

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS.

Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. (John v. 28-29).

Both the words and the works of Jesus startled the people. He had just healed a man who had long lain at the pool of Bethesda without a friend to put him into the pool. This happened on the Sabbath and the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him for what they called a violation of that holy day. It only intensified their anger to hear Him tell that all He did was with the approval and after the example of His Father, making Himself equal with God. But He assured them that the proofs of His Father's approval were too many and positive to be denied with impunity. How could he more effectually prove Himself the Son of God than in the way He met and conquered death. The sick heard His voice and recovered. He spoke to the dead and they lived. His voice followed the monster into the very grave and took from him his prey. The hour was coming and then was, when the dead heard the voice of the Son of God and lived. But these facts which puzzled and condemned the people were the preludes to the greater and coming hour when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

Jesus has a right to speak and to be heard on the resurrection. 1st. Because He is God's speaker. He has in times past spoken to the Jewish fathers by the prophets, but has in these last days spoken to us by His Son by whom He has made the world. 2nd. He is the Resurrection, its cause and grand demonstration. There would be no resurrection without Him. He rose and proved it true. 3rd. It is His voice that will call all the dead from their graves and decide their eternal destiny, and that voice has a right to tell it and to be heard and obeyed by every one of us. Who can deny His right to speak and to be heard on the resurrection?

Jesus tells of two resurrections and the hour means all the time in which these two shall occur, whether they shall be simultaneous or a thousand years apart. As every one of us will have a part in one of these resurrections it is a question of the deepest interest to each. To which resurrection will I come? Shall I hear the voice of Christ and come forth to the first resurrection? or shall I remain to the second? We will have no power to decide in the grave, will have no choice in the matter then. He will not reason and plead with the dead as He did with the Jews when He would have gathered them under His wing and shield them as the hen gathered her brood. He will not plead and wait to be gracious as He now does with men by His spirit through the Gospel while they can choose whether they will obey or disobey Him. But He will speak as He did to the winds and waves, to demons, and as He did to the widow's son, and to Lazarus in his grave, and all who hear must obey Him. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, etc., etc. (Rev. xx. 6).

Jesus has plainly described the character of those who will come forth to the first resurrection and has given us the power to gain that character—*They that have done good.* He did not say "they that are good." If He had we would have no hope. We cannot say that we are good—good enough for

the first resurrection and to appear before the white throne, and we would have to remain in the grave till the second resurrection. Had Jesus said, "They that have good thoughts," who think right, we could have no hope. Sometimes we have happy thoughts, again before we are aware they fly to and fro in forbidden paths and discourage us. How, then, must these thoughts appear before Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire? Had He said, "They that have good feelings" shall come to the resurrection of life, we would be condemned to lie over till the other resurrection. Sometimes we feel well and happy, at other times we feel depressed and doubtful and gloomy. We cannot say to one feeling come and it cometh, and to another go and it goeth. Our feelings are not under the control of our will and how entirely hopeless would be our case if Jesus had made our feeling the test of our final happiness.

But Jesus said, "They that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life." So it is on our actions that the hinge of eternity will turn. Here is justice, here is goodness. Everyone knows that in a great measure our will controls our actions. The will cannot control our emotions, but it can control our purposes and our doings and our words and so will our judgment be.

But, an unconverted man says, "How can I control my actions?" Many a time I resolve and try to amend my life and sometimes I think I am successful but ere I am aware I am as far back as ever. What am I to do? This question was often asked after Jesus' death and always answered by the Apostles so plainly that the enquirer knew what to do. The helpless sinner's first duty is to come to Christ for salvation. No unprejudiced, intelligent man can rise from reading in the last of Matthew and of Mark what Jesus said to His apostles when sending them out with the Gospel to all the world, and then comparing it with what the apostles did tell enquirers to do without finding out how to come to Jesus. If any point has been made plain and positive by Christ and His apostles it is how a sinner can come to Jesus and be saved. It is *doing good* to believe and obey Him. After men are saved by the death of Jesus it is their happy privilege to abide in Him and then do good. The unconverted know how a Christian should walk, and no Christian does better than the world expects him to do. They know the difference between right and wrong, and how much more does the Christian know it. All know that it is wrong to swear and lie and steal; that it is wrong to defraud in dealing. All know it is right to pray to God in secret, in the family and in social worship; to attend the house of God on the Lord's day; to take part in spreading the Gospel; to be faithful in leading our families and our neighbors to Christ. All know these things to be right and those who are heartily engaged in them to be doing good. The enemies of Christ acknowledge that His life was pure, that He did good. He "went about doing good" to the bodies and souls of men. The poor and the outcasts were His company, to raise the fallen His delight. He offers us a partnership with Himself and to thoroughly furnish us for every good work. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can we except we abide in Christ. Our time for labor is short—growing shorter every day and we are nearer the resurrection than ever before. Are we becoming more anxious to do good as we draw nearer and nearer the resurrection? Certain, it is that we are doing, but are we doing good? Let reader and writer press this question to themselves before God and not rest without a satisfactory answer. Without Christ we can do nothing. Let it be our constant prayer and study to keep His commandments, that we may abide in His love even as he has kept His Father's commandments and abode in His love.

Original Contributions.

WILL YOU HELP US?

A resolution was passed at our last annual meeting that a letter appear in THE CHRISTIAN each month of the ensuing year, soliciting aid in behalf of the mission work in the provinces. It was understood that these letters were to be a plain, practical and earnest appeal for help. They are not to range so high in rhetoric that the object, worth and design shall be lost, but plain talk about the best means and ways to advance the glorious cause we have espoused. We believe, when we present the matter through the columns of THE CHRISTIAN, we are addressing the brotherhood; for we do hope there is no brother or sister but contributes to our noble little paper. Looking at the matter from this standpoint, we humbly and faithfully ask the readers of THE CHRISTIAN to view the matter fairly and squarely. Brethren, we want help, means to advance this noble cause. We do not forget the generous manner in which you have aided the work in the past, and your noble efforts are being crowned with success. The work is advancing, and the cause we love so dearly at the present time demands our best attention. It requires our strongest efforts, our greatest care, our prayers, our tears, our means. *Shall we do it? Brethren, we must do it.* Help is needed. The cause of our dear Redeemer calls for our support. Think of it carefully. Think what Jesus has done for us, and then ask ourselves the question: Shall He ask of me in vain. Will you do your utmost by helping to increase the mission fund? What is the mission fund? may be asked. It is money collected together to support the gospel in weak destitute places. Practically, it is visiting our Lord in prison. It is giving a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple; in fact, it is clothing and feeding and visiting the weak, destitute in Christ; and inasmuch as we do it to these we do it unto Christ. But if we do it not unto the least of these we do it not unto Christ.

The cause of the Master must be sustained. *Do you ask how? Why, do your best to collect all you can for the mission work.* Why, if every family taking THE CHRISTIAN will give two cents per week for one year will give the mission fund one thousand and twenty dollars. Think of it. How much do we spend without notice? Far more than two cents per week. Brethren, let us give our cents to the Lord. Will you resolve to do so? If every reader of our paper will pledge to collect one dollar for one year, how the work of the Master would flourish. We should be reasonable in this matter. We should be honest about this matter. We should be anxious about this matter. We should be zealous for the cause of our dear Redeemer. Let us be faithful stewards while the opportunity offers, that when our toils of earth are over we may go to meet our Master, bearing precious trophies to lay at His feet. I am sure we will not miss what we give to aid the cause of our blessed Lord. Doing this we are laying up treasure in heaven, where moth nor rust doth not corrupt, nor where thieves do not break through and steal. How will we do this? By aiding to support the gospel, that souls may be brought into the light and liberty of our Lord Jesus Christ. You may call this begging if you like; but it is begging for Christ. Let love for Christ and His cause reign in our hearts supreme, and we will love to give. We should not see the cause of Christ suffer, but with willing hearts we should do our utmost to extend the kingdom. Once more we appeal to you, beloved brethren. Will you do your best? Will you pledge yourself to do all you can to advance this noble cause. Let us unite our efforts for one grand end, for soon our time on earth shall end and our opportunities will all be over. Let us remember we have to stand before a just God to give account of our stewardship. Shall we be weighed in the balance of God's justice and be found wanting? H. E. COOKE.