—Paul.

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CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

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"And now abide faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii. 13 •

Without faith it is impossible to please God, but charity is greater than faith. Again, the Scriptures say, "we are saved by hope," yet charity is greater than hope. When we read of the wonderful triumphs of faith we ask, Can there be anything greater than faith? And when we consider hope, sweet hope, we wonder how any feature of the Christian religion can possibly be greater than this! But the same Word from which we learn of the triumphs of faith, and the sweet influence of hope, tells us that love is the greatest of these. We cannot, then, do better than to study this, the greatest of all Christian graces.

The inspired penman gives us two sides of this great subject. He shows us what love will do, and what it will not do. As we judge of the tree by its fruits, so can we decide whether we are partakers of this grace, by looking into our hearts and studying our motives and actions. If the thoughts of our hearts and the deeds of our lives are in harmony with this principle of love, then are we indeed the children of God. But if we find the fruits of the flesh, then are we yet strangers to the spirit of grace, and without a reason for the hope of eternal life.

What then will love do? 1. It suffers long, and is kind. This is God-like. Were it not for His long suffering, tender mercy, we would not to-day enjoy the hope of seeing Him in glory and being made like our blessed Saviour. Are we striving to be partakers of His nature, that we may indeed see Him as He is, and be made like Him? 2. Love rejoiceth in the truth. Are we doing this? Is the truth, for which Jesus lived and died, precious to our souls? Are we rejoicing in its triumphs, and working for its success? 3. It beareth all things. He who would be a disciple of Christ must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Him. He must be ready to suffer for Christ's sake and bear it patiently. 4. Believeth all things. The soul imbued with the spirit of love believes all the Saviour says; trusts His great and precious promises; hence, it hopeth all things, and endureth all things, that the hope raised by those promises may, by-and-by, be realized. 5. Love never fails, it cannot fail, it is from above, God is its fountain, and the more we draw from Him the fuller will be our supply.

Then, what will love not do? "It envieth not;" envy is one of the fruits of the flesh; and Paul says: "They who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God," Gal. v. 21. Love is not envious, is not jealous of another's good fortune. There is no passion of the human heart more cruel than this. It was envy that caused the scribes and priests to hound the Saviour to His death. They were jealous of

Him because He was better than they, and because He exposed their hypocrisy. The same wicked spirit, born of the Devil, is doing its work in the world and in the church. Oh! the hard sayings and hard thoughts that are continually springing up from hearts filled with this evil spirit. "Love and envy cannot possess the same heart. Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, but humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; and this He did to save sinners. To be followers of Him we must not be high-minded, but have brotherly love, in honor preferring one another. "Love does not behave itself unseemly." There are no improper actions done in Christian charity, nor does it seek its own. There is nothing selfish in love. It looks not on its own things, nor does it study its own selfish ends, but rather studies the welfare of another. Christ laid aside His glory for a time, that He might, in the flesh, provide salvation for man; so, we, as imitators of Him, must be unselfish, and labor for the good of our brother man.

"Love is not easily provoked, and thinketh no evil." It is not suspicious. The human heart is ever looking on the dark side. Being evil, it sees evil in everything. Even the pure life of Jesus was evil in the sight of His enemies. To the pure all things are pure, but the impure heart sees evil everywhere. Love is not looking for evil, nor does it rejoice in iniquity. All forms of sin are painful to the heart imbued with the spirit of love, for God is love, and he who hath God cannot enjoy sin. Let us, then, examine our hearts and actions, and see how far they are in harmony with this spirit of love, and wherein we find ourselves lacking, let us work up to this Divine model. To cultivate this spirit of love is to sow to the spirit, the end of which is eternal life. But to neglect this, and follow the natural inclinations of the heart, is sowing to the flesh, and the end will be eternal destruction. Let us, then, labor to cultivate that grace that never fails. Faith will be changed to sight, and hope to a grand reality, but love will be sweeter and purer in the presence of God and Christ, and make our joy complete.

Westport, Oct. 25th, 1884.

THE BAPTISMAL FORMULA.

In a letter, received a few days ago, I was asked if I ever used the expression in baptizing a person, "For the remission of sins," and, if so, why I did, and if I did not, why not, and the writer of the question wished me to answer through THE CHRISTIAN.

In the commission given by our Saviour, to His apostles, as recorded in the Gospel by Matthew, the Saviour said: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the

world." (New Version). There is not even a hint here of remission of sins. Now, let us turn to the record given by Luke, of the same event, and we read: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Here we have remission of sins, but no baptism mentioned. Luke tells us in Acts 2, how this commission was carried out by the apostles. They began there to teach or make disciples of the nations. When the multitude heard the Word of God, as spoken by Peter, and believed it, they were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles: Men and brethren what shall we do? Then, Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Here, we have the baptism and remission of sins mentioned, but not a word about the Father, etc. Ananias said to Saul, "And, now, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Peter says in his first letter: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." We find, by these passages, from God's Word, that we are to be baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That we are to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, (that is by His authority). That baptism is for the remission of sins, or using a figure to wash away our sins, and that in our baptism we obtain a good conscience.

Now, the question is, which of these expressions shall I make use of in baptizing, or shall I make use of any of them or all of them. Shall I say in baptizing by the authority or in the name of Jesus Christ. I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for the remission of your sins, and that your sins may be washed away, and you may have a good conscience toward God, and if not, what shall I say. These expressions, with the exception of that recorded by Matthew, are explanatory; they serve to explain the design of the institution, and show whose authority gives it this importance. I think, that in our discretion, we may use one or the other of these if we think best; not because it is part of the formula, nor because the candidate needs information on the subject, but for the purpose of instructing strangers in the assembly. All that really belongs to the formula is: I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. If I say, "By the authority of Jesus Christ" I baptize, etc., this explains that I am directed by my Saviour. If I say, On the confession of your faith in Christ, etc., I declare to those who do not know that the candidate believes in Jesus, and has made confession to that effect. If I say, "For the remission of sins" it shows that I believe what Peter taught on Pentecost is true to-day, and that the candidate will as surely be forgiven as if God spoke