

DO YOU LOVE JESUS?

THOSE who believe in Jesus love Jesus. We love Him because He has first loved us. We have known and believed the love which God hath towards us (1 John iv. 16). And you, dear reader, do *you* love Jesus?

Alas! Why should you not love Him? If you were seriously ill and suffering severely, would you not love the compassionate and skilful physician who should remove your complaint? If you were in captivity, amongst barbarous people, and were every day enduring hunger and the most cruel treatment, would you not love the generous deliverer who should pay your ransom and break your fetters? If you were in a desert country, where no path, no shelter could be seen around, and you felt death with its bitterest pains already approaching, would you not love the friend who had sought you, and ran towards you, and restored your failing strength? Lastly, if, by the commission of crime, you had incurred the indignation of society and the utmost rigour of the laws, and were already bound and brought to the scaffold, would you not love the devoted benefactor who should take your guilt upon himself, and bear its punishment in your stead?

And JESUS, has He done less than this? and does He approach you with less striking benefits?

Is not your soul afflicted with the deep-rooted disease—in-veterate and mortal—of sin? And does not Jesus—sent from God to heal the broken hearted, Luke iv. 18—present Himself to you, and say in a voice of love, “Wilt thou be healed?”

Are you not in captivity, and the slave of the most cruel of tyrants? Col. i. 13. Is not your heart in bondage to the world and its vanities? and does not Satan the prince of this world, lead you captive at his will? and does he not force upon you the yoke of those passions and idolatries, and that burden of covetousness which threatens finally to overthrow you? Eph. ii. 2, 3. And has not Jesus conquered Satan, Heb. ii. 14, 15, and broken the staff of the exacter, 1 John iii. 8, and come to you, with tender solicitude, saying, “Wilt thou that I deliver thee?”

Are you not, by nature, gone astray, Isa. liii. 6—lost, Matt. xviii. 11—lost without remedy. Rom. v. 6, in the thick darkness of this age—in its ignorance of heaven,—in its unbelief—alas! in its hatred of God and of His grace? And is not Jesus *the way, the truth, and the life*. John xiv. 6? Does He not come to you as the Shepherd who runneth after the lost sheep, Luke xv. 4, and say, with compassionate love, “*I am the door. He that entereth in by me, shall be saved?*”

Lastly, are you not under condemnation from your birth, and through your multiplied transgressions, and guilty before the High and Lofty One? John iii. 18. Are you not under the sentence of the second death, Eph. ii. 3—of the eternal curse which all sin deserves? Rom. vi. 23, and does not Jesus—who, having been made a curse when He hung upon the tree, Gal. iii. 13, bearing thus in His own soul the eternal punishment of the sins of His people, John iii.—approach you, and present to you the blood sprinkled for the remission of sins, Heb. ix. 22, saying, in tones of mercy, “He that believeth in me shall not perish, but shall see life” John iii. 14, 17?—“*Believe and be saved!*”

Is not this what Jesus has done—what Jesus says to you? O what love! Why, then, O why should you not love Jesus?

One word more. Know, then, that by Him is preached unto you the remission of sins, and whosoever believeth in Him is justified by Him. Acts xiii. 38, 39. “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above: or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that 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.”