



FOR ONE WHO HAS NOT PEACE;

WITH

SOME TEACHING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE.



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HELP

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My dear ----

I am glad you told me that you did not understand all I wrote. I must try and write more simply to you. I thought you might have understood, because you said you were at peace with God, and believed you were saved; and so I wrote to you as if you were settled in your soul about that. But if you are not quite settled, and what I then wrote, is, as you say, "far beyond" you, I must begin earlier and put before you again what is the gospel that saves.

Have you accepted the fact that there is no good thing in you; and that, because we were lost, dead in sins, Christ died for us? As truly as you cannot mend a broken glass, or china ornament, or restore its original character

to an egg, after it has been broken, so it would be no use patching up a sinner to present him to God, as though he were fit and sound enough for God to receive him. A person would be foolish who would expect life to be produced from a patched-up egg, be it done ever so carefully. Man's eye might not discern the flaw, and such a patched-up sinner might do well enough for man, but God's eye would search out the broken part. A mended sinner will not do for God, but God must have "a new creature." Neither does God mend the sinner nor does He help him to mend himself, but He gives him new life. The receiver of this life is then "born of God," he is "a new creation." Thus he is not a mended sinner. but "a new creation" (See 2 Cor. v. 17, 18).

Only God can create; and only God can create over again, or make a new creature; therefore this is out of man's reach to obtain except in God's way.

I only seek to show that it is not mending and improving, but a being created anew by God; yet it is not out of our reach to get it from God, if God tells us that He does it for sinners. But the first thing to get settled peace, is what you might think is a strange way, and that is, to learn that you are lost. Then God says, I have a salvation for the lost, but for no one else. Being lost brings you into that company that Jesus Christ came into the world to save. If you are not amongst them, He did not come to save you. "He came to seek and to save that which was lost."

There is no mending the sinner to make him an ornament fit for God's house (either for God's church down here, or in heaven). And just so far as we learn that we must come up to God's thoughts of what a man ought to be so as to be suitable for God, just so far do we learn that we "come short." God will have no one in heaven, and no one can stand before Him even on earth, unless he comes up to the measure of what God requires. If a man now seeks for righteousness, so as to be able to stand in that righteousness without shame before God, he must come up to the standard God has given, the pattern of what a righteous man ought to be.

And what is that? Christ has been presented to us as the model or pattern of what a righteous man ought to be in God's sight. Christ, as a man, has glorified God on the earth.

And we—what have we done? Have we, as Christ did, glorified God? No, the opposite. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

As to being saved, and getting into heaven, it makes no difference whether we come short little or much, if we come short. If I am shooting at a target for a prize, and if I have to hit the target to get the prize, it does not much matter by how much I miss it, if I miss it. I may have missed it by ten yards, or ten inches, or only a hair-breadth; it makes no difference, I have lost the prize. If I appear to shoot a little nearer than another, I may stand better in my own eyes or in the eyes of others, but as to the prize, I have lost that. God will not say, as many people say, Never mind, you did the best you could, I will give you the prize. That is not God's righteousness. That may do for man's righteousness, it will not do for God's. God is merciful; but He is not unrighteous because He is merciful, neither does He change His Word. And if He has said, You must hit the target to get the prize, He will not change His word, because we have missed it. Neither will He pick up our badly-shot and stray arrow and stick it in the target for us.

No, but if another who had shot and won the prize by his own skill, and had got the prize in his possession and was in all the enjoyment of it, offered, without our shooting at all, to share his prize with us, it would be well, if we wanted the prize, to accept that offer, and take it on the terms of a gift to us, especially if the love of the giver were mingled with the gift.

Christ, as man, has won the prize of heaven and the glory, and we should have lost it for ever, if He had not. He has won it not for Himself (for He had it before Himself) but to share it with us, if we will accept it that way. Man, the unbeliever, is too proud to give up his shooting, and trying, and submit to take Christ, and salvation, and life, and heaven, and glory, and everything else included, as a gift, a gift of love—the Gift of God to a sinner. In accepting Christ, the Gift of God, the believer has everything, but he does not get it by trying to hit the target of God's righteousness, but by believing and owning that he has "come short," and has no hope of anything else except coming

short, and when that is the case, he gives up trying to shoot, himself, and accepts what Christ has won and offers to him.

How simply Scripture says (Rom. iii. 9-26), "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin ; . . . there is none righteous, no, not one; . . . they are all gone out of the way," (the arrow has not hit!) "they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one . . . Now we know, that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become GUILTY before God." That is-if you are trying to get the prize by shooting, in other words, by your efforts, you are trying works, or to improve yourself for God, trying to become satisfactory to God, and you are under the law, and the law has already pronounced the verdict. What is the verdict? Guilty before God. Why is it pronounced? "That every mouth may be stopped." That there may be no more efforts or hope to become righteous in our own way, but giving it all up as lost that way, may lay down the bow and arrow, so to speak, and own it a gone case;

may take the place of guilty, and lost, and then wait and hear what God has to say.

Doing and striving is not hearing. While men are striving and doing, they have no time, no inclination, to hear. For them it is not what God says, but what they can succeed in doing or feeling. God says, "Guilty," and they go on, as if He had not said it. God says, You have missed the mark; you need not try any more; I have a gift for you. God says, "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin," and yet people go on trying to get rid of sin, as if there was still a hope of doing it. They have not heard His verdict. He says, "we have before proved" it, and yet they do not take proof, of God, to be enough, and give over their efforts, taking the place of guilty and lost, the only place in which to learn His mercy.

But now what does He say to such? Let us go on with those verses in Romans. Verse 20, "Therefore by deeds of law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by law is knowledge of sin." That is, He cannot pronounce you righteous by your effort to hit the target, for you have tried, and He has proved

you have not done it. Your arrow has been shot, and it has "come short." He gave you a life to use for Him, and you have not done it; you have failed. You only had one life to give to Him, one arrow, so to speak, to shoot with, and it has missed the mark; where will you get another life to try with? "God has mercy," you say. Yes, but not to allow you to establish your own right eousness. You must bow to His! Have you missed the mark? are you lost? Do you bow to the Word of God that by deeds of law shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by law comes, not knowledge of righteousness but "knowledge of sin." Do you accept the statement of God that you will never become righteous that way at all, or ever get one step nearer to it? Read it again: "By deeds of law shall no flesh be justified in his sight;" it is not His way : efforts after righteousness do not bring out righteousness from man, but bring out the knowledge of sin, just the opposite—"by the law is the knowledge of sin." Give up that way then.

If I am working at a pump-handle to try and get up fresh, clear water, water that I can drink; and some one says to me: "You may

as well save yourself that labour, for that water has been polluted, and you will get no fresh drinkable water there; the more you pump at it, the more you will find it true; I have had it all uncovered, and I have been down into it myself, and I know all about what is in that well; you may as well give up your efforts. But there is a well close by, where you will get what you want; go to that. But let that well you are pumping at alone; the more you work at it, the more dirty water you bring up"; I should be foolish if I did not attend to such a warning, if the person was worthy of belief; or should I ask him to help me to pump?

Christ knows what is in man. He has been down, spotless Himself, into the dirty waters of man's sins, and knows what it was to die as the bearer of our sins. Such a witness as that is worth believing.

It would be foolish, too, to try and work at both pump-handles together. God will allow no mixture of ourselves and Christ together. One is pure; it is *His* stream, as pure as Christ is pure; as pure as God is pure. The first is marked "I," that is the way you may know it. The second is marked "Christ," that is the

way you may know that. What Christ has come and done for me, a sinner, and said to me, a sinner, is quite a separate and distinct thing from what I have ever been, or ever could be, able to do, or say, or think towards Godjust as another shooting and hitting the target, and exhibiting to me the prize he has won, is a separate and distinct thing from my trying to do it for myself. Christ's work is over, and He has got the prize, and is sitting down in heaven in possession of it. The shooting time is over, unless unbelief persists still in going on with it. But God's Word is, "Stand still, and see the salvation of God" (Exod. xiv. 13). The only way of getting the prize now is accepting Christ's offer of sharing His prize with us. We must have it as a gift, or not at all. He alone has been able to glorify God, as God's glory requires it to be done. What a simple thing it is, and yet it is the last thing man likes to do. Resting and receiving is the easiest thing where there is faith, but, because of man's unbelief and unwillingness to yield the point of his being helpless and hopeless, he will not give up his efforts to get some good thing out of himself-and asks God to help him!

It is wonderful the many ways Satan and our own hearts deceive us. The good things that man looks for in himself take different forms and shapes. One man hopes to produce good works. Another says, No, I know I cannot do good works, but I ought to love God. Another thinks he ought to pray for it; another that he ought to repent for it, and feel his sins more deeply first. Another that he ought to feel more grateful (feel grateful for what he does not know he has got!) Another is not satisfied because he does not feel right (a sinner in his sins feeling right!) It is the same story with each, only put in different ways.

"I don't feel as I should like to feel," is such a common expression. How could you, when you are a sinner, and nothing but a sinner?—but you don't know it thoroughly, you don't know you are an out-and-out sinner, and you will have to learn that some day. That blood of Christ, shed on the Cross, says what you are; but you have not accepted the verdict thoroughly, you are still working at the old pump-handle, and must pump up more filthy water before you will consent to give up the hope of getting good out of that old nature as

a thing which is impossible. "The carnal mind" (the mind of the flesh—that is, what you are as born of Adam) "is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." You have found out, by the experience of trying, that you have not succeeded in being subject to the law or will of God, but you do not yet believe that this also is true—"NEITHER INDEED CAN BE!" "So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Do you believe that true?

If you do, you will give up trying to please God in order to get justification, and give up looking into your own experience to know whether you have life, and you will, instead, accept the justification offered you through Christ, as a gift from God. If you believe on Christ, you are justified without your works; but how could you feel justified, before you are justified? Justification comes through believing and bowing to Christ and His work on the Cross for sinners, and not through your feelings, or experiences of any kind, good or bad.

A person does not get warm by feeling that he is warm; or get sight by feeling that he sees; or get his hunger satisfied by feeling that he has eaten. But after he has been to the fire, he feels the effect of the fire. He learns there is heat in the fire, not heat in himself, and that heat from outside warms him. After he has eaten, he finds his hunger is satisfied; if he is still hungry, it is a pretty good evidence that he has not eaten, or not eaten enough. A person knows pretty well when his hunger has been satisfied; there is a rest in it, after being hungry.

And so with the sun-light. We get the light in the sun, or in a lamp, and can see by it after we have gone into the light, where the light is to be found. But the light is outside us, and found in the sun, not in us; and if a person cannot see, he either has his eyes shut, or is not in the light, and it would be no use his trying to feel anything. He has not yet got the light. Christ is the light; you must get there, you will find all you want in Him. You have not given up everything, every hope in yourself, and opened your eyes to see that bright light which God has caused to shine down on this dark world and upon dark sinners, from Himself, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Remember that the light is not to be found

within you, but shines from the face of Jesus Christ, who has been to the Cross for sinners, and now sits at God's right hand, the proof of the work having been accepted by God. Can you see it there? Light shines down from Him to us; and does not shine up from us to Him; that would be the wrong way for the rays of light to flow. Can you see that light? If not, you are blind, for it shines brightly enough, and it would be no use your groping about for feelings in yourself—right feelings towards God—you will get no right water out of your well, rump you ever so hard or ever so long.

Use the well that God has opened; you never found one drop of water that came out of that well, or one ray of light that shone from that sun, anything but a pure one. You never found anything but love there—love and light—love that loved the worst of sinners, and light that judged their sins on the Cross, and can righteously accept us on the ground of that work of His. But that is a work that has judged every work of ours, and judged the man that does them, as well, judged both works and man, both bad together. Judgment on us—life, and justification, and salvation, wisdom,

righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, all found in Him; and nothing to hinder them being ours except unbelief. Accept the judgment of God about yourself, that you are guilty, and not only that, but lost; and then accept the mercy of God through Jesus Christ who has opened a Way for us in Himself, but a way that has shut out every way of our own.

But I will say a little about Christ as the Way, for while it brings out Christ's perfection, it brings out more clearly man's hopeless imperfections. God's glory requires that a man should not come short of it. There was only one Man who did not. Christ glorified God as a man. He was a bright Light in this world to the glory of God. But if He was that, He throws into darkness all the sparks that men attempt to kindle. He undertook to glorify God, for us; this is the explanation of His becoming a man. In His life as a man (and far more, if one may say so, in His death) He glorified God. He was perfectly obedient all through, even to death. His whole life was for us. One way in which it was for us, was, that He manifested to us what God was: He made it clear that God loved sinners, and would not spare even His Son, but sent Him down with all manner of help and healing. There was nothing of mercy and love and sympathy that Christ did not bring with Him.

But another sense in which it was for us, was, that it brought out what man was-what we are. If you want to heal thoroughly, and get the patient, the sick person, who does not know his sickness or the extent of his disease. to submit to your skill, you must prove and make manifest the disease. You must convince the patient as to the extent of the evil that is in him before you will get him to take the remedy for it. You must bring out the need, the extreme need, before you will get a man to take the medicine that will cure him. This also is the part of the physician. Christ's life did this. It brought out that man was not only a law-breaker (which had been shown before Christ came), but that he was a hater of God. God, in Christ, came into this world of misery with nothing but good for man: and man put the One who was the Messenger of all the good, out of the world. They could not find anything against Him except that He came from God,-that He said that He and His

Father were one. God had turned sinful man out of paradise, but when God came into the world, in the Person of Christ, to seek after man in that distance into which sin has brought him, man turned God (as far as he was able) out of the world. Man killed the Son of God. This manifested man's enmity.

God showed too what He thought of man, for God gave Christ to die. Christ on the Cross takes man's place. What is that? Death. Then death is the end of man; he is subject to death. His disease is—death!

But Christ bears more. What is that? Wrath! "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" This was not death, but more. It is what man will have after death if he refuse the remedy. It was the way that God looked at sin, and showed the way Ho must deal with it when He deals with it in judgment. Christ takes the place of the sinner and bears his penalty. "Thy waves and billows are gone over me." Not man's waves; "Thy waves." What must God's waves and billows be like? O sinner, thy portion, if Christ has not delivered thee! Christ endures all this as sin-bearer, and dies—then rises again.

The gospel then says, Now you must have salvation in Him alone. That is what the brazen serpent was; it was the proof of the disease, but it was the cure for the disease. (See John iii. 14-18; Num. xxi. 8, 9). The sinner, bitten by the old serpent, the devil, with the poison of sin in his veins, and death staring him in the face, with judgment and the wrath of God to follow-looks at Christ whom God has "made sin" on the Cross (2 Cor. v. 21), and directly He sees that Christ was lifted up for salvation, and that God has given this as the gospel of his salvation, the sight alone of that "salvation of God" delivers him from all his fears. He sees a salvation outside him in Christ, Christ lifted on the Cross. This "gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 18); and directly he understands it and believes it is of God, he sees that there is power of God in that Cross for his salvation; a power that is in God, not in him; that God can save him, without his doing anything himself. He is saved through the work of another, a work that is finished; he is saved through looking at it, that is, by believing it, seeing it with the eye

of faith, an eye that hitherto has been closed. or looking at himself and his own poor works and feelings, and experiences instead of at Christ. Ah, he has neglected the work, and the feelings, and experiences of Christ on that Cross, and been occupied more with his own experiences, and thought that he had to do something, or feel something, or experience something in himself, to make himself, somehow, worthy, or more worthy of it. He has forgotten or never believed the fact that it is for sinners, haters of God, and those who are without strength, so that the sight of it, the letting of it into their hearts, might make them hate the sin that made it necessary that such a wonderful work should be done, and such a wonderful Person should die, as the only remedy to take it away. It was done, too, for those that had not loved God, that the sight of it should break the hearts that had not loved Him. It was done too for those who were "without strength," that they might learn that "Power belongeth unto God" alone (Psa. lxii. 11), and that if they are to be saved by any power, it must be His alone; this power to be found only in the Cross (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 18, 24; ii. 5). God "has raised him from the dead and given him glory, that your faith and hope should be in God" (1 Pet. i. 21). The death and resurrection of Christ contains the gospel of God, God's provision for the sinner; and it is preached to him; and the sinner is saved by only believing it; but I will point out what Scripture says about this, that you may see it and be convinced for yourself; for if you are to have it, you must have it from God alone.

In 1 Cor. xv. 1-11 you will read that the apostle repeats over to the Corinthians what the gospel was which he had announced unto them. He says that they had received it, and that, at the time he was writing to them, they were standing in it, and that (unless, indeed, they had believed in vain, which they had not) they were saved by this gospel, if they held fast the word which he announced unto them as the gospel, or glad-tidings. Now this is an all-important Scripture, because Paul is here undertaking to repeat to the Corinthians the particular gospel that had saved them, and would save them, if they kept to this and nothing else. And he goes on to argue that if it were a false gospel they were still in their sins; which was the same as saying, if it was a true one they were not in their sins.

We see then that since everything depended on Paul's making clear to the Corinthians what really was this gospel, and his putting in or leaving out nothing, this is just the occasion when we should be able to learn what it was that saved them, and therefore what it is that is to save us. (Compare also Acts x. 34-44; xi. 14.)

I quote the passage then: "For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he rose again [was raised] the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve," &c.; and then Paul goes on to give the evidences of Christ's resurrection. But the gospel is all contained in these three facts about Christ: death for our sins; burial; resurrection; three facts preached to sinners dark in heathenism, for their salvation, and saving them if believed and kept in memory.

But what is the importance of these three facts? All importance if true; a false gospel,

and deceiving, if untrue! Those who received it were now not in their sins if this gospel was true; they were still in their sins if it was untrue! Once, steeped in sin, this gospel had been declared to them by Paul in the name of God; they had received it, as being God's message to them; they had even received deliverance from their sins by it; they had got peace with God by it; was it now, after all, to be found a deceitful gospel, and were they still in their sins? Had they believed in vain? (for this is the meaning of "believing in vain"). Had they rested their whole soul, and body, and course in this world, on a gospel which after all was an untrue one, and would give way under them and leave them in the misery of their sins as they were before!

If some one tells me I may trust to that plank, that it will bear my weight, and I may safely cross upon it over a precipice; and if I believe his word about the plank, and, trusting myself upon it, begin to cross over to the other side—then, if I find the plank begin to crack, I may well fear that I have put my confidence too quickly in my adviser and in his plank. But if the plank proves, upon the trial, still

sound, then I may go on trusting it; and I had better not be diverted from it to step upon another plank, instead, which is not sound. If it bears, I find I have not "believed in vain," and I go forward confidently, trusting to the strength of my plank, not the strength of my faith in it.

Paul says: You received this gospel, you believed it, trusted to it; you are still standing in it; you are saved by it if you continue in it, unless the plank gives way—unless the gospel proves unreliable, untrue.

But a few words of caution before examining the three parts of this gospel that Paul describes, the triple thickness of this infallible plank that God has provided for man's safety, advising them to make use of it, for it will certainly bear them over in safety. The caution is this: Do not mistake your faith for the strength of God's plank. Do not confound your believing with the gospel. The Corinthians had received it, they were standing in it. Do you then believe it, and take your stand on it, and on nothing else? Paul did not say, "Unless your faith is weak"; but, "Unless your faith is weak"; but, "Unless your faith is in vain." He did not tell

them to doubt their faith, but to continue in it. There was no question in their minds that they had taken their stand on this plank, and Paul was encouraging them not to step off it, although there were some teachers amongst them constructing another plank or bridge for them, that they might step off the one on to the other. Paul says, If what these other teachers tell you is the gospel, you have believed in vain, God's gospel is a false one; but he does not say, I fear you have not believed, or, I fear your faith is not of the right kind. He knows they had trusted something; and then repeats to them the thing they had trusted. He knew they were on some plank, and then described to them again its threefold thickness and security.

If a man is on a plank, he may drop off it, or step off it, or be enticed off it, and it may require good eyesight and careful walking to keep on it or walk on it steadily, but as long as he is on it at all, it is certain that his safety depends only upon the strength of the bridge he is walking on. The danger these Corinthians were in was that of being led off by false teachers to another gospel, which was not

another, but only a deceit; and Paul tries the strength of their bridge for them again, to make them keep to it. Do not then confound your trusting to the plank with the plank itself; but if you are not on it, step upon it, and let your whole weight be upon it, for it will bear you, and would bear all that would trust it. You need not fear to trust it. Once lay hold of its strength, that it is God's, and you will be satisfied that it is strong enough, so that a man has every reason to walk on without fear, trusting, not to himself, but to the ground he is upon. If you are not sure you are upon God's ground, do not wait to ask yourself or test yourself at all, for you will never stand any test; but step upon the plank-believe this gospel. You will not believe it in vain.

But now let us examine what that plank is which is to be trusted to. What is that gospel on which all that a man holds dear is to be risked? How can a gospel save you? God can save you by a gospel. God Himself is the adviser that you should trust your all upon it, for it is the only plank in His universe that will carry you safely over that fearful precipice that lies between the place where you are standing

as a sinner (towards which the wrath of God is hastening), and that place in the glory of God in heaven, whither the Lord Jesus Christ has gone as a man. If a man attempt to cross on any other, it will fail him, as surely as God is God.

FIRST PART: "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." Then, as we have seen before, the death and wrath that belong to our sins are past and over; Christ bore them; they are behind. It was for "our" "Our" sins then have been judged, condemned, punished; Christ had none of His own, they were ours. The wrath then for our sins is past, and there is no wrath left for us; He took it all-for all our sins. Then there is no wrath left for us. If He did not die for our sins, there is nothing left but that ourselves must die for them. Christ is not coming again to die, and there is no other who is coming. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission"; some one must die, for God cannot pass over sin. If sin can only be put away by death, and if Christ has not died, can you provide another ransom, or will God do without one? No; if Christ has not died, we

are irretrievably lost. But if Christ has died, do you believe "Christ has died for our sins?" Can you adopt that text as being true for yourself? "Our" sins? If not, who is going to die for them? Do you not see that there can be no other possible way for you if He has not? The wrath is either all past or unavoidably all to come. There is no alternative between the one or the other.

It was "according to the Scriptures"—there was God's word for it (Heb. ix. 25-28).

Second Part: "And that He was buried." He not only died, but passed out of this scene altogether by burial. It was more even than death, for the Christ that bore our sins in His own body on the tree was no longer to be found in His life as sin-bearer in which He bore them. He not only died "for," but also died "unto" sin. He went out of that one condition, which He took as sin-bearing, and, before appearing in resurrection, He was buried. It was the end of the sin and sin-bearing, the death and the wrath, and was the burial of Him who, being "made sin for us," bore it. That condition of things was closed for ever, both for the Substitute and those whose place He took. Their

sins and iniquities are no more to be seen or remembered — not even by God (Heb. i. 3; ix. 26; x. 17; Psa. ciii. 12; Isa. xxxviii. 17) — all the past, even the sin-bearing life, gone—"He was buried." We are buried with Him by baptism unto death (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12).

THIRD PART: "And that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." If He had not been raised by God, where would have been the evidence that God had accepted the work? He who laid our iniquity on Christ was the very One who raised Him from amongst the dead. It was wrath for sin, on the Cross, but resurrection from the dead when the sin was gone. A risen Christ is a Christ who has manifestly put away our sins, and died "unto" our sin. Resurrection is the manifestation to all of His being the Son of God (Rom. i. 4), and therefore of His ability to do it; and also that He was cleared from all that which was laid on Him when He was on the Cross. was not more truly "delivered for our offences" than He was "raised for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Not only was He raised from the dead but raised up into the glory of God.

If I have seen a man put into prison for a

crime, and afterwards, when the term is over, see the magistrate himself go and open the prison-door and take him out, I know that the crime has not been passed by, but atoned for; justice has been met. If I know that man as having undertaken and been allowed by the magistrate to go into prison for a crime that I had committed, when I saw him taken out by the magistrate, it would be to me as though I saw myself taken out. No one could righteously lay hold of me afterwards, if righteousness had been righteously met and satisfied in that substitution. The responsibility of it would rest upon the magistrate, not on me; and any one who again brought the charge against me would be bringing a charge against him, would be making him unrighteous. The character of the one who proposed and carried out the substitution would be at stake, if any one could find any flaw in what he had done.

God undertook to show mercy, yea, rather, love! and yet sustain His own character as righteous. He undertook to glorify Himself about our sin in condemning it on the Cross, and then to glorify Himself in His love, as the One who was our Justifier. He undertook so

to clear away our sin that He should be righteous in taking us back to Himself in love, to Himself in glory! This He accomplished by giving His Son, who went to the Cross (Heb. x. 9); and there on the Cross, in the person of the Son, God so dealt with sin that His wrath was exhausted. Our sin received all the condemnation and wrath it deserved. Instead of God's wrath consuming the Victim, the Victim, who was God's own Son, consumed, so to speak, the wrath. None but One who was Divine could have done this. He who was the Victim, the Sin-bearer on the Cross, could then be taken back into glory. He could not have gone there if He had taken the sin with Him. But He became entitled to the glory as a man, as Substitute, for men, after He had put away their sin-"ours," if we have believed. This is God's righteousness; this is the covering, the garment, that God clothes the sinner in, who has trusted in Christ's death, God's remedy for sin.

Christ's place on the Cross, then, manifests God's wrath against sin; Christ's place now in glory manifests that it is gone. He who took it on the Cross, and confessed it as His own, has been discharged, cleared, justified from it.

It was really "ours," so He was discharged " for us"; "raised again for our justification." God sent Him that He might bear it; God raised Him from the dead and put Him in glory after He had borne it. Therefore it is God's righteousness; put in action and accomplished for us by God, as sinners. God has made a path, then, by His Son, from the place of condemnation (the Cross) into the place of glory. As this path starts from the place of condemnation (the gate into it is at that point), it must be for the sinner under condemnation, and for none other. There is no way into the glory for any others. It is preached "unto all" for all are under condemnation; it is put "upon them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22). Which is it for you-"unto" you or "upon" you? Those who own themselves to be sinners and lost, and bow in faith to this mercy of Godbow to Christ, the Saviour whom God sent into the world for sinners, enemies of God, without strength, and lost, and then raised from the dead-those who believe it, receive it all, and have been brought to God, and stand in the righteousness of God, in Christ.

Yours, desiring your soul's peace,

* * *

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