

[For OUR MISSION UNION]

Giving Thanks Always for All Things.

Ephesians v. 20.

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“O! for *all things*, oh Divine Teacher,” cries one, “surely not for *all things* would'st thou have me give thanks! This bitter disappointment, this blighting of so many hopes, this cutting off of so many flattering prospects, not for these, surely not for these!” Yes, for these,—

all these, for such is your Father's will, else it could not have been. God discerned something in the thing, or things upon which you had set your heart, that, if attained, would surely have come between your soul and Him to whom you have pledged your deepest love, your most loyal service. Then thank Him for interposing His hand between you and it, and thus shutting you up to Himself; that so, with all a father's tenderness, He might lead you in the way in which He would have you go.

“But how can I? My will does not consent. I would this moment reverse the whole, if only I could!”

No matter. Thank Him, first of all, that you *cannot* reverse what He has done; that He has put such a dreadful deed wholly out of your power; and then in the dust of humiliation at His feet, give up your own will, at once and forever. For, be assured, you will find no rest of soul until there is, between you and God, but one will, and that, not your will, but His. “Father, not my will but Thine”—“Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!” Thus prayed the Holy Son of God—He who needed no discipline; and shall your will, so blind, so selfish in its aims, be considered, and not His?

Is it too much that you, who are so likely to be wrong, should be asked to share with Him the cross of submission from which He, though never wrong, did not, even for a moment, shrink? Shall you, who every moment need the steadying, restraining hand of God, oppose your will in anything to His? O be careful! On earth and in heaven there can be no will but His, if happiness, rest, and peace are to prevail. No soul can be one with Christ, unless he and Christ are one in will; even as Christ's will is one with His Father's. Thank Him, then, for disappointments; for be assured, if accepted in the spirit of absolute submission and obedience, you will discern in them a father's love, a father's pity, a father's discernment of what is best—the *very* best for you. He maketh “all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” Are these trials, among the *all things* that concern you? if so—and no one knows so well as you how *saeply* they concern you—thank Him for taking them

into His own hands; and in his own time He will show you the silver lining of the cloud that at present looks so dark and threatening.

“But how can I thank God for this great sorrow?” cries another. “It is more than I can bear! *How* can I look upon the face of my dead, my loved, my lost, and say, I thank thee, O my Father, that thou hast done this?” Ah, poor heart, it is very hard, but listen. “Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Is it not sweet to know yourself beloved by a Father who is “too wise to err—too good to be unkind?” He is the wise physician who knows just how bitter is the medicine he presses to your lips, for He has tasted it all Himself. He is the careful surgeon who only just cuts deep enough to remove the festering ulcer. He is the watchful refiner and purifier of His own precious metal, who will not subject to the furnace heat a moment longer than till He can see His own image clearly reflected in the glowing mass.

Your dead are in the same kind hands as yourself. If they are His, He will do better by them than you could even wish to do;—if they are not, “the judge of all the earth will do right;” and that is all even you would dare to ask. Be still, and know it is God who has wounded, and His wounding is in order to heal. Lie low at His feet, and He will lift you up. Thank Him for all He does, for His is love that makes no mistakes,—love that pities more than any earthly father can pity,—that knows your grief, and with the rod of chastening will provide the staff of consolation. He withheld not His dearest and His best that He might save you; and now He seeks only your sanctification. Therefore “thank Him always, for all things, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;” so shall you find abundant rest in His faithfulness and love.

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Repentance Toward God.

By REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D.

ON the day of Pentecost, those who were convicted of sin, or as it is in Acts ii. 37, “pricked in their heart,” cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter answered, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Not long after, Peter again called them to repentance, saying, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts iii. 19. This is the proper direction for any one troubled about his sins. *Repent.* Repent that your sins may be blotted out. Repentance is an act to which God calls every man who would be saved. It is a very comprehensive act. It is two-fold. It respects our sins and it respects our Saviour. It turns from sin to the Saviour. This two-fold action is essential to it. It is incomplete if either the one or the other is wanting. It is of great importance to see this clearly. If we break with sin, and do not