



THE VITAL QUESTION

By A. G. D.





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EVERY thinking person will admit that the present day is one in which many questions of importance await solution. In every sphere of human activity, problems of great moment are facing mankind.

There is one question, however, of the greatest importance with which everyone of us is faced, and to which everyone of us must furnish an answer. Other questions we may leave

to those of greater ability than ourselves ; but this question cannot be passed on to others, nor can it be left unsolved. Every political, social or religious question fades into insignificance beside this great question :

How do I Stand in Relation to God ?

Now do not at this point say, "Oh, another tract, after all," and scatter the book to the winds. At least believe that this booklet has been written and handed to you with interest in your welfare, and read on to the end.

After all, why be annoyed that such a question should

be raised? Whatever your professed beliefs may be, you know quite well that there *is* a God, and that you have a responsibility in regard of Him. The starry heavens and every flower that blooms, proclaim in undeniable terms that *God is*.

Moreover, apart from anything the Bible may say, it is certain as God's creatures we must be responsible to Him. Your conscience will tell you that, and if you will listen to the voice of the scriptures, you will note that God has said, "Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (Rom. xiv. 11.) This is the unalterable and unchallengeable decree of

God, with whom you must of necessity have to do.

You may dismiss from your mind what you deem to be an unpleasant fact, but the fact remains. Either now or by-and-by, either in time or eternity, either as Saviour or Judge, you and I must have to say to God. I shall not answer for you, nor you for me. Parents shall not appear for their children, nor will there be any defending counsel. As an individual and in respect of my own individual responsibility to God, to whom I owe everything, I *must* have to say to Him.

Before pressing this question,

however, let us ask and answer another question :

How does God Stand in Relation to Me?

We know quite well that much we have said, thought, and done would not bear telling to our nearest friend, much less exposing in the searchlight of the holiness of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity. (Hab. i. 13.) We know, too, that the God to whom we owe our all has had little or no place in our thoughts. Yet, after all, how does God regard us? What are His thoughts of us?

Perhaps you say, "I cannot

tell.” Yet the whole object of the gospel—and we mean God’s gospel—is to disclose to us what God’s thoughts are in reference to men.

It is marvellous to think that God should have thoughts of us at all, but infinitely more marvellous that those thoughts should be of blessing. So far from God desiring to execute the judgment upon this world and upon men that they so righteously deserve, He has come out from His own side, at infinite cost to Himself, to secure our present and eternal blessing. If you are lost for ever at the finish, it will be in spite of every divine activity and every divine entreaty.

There is nothing that God could do to win our confidence and save us from the consequences of our sin and folly that He has not done.

Let us listen for a moment to an important statement from the word of God : "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) You have doubtless heard that before, but has it ever charmed your heart to think that the very God against whom you have sinned should commend His love to you ?—that so far from having hard thoughts of you (as you may have of Him), He has nothing in His heart but

blessing for you. Long before there was ever a pulsation in any of our hearts Godward, the heart of God was throbbing towards us.

No mighty act of power, no wonder-working word, however, could meet the sin question. The righteousness of God necessitated a complete vindication of His glory in respect of sin. No man was capable of meeting this question, for all were equally involved in sin ; so when at last it was proved beyond question that the position was irretrievably hopeless, God's Son became Man.

There has never been such

a moment in the history of this world—apart from the death of Christ—as when the Saviour lay a babe in Bethlehem's manger! It was the moment of God's intervention on behalf of His sinful creature man. Unsought by men, and, sad to relate, unwanted by men, God's Son was found here as Jesus of Nazareth.

You do not need to be told the story of Jesus, you have heard it from childhood days, but have you ever asked what it means to you?

Some tell us that the life of Jesus was an example of what man's life ought to be, and that His death was that of a

martyr ; but the word of God says that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) Men may tell you that His death was a sacrifice in the cause of reform, but scripture tells us that He died "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.)

Let this amazing fact sink down into your soul, that the holy Son of God went into death to meet the great sin question to God's glory and to give Himself a ransom for all. (1 Tim. ii. 6.) At Calvary

God's holiness (which required a complete answer to sin) and God's love (which furnished the answer in the provision of the sinless Lamb of God) met together.

But the One who did that mighty work, and who alone could have done it, is no longer in death. The cross is vacant, the grave is empty, and at God's right hand to-day sits a risen and triumphant Saviour. Through Him, and Him alone, is proclaimed to all men forgiveness of sins. (Acts xiii. 38.) Such is the wonderful situation existing as you read these words.

Let us, then, amend the

question stated at the beginning of this tract, and ask :

How do You Stand in Relation to a Saviour God revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ?

You and I must each answer that question for ourselves. Upon our answer depends our eternal destiny.

Do not spurn these precious truths as "old-fashioned" or the like. There is blessing to be found in none other but Christ. (Acts iv. 12.) God has given His best, for He has given His Son. He has met the questions you and I could never meet, and the divine solution of them is for us. In Christ God has found *His* answer to

every question which has ever been raised in His universe ; and you and I may find in that same wonderful Person a perfect answer to the great question with which we are confronted.

You may seek to find some other solution, you may endeavour by high ideals, by a model life, by self-sacrificing devotion to your fellow-men, by religion, or by some other means to make yourself fit for the presence of God ; but if so, you will find one day to your eternal loss that none of these things afford the least footing before God. May you make this discovery *now*, and turn in simple faith to the One in

whom God has found *His* answer.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”
(Rom. x. 9.)

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