

## Our Contributors.

### The Blessedness of the Righteous.

Revelation xiv : 13.

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Before proceeding to consider the doctrine contained in our text we would like to have it distinctly understood that while it pronounces those blessed who *die* in the Lord it does not thereby intimate that those who die in the Lord had not been blessed during their life-time. The Christian is again and again declared in the scriptures to be blessed even here in this world. If there is such a thing as true happiness on this earth the Christian has it. And surely he ought to be happy who is pardoned, and justified, and able to sing—"O Lord, I will praise Thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comforted me. Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song, he, also is become my salvation." It is the privilege of every Christian to experience (and if he does not experience it he is not living up to his privilege) the sentiment expressed by the Apostle Peter whom having not seen ye love; in whom though, now ye see Him not yet believing ye rejoice, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.\* We see from this passage, that the man who is in Christ, experiences, even in this life, a blessedness which words cannot express. One does not require to read far into the book of Psalms to be convinced that the man of God is blessed in this life as well as in the life to come. Every Christian possesses, in a greater or less degree, those seven characteristics mentioned by Christ in His sermon on the Mount, to which a sevenfold blessedness is attached. Now you will observe that, while the reason or ground for this sevenfold blessedness is drawn from something in the future, the blessedness is a present thing. The poor in spirit are declared to be *blessed now*. "Blessed are," not will be, "the poor in spirit." "Blessed are," not will be, "those that mourn." "Blessed are the meek."

Well might the sweet singer of Israel, when he takes his pen in hand to write those beautiful Psalms, so full of religious experience, and so well fitted to cheer and comfort Christians in every condition in life—well might he begin by saying: "Oh the many *blessednesses* of the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. Well might he take his harp and sing:

"Blessed is the man whom thou dost choose"  
"Blessed are they in thy house that dwell."

"Oh greatly blessed the people are  
The joyful sound that know:  
In brightness of thy face O Lord  
They ever on shall go."

But what are the different ingredients that constitute the happiness or blessedness of the Christian here in this life? They are all given in the answer to that question in the Shorter Catechism.

What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification adoption and sanctification. These benefits are—"assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost,

increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

Not only is the Christian pronounced blessed while he lives, but he is pronounced blessed when he dies. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.

The dead in Christ are blessed because they are free from all the evils, from all the toils, and trials, from all the pains and persecutions of this life. The life of a Christian in this world is far from being one of ease.

"The path of sorrow, and that alone  
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;  
No traveller ever reached that blessed abode,  
Who found not thorns and briars on his road."

The Christian's life is one continual struggle. He struggles with the world, with lust and the evil one. He writhes not simply with flesh and blood but with principalities with powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places. He is often forced to exclaim, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other so that I cannot do the things that I would. I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

But death comes like a devoted friend to the rescue, and with a single blow lays that tyrant lust low. The principle element in the blessedness of those that die in the Lord consists in their being made entirely free from sin. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and therefore they are perfectly blessed. There is nothing a Christian longs for more than to be freed from sin; there is nothing he hates more; but death comes to the believer as the Angel came to Peter in prison—he smites off the chains and sets the prisoner free.

The Christian, too, has to contend with spiritual foes while in this world. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," says the Apostle Paul, "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." That old serpent the devil is ever going about seeking whom he may devour. Hence the Christian has to be ever on his guard. So long as the Christian is here he is exposed to the assaults of that most malignant foe. But death puts the believer beyond the reach of temptation. At death the victory is won, not only over sin but over Satan.

Another element on the blessedness of those that die in the Lord is that their souls do immediately pass into glory. And who can conceive all that is implied in that word "glory?" "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The Apostle Paul seemed to be at a loss for words to express all that was contained in this word "glory." He has a whole string of words attached to it one place. *A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* It is not glory merely that awaits those that die in the Lord; nor is it a weight of glory merely; nor is it an eternal weight of glory merely; nor is it only an exceeding and eternal weight of glory; nor is it a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory merely; but it is a *far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.* "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

In regard to the deceased I would say that the late James Buchanan was possessed with many excellent qualities; and I shall mention those only for which he was noted:

(1) He was most faithful in his attendance upon the public ordinances of God's house. I know a man may attend the house of God and not be a Christian; but I cannot understand how a man can be a Christian and be constantly and habitually trampling under foot that command "for-sake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is."

(2) He took a deep interest in the Sabbath school. For years he taught the bible class.

(3) He was remarkably well versed in the scriptures. He could repeat from memory nearly the whole of the Paraphrases and many of the Psalms in metre.

(4) He had also a remarkable talent for music, which talent he used in the service of his Lord and Master. For years he led the singing in the public services of God's house; and during his life he did much to improve that part of public worship by teaching the young people in the congregation how to sing by note. As a solo singer his services were always in very great demand and were highly appreciated at all socials and public entertainments far and near. His voice which was remarkably sweet retained its sweetness to the very end.

(5) He was remarkably able in prayer. Few ministers could excel the late James Buchanan in that part of public worship. And although he made no pretensions to scholarship or to being a college bred man, still his prayers were models of good English.

(6) The late James Buchanan was also a staunch advocate of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors.

(7) Last, but not least, the late James Buchanan was blessed with more than an ordinary share of good common sense. This he showed in becoming a member of and a diligent worker in the Presbyterian church in Athelstane. Mr. Buchanan was an Independent in creed and could not subscribe to the Confession of Faith. This stood in the way of his becoming an elder in the church for which position he was eminently qualified; but it did not stand in the way of his becoming a member of the Presbyterian church and devoting his energies and talents in connection with that body for the advancement of his Redeemer's Kingdom. In this he showed good sense.

### Equal Rights for All.

In the course of his sermon in St. Andrew's church last Sunday Rev. Dr. Herdridge referred in fair, moderate and dignified terms to the invidious distinctions made in the invitations sent out to the various functions connected with the recent royal visit. The Free Press reports the minister of St. Andrew's as follows:

"Without being ungenerous one might almost think that an attempt was made to create a dividing line between the churches of this land by the official recognition of some of the total ignoring of others during the late royal visit to Ottawa. If the seeming slight was unintentional, that does not excuse it. When all other details were so carefully considered, this should not have been left to mere caprice or accident."

\*An address given at the funeral of the late James Buchanan by the Rev. A. Rowat of Athelstan.