

God's Way of Saving Sinners

We are not in a safe condition to obtain salvation until we are thoroughly convinced of our utter inability to do anything of ourselves in order to obtain it. Before asking to be forgiven, we must first feel in our hearts that we are guilty sinners before God and standing in need of his forgiveness.

Unless we make a humble and truly penitent confession of our sins to God, we are still remaining in a state of rebellion towards him; it is the kind of spirit we entertain in our hearts when we are approaching God that is either in favor of, or against us, being received by him. The Bible words are, that man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart. Yet, it is the true service of the heart he demands, and nothing less than the whole heart, and yet many are offering him the divided heart. We cannot serve God and mammon. But if we come to God with a humble and penitent heart, acknowledging our sinfulness, and pleading the merits of Jesus on our behalf, God will then be more willing to forgive us than we are to be forgiven. There is no other way of forgiveness, except through the merits of Jesus Christ. His death upon the cross was the great atoning sacrifice which he offered to God the Father for the sins of the world, so that mankind might be brought into fellowship with God. Hence, we read the comforting words in John iii, 16: 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Yet there are multitudes who are refusing the glorious free offer of salvation on God's kind of terms, preferring a way of their own to secure it, namely, to offer something as a recompense to God for it, thinking by such an act it might afford them a great amount of satisfaction. Oh how fatal is such an idea. God's way of salvation will never be changed.

We are strongly warned about trusting to our own righteousness, and in Ephesians ii, 9, we read: 'Not of works, lest any man should boast.' God's gracious offer of salvation to all the human race is free and unmerited, and is clearly set forth in the words, 'Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.'

ROBERT JOHNSTON.

Moody on Power.

You remember when Christ had got through with his work on earth, and was turning over his commission to his disciples, he told them that they were to go back to Jerusalem and wait there until they were imbued with power from on high. I can imagine the apostles getting together and saying: 'Lord, you don't mean that we shall stop preaching? Shan't we go back and go to work? there is many a man in Jerusalem that is perishing; and, besides, we have got the spirit.' And I can imagine Peter saying: 'I never would have left my fishing smack and followed you if it hadn't been for the Spirit of God that called me. And then you can remember that first evening, Master, how you raised those wounded hands in a blessing upon us and breathed upon us and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost? we felt the Spirit of God come upon us? We have got the power.' And I can imagine the Master saying to them: 'Ye have got some of the power, but not the power I am going to give you. It is expedient for you that I

go away, because if I go not the power will not begin to come, and when it comes you shall do greater works than I have done. Go back and wait until the power comes.' These men that had been swept up into the third heaven, these men that had seen Christ for three years, and seen him do the mighty work, went up into the holy land and caught sight of the coming glory. Yet these men were not qualified to do the work. They were to go back and to wait until they were imbued with power. They waited ten days, and at the end of that time that promise was fulfilled: 'Ye shall receive power, and ye shall be witnesses in Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' The glorious Gospel was to go throughout the whole world after these men got their commission or re-commission, as it were, to preach and to teach the Gospel. Now, notice in the second chapter of Acts, that while they preached the power came, and these men were filled. It says they were all filled—not the men alone, but the women, too. The place was shaken. It came like a mighty rushing of the wind. They were ready for the service. Now, look and see the marvellous result! There is a class of people who tell us that that was a miracle that never will be repeated. Pshaw? I don't believe it. I believe that was a specimen day. I believe we can have the old Pentecostal fire born here in New York if we have the same faith that they had. We want to remember that our God is an unchangeable God. Why, we have the same human nature to contend with that those men had. Men haven't changed one whit from what they were in the beginning. Human nature has been the same for 6,000 years, and we need just the same power that those men needed in Jerusalem; and I believe that if we would look to God and expect him to give us the power, he would not disappoint us.—Portion of a verbatim report of a sermon in New York.

A Missionary Parable.

(Rev. Augustine S. Carman, Granville, O., in the 'Baptist Missionary Magazine.')

It was a beautiful May morning when I rode with a friend, a grain dealer with farm raising, out through our beautiful southern Ohio roads to the region where he had spent all of his earlier days, past fields and forests, every rod of which was familiar to him. I was the layman and he the professional in rural affairs, and I sat as meekly under his instruction as upon Sundays he was wont to sit, I can only hope with equal profit, under mine.

I was especially interested in his account of the rotation of crops as practiced by the wise farmer in this region of country. It seems that one ploughing is made to serve for the raising of three years' crops. After the spring ploughing of the first year there will be put in a crop of corn, which is harvested in the fall. Then amongst the standing stumps of the corn there will be 'drilled in' the winter wheat which is to form the crop of the second season. In the spring, at as early a date as possible, when the winter wheat is well started, there will be sown broadcast amongst it the clover seed for the crop of the third season. The wheat grows to maturity and is harvested in early summer, and there is found remaining upon the field after the wheat harvest a young growth of clover, which is well started by fall, and by the next summer is ready to cut. This is the first crop of clover; and with the variety most cultivated in this region (known as the 'little

red' clover) there springs up immediately a second growth, from which about six weeks later there is gathered the clover seed. The clover sod remaining is then ploughed under the next spring, forming the finest basis for the corn crop of the ensuing year, and the rotation is repeated through another three years, four crops thus being harvested from a single ploughing.

It was at this point in my friend's explanation that I ventured a modest question: 'But isn't clover seed an extremely valuable crop?'

'To be sure it is. The most valuable crop per acre that we raise.'

Then said I with more confidence, 'Why don't our farmers take a field and sow it wholly to clover and cultivate the field carefully for that valuable crop of clover seed, making the most of it? Wouldn't that be far better than to try to raise clover seed in a field where a corn crop and a wheat crop and a previous clover crop have all been raised from a single ploughing; and wouldn't it be far better to sow the clover carefully in a field all by itself than to broadcast it into a field already growing up to wheat?'

'No, indeed,' said my friend quickly, 'that wouldn't do at all. You see the clover is a slow-growing crop, and if sown in a bare field the weeds would spring up before the clover could get a start. The wheat crop already started keeps out the weeds and is just high enough to serve as a protection for the clover as it comes above the ground in the early spring.'

And then I had my parable, for who has ever watchfully observed the growth of a church or of an individual character without witnessing the working of the same principle, namely, that the attempt to secure progress in one direction by the neglect of claims in other directions is a luckless effort?

Seek to Edify.

The Sunday school teacher needs to know what is to be taught just as thoroughly as the teacher in our common schools needs to know in order to teach. Study, hard, patient, persistent study is necessary on every lesson if the teaching is to make a positive and powerful impression on the mind and heart of the scholar. Any teacher who depends much on his or her personal popularity, socially or otherwise, with the class, and neglects to study and pray heartily over each lesson may entertain, but cannot edify the class. There is a mighty difference between grace and gab, knowing and blowing. The popularity of a Sunday school worker before the school or class should exalt Christ and not self, salvation and not sentiment and ever ground all efficiency on the principles and power of divine grace and truth.—J. B. Kanga.

The Find-the-Place Almanac

TEXTS IN EPHESIANS.

- Feb. 24, Sun.—Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.
- Feb. 25, Mon.—Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.
- Feb. 26, Tues.—Speaking the truth in love.
- Feb. 27, Wed.—Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.
- Feb. 28, Thur.—Let him that stole steal no more.
- March 1, Fri.—Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from you.
- March 2, Sat.—Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.