

mercy and peace, whispering that God has found His rest in Jesus, and our confidence must be in believing this and entering into "His rest;" but to those who harden their hearts and turn away, it comes in warning—"Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven." (Heb. 12: 26.) Truly, for the unbeliever and disobedient, it will be "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10: 31).

[For OUR MISSION.]

The World's Hatred.

John 12: 10, 11.

By ALF. SANDHAM.

If we turn to James 4: 4 we read:

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

We are not to understand from this, that a friend of God will be an enemy to his fellow man, but that he will be an enemy to that principle of sin which is in God's word spoken of as "the world."

In the first part of the 12th chapter of John we read of the supper at Bethany, on which occasion Lazarus is introduced as a guest,* eating with and enjoying communion with his Life-giving Master. But verses 10, 11 presents another scene—for we are called to view Lazarus the hated one. Why? Lazarus had done nothing to merit it. Those secret conclaves held by the priests, were not to consider acts of outrage committed by him. He has spoken no words derogatory of the ritual of the Jewish Church. Then why want to put Lazarus to death? Lazarus is no stranger in Bethany. He has been resident there for many years. Doubtless it was his native town. He had not lived the life of an ascetic. The synagogue has often been repaired to by him and his sisters. He has lived so as to win the respect of many living in the town, and even of Jerusalem. (John 11: 18, 19.) Then why this sudden desire to put him to death?

Let us take a few words of testimony from God's Word on this point:

"Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." "Then said the Jews, Behold, how He loved him."—John 11: 5, 36.

This is what we may call the starting point. Jesus loved Lazarus. But Jesus loves all men. He is full of love. There must, therefore, be something else in question. Lazarus also *loved Jesus*. In other words, he was a Christian—a witness for Christ. Now we read the following verses:

"But the chief priests consulted that they might put

Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus."—John 12: 10, 11.

Until Lazarus became a living epistle, known and read of many Jews—until he became a living monument—a proof of the power of Jesus—a daily testimony that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. The Priests paid no attention to him. So long as he paid his tithes, attended the Temple worship, paid them the proper respect, Lazarus knew nothing of hatred from them; but the very moment he became as it were a second John the Baptist—became a finger-post, pointing to the Lamb of God—became a living voice, saying, Behold the Resurrection, the Life, the Way—that moment he became an object of hatred, a target at which the world began to fire. But observe, it was not hatred to Lazarus as a *man*. He is the same Lazarus now as before, so far as the man is concerned. What they hated was the *new* man—Christ in him. See what Jesus says on this point:

"The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."—John 7: 7.

The hatred of the world against Christ is because He testifies against it. Now, a man who is unconverted certainly could not bear testimony against the world, for he would thereby condemn himself.

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John 15: 19.

So, then, we have presented very clearly the fact that the world does not hate *the man*. It hates the *Christ* in the man. It hates Jesus whom the man represents. There is wrapped up in this a truth which it is well for every Christian, and especially young Christians, to bear in mind. How often are young converts staggered at the fact that men who once professed friendship, are now enemies. Men who were once anxious to meet with them, now avoid them. Well; this is human nature. I am quite sure I should not be desirous of receiving visits from a man whose very presence was a reminder to me of some exceedingly disagreeable circumstance. And just so it is with a true follower of Jesus. His very presence reminds an unconverted man of his own lack of a saving knowledge of Christ. Mind, we are speaking of a genuine follower of Christ—one who has, like Lazarus, experienced the presence of Jesus as a quickening power—a life-giving power. There are men who profess to be Christ's, and yet who are much sought after by the world. But rest assured, when you see a professing Christian, who thinks he has found out how to keep the world, the things of the world, and the friendship of the world—one who can freely mix with the people of the world, find delight in its society, takes his friends and companions out of it—you have found, it may be, a professor, but Scripture says you may doubt his being a possessor. The friendship of the world means enmity to God. To be a Christian means to be a witness against the world; and criminals

* NOTE.—A very striking line of thought is presented in connection with the Divine record concerning Lazarus. He is mentioned only—as Dead—Risen—Seated in communion with the Master, and Hated because of the work wrought in Him. Do we not here find the Christian experience portrayed. Remember that the name Lazarus means "God is my help," in other words of himself, man is "helpless." So all our life, communion and testimony, which leads to the world's hatred, comes from another. We are "helpless."