

heaven: "How to get there?" By trusting in that atonement, by relying on that deace, by pleading the merits of that Savior, by clinging to that cross. Rejoice in this salvation. And then, brethren, our death will only be our deace, our departure from this life into the better life, our going out from God's gracious presence here to the fuller manifestation of it yonder. We shall not be afraid to speak of our own deace when we live in the power of the deace of Christ. Let us not be ashamed of the cross, to which we owe all our hopes. Let this be our solace, whatever our earthly circumstances: "He loved me and gave Himself for me."

O Lord, help us to behold Thee dying for us on the cross; nay, rather help us to behold Thee as now transfigured in glory. And so, habitually dwelling upon the thought of Thy great love, Thy presence and Thy glory, may we be able to say, in all places and in all conditions, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

THE LIVING GOD.*

BY HENRY J. VAN DYKE, JR., D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN]. IN BRICK CHURCH, NEW YORK.

The living God.—Acts xiv: 15.

Is God real?

This is the question of the ages.

Four philosophers are discussing it together. The first says, "There is no God." This is the atheist, whose folly has been condemned alike by inspired Scripture and by modern science.

The second says, "I cannot tell whether there is a God or not, and therefore I do not think about it." This is the agnostic, who makes his doubts the limit of his knowledge, and exalts the confession of short-sightedness into the first of the virtues.

The third says, "I cannot be sure that God is, nor what He is; but I think He is thus and so, and I act upon this

supposition." This is the man who is willing to go beyond what he sees, who loves his hopes so much that he treats them as if they were facts, who is content with probabilities and turns them to the regulation of his practical life.

The fourth says, "God is. I know Him." This is the apostle of religion, who declares unto us that which he has heard, that which he has seen with his eyes, that which he has looked upon and his hands have handled of the word of life; that God is Eight—manifest, actual, real, as the sun in heaven.

I need not waste time in proving that this last man is the only one of the four who has the Bible on his side, for surely if anything is plain in regard to this book it is this: that it teaches the existence of a living and personal Deity, who may be really known by His creatures. But we cannot pause here. We must go back of this. We have to ask which of these four philosophers has the facts on his side; which of them is resting, not on illusions and dreams, but on the solid ground of reality.

In regard to the first of these four men, we see that he stands alone; and there is probably no danger that any of us will be inclined to stand with him, for he is in the difficult position of having to prove a positive by negatives. Admitting that all arguments for the existence of God are failures, the atheist must go beyond this, and bring facts to show that God is impossible. He must sweep the universe from end to end, and show that it is empty. He must prove, not only that an effect may exist without a cause, but also that the sum of all effects cannot possibly have had a cause, and that nowhere in heaven or earth is there a lurking-place in which an unexplained and primal power can dwell. With this task we may leave him, like a foolish builder trying to reach the skies with a tower of brick, and pass on to the other and wiser men.

We observe at once that the second and third stand together in theory, though they differ in practice. They are both professors of ignorance. They admit the idea of God, but they cannot

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