



TOWARD THE MARK

*“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE
OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”*

PHILIPPIANS 3:14

*A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES*

**October 2017
Vol. 16 No. 4**

October, 2017

Dear Reader,

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Ephesians 3:17)

Now with many of you back to school, university, and regular work schedules, and with all the challenges of daily life, I would like encourage you to have Christ reign as Lord in your heart. For it is when Christ is seated on the throne of your heart, not merely that He is in your heart, that His rights there are fully recognized. Only then you will find that greatest joy of every day, when the heart keeps the celebration of Christ’s right to be enthroned there. Then Christ’s voice is heard to give you instruction from His Word on how to face the challenges of every day circumstances. When He reigns alone! Though rejected on earth, He is proclaimed King in your life. Your year will be like “the whole year” which Elijah spent with the widow (1 Kings 17), every care and every need were foreseen and provided for by the great guest in the house of the one in need. Day by day with Him as the King of your life you will find peace in the midst of trouble as you cast all your care upon Him. Your anxiety and fear will diminish and you will taste His tender love and care in a fresh way. But that is not all! The tree lives and thrives in winter because of its roots; it bursts forth into unhindered manifestation of its life in summer. The winter is now, the summer is eternity! We live in Christ at home during the winter; we keep ourselves in the sunshine of His presence in foretaste now of an endless eternity. It is Christ in both: He reigns in our hearts and we shall reign with Him. If we do not like His full sway in our own little kingdom, how can we relish His unbounded sway over everything? “He that is faithful in that, which is least, is faithful also in much.” Crown Him King in your own heart and the great day of His Kingdom and glory will also burst on your prepared and delighted heart.

May the Lord use this issue of *Toward the Mark* to help you grow and be established as you read it.

Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on *Toward the Mark*.

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

Emil S. Nashed

Please send your questions and comments to:

Toward The Mark
c/o Wayne Christian Assembly
60 Smith Lane
Wayne, NJ 07470-5354
Attention: Emil S. Nashed

www.towardthemark.org

TOWARD THE MARK

Contents

Repentance	1
The Trespass Offering	4
Letters to Young Christians	10
God in Everything!	15

If you would like to join the mailing list to receive the electronic version of Toward the Mark, simply visit www.towardthemark.org or send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com to be added. If you would like copies of older issues, please mention it in your e-mail.

Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or the J.N. Darby translation.

MILK

"The truth shall make you free"

REPENTANCE !

Μετάνοια = change of mind, afterthought, to think differently after reflection—the contrast of forethought. νοῦς = the mind, the organ or faculty for the apprehension of the truth, the understanding—not the ability to think, but the organ of thought and sentiment; or, by an easy and not uncommon transition, the thoughts objectively present before any one, his judgment, view on any matters.

Repentance is accordingly directly connected with the mind, thought, reflection, understanding, judgment according to truth, the knowledge acquired by mental exercise, and what is involved therein.

It is not merely the forsaking of an evil path—the dread of consequences might produce that—but a change of judgment and apprehension concerning it. It is the result of an action of the mind, not of the feelings merely, though the feelings may set in movement the exercises that lead on to repentance. “Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation.” Sorrow is connected with the feelings, but the mind is deeper than the feelings. They change, but the mind is part of the man himself; it abides, does not change, though we speak metaphorically of a “change of mind.” The feelings are connected with what is introspective and subjective; the mind is capable of objective thought. Joy, sorrow, and such-like are feelings aroused by something in relation to self. They are motions of the soul, subjective and feminine. The mind, which is connected with the spirit, and is the highest masculine part of man, treats of things absolutely, as they are in themselves. There is then a godly sorrow that “worketh repentance;” and there is a sorrow that does not, a sorrow that “worketh death” (2 Cor. 7:10).

The judgment of sin, according to God, is in the former: regret or remorse only is in the latter.

There is another word translated repentance in the A.V.—μεταμέλομαι (see Matt. 21:29, 32; 27:3; 2 Cor. 7:8; Heb. 7:21)—which means to produce aftercare, regret, remorse, as in the case of Judas; but it does not seem to involve the same action of the “mind;” but rather of the feelings, and it is not said, as is said of repentance, μετάνοια, to be directed “Godward” (Acts 20:21).

Repentance, then, is the reflective judgment passed upon sin in the light of God, and on self as connected with it—the doer of it. It is not a change of judgment as to God, but a change of judgment as to what sin is in His sight, and of self along with it. And so the prodigal says, “I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” Here all the afterthought and the blame are about himself and what he has done, and the standard of his judgment is according to what heaven is and in his father’s sight. That is true repentance; the fruit of grace bringing him to the just judgment of himself, and working in him sufficient faith to come home, and find that faith fulfilled beyond his fondest expectation.

This repentance, first preached by the Baptist (Luke 3) and afterwards insisted on by the Lord (Luke 13), is now portrayed in this inimitable picture (Luke 15), which has furnished ever since an inexhaustible fund of unfailing wealth to set forth the grace that produces repentance and the exercises of soul that start from the first dawning of fearful faith, until it rests in the joy of the Father’s kiss and the delight of the Father’s welcome home.

This repentance may or may not be produced or accompanied by the knowledge of the gospel; but in itself it is always “toward God,” and ever justifies Him, as it condemns self. So David—“Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest” (Ps. 51:4); and so, again, the dying thief—“We indeed justly; for we receive the

due reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:41).

But if repentance is the judgment of self according to God, it necessarily deepens as we learn more of God and of self. But from the beginning its character is the same in kind, differing only in degree, as we become better acquainted with things as they really are in the truth of them. It is the first step on the road of true conversion; it deepens all the way along as we grow in the knowledge of God.

Edward Cross

Search the Scriptures!

1. Whom did Moses describe as “The beloved of the Lord”?
2. What New Testament word means “the anointed one”?
3. What was name of a godly woman who is the first to be called prophetess in the New Testament?

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

THE TRESPASS OFFERING!

"Then I restored that which I took not away" (Psalm 69:4)

The Trespass Offering (Lev. 5-6) is usually looked upon as a sort of secondary sin offering and passed over with little notice, but there are features about it, so it seems to me, that give it a character entirely its own and show that it is not a whit behind the four great offerings in its importance.

In the sin offering we learn the guilt of sin, but the trespass offering teaches the injury that sin has done; the sinner not only suffers himself but his sin causes others to suffer. Every sin is a trespass against others.

Three directions are indicated in which sin operates:—

- In the holy things of the Lord (5:15).**
- Against the commandments of the Lord (5:17).**
- Against the Lord in an offence against one's neighbor (6:2).**

To get a right view of these different aspects of sin we must go back to the start of man's history.

- Adam committed a trespass and sin in the holy things of the Lord. When Adam sinned God was the first to suffer; We learn how dear man was to God by the counsel He took as to him before He created him, and the care He exercised as He formed him in His own image and after His likeness, drawing so near to him that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Adam must have been impressed with God's affectionate interest in him; most certainly the devil was, and he planned to spoil it all and to make Adam sin in the holy things of God, to injure God in His holy love for him. He succeeded, perhaps more easily than he had hoped; distrust and disobedience thrust out of the hearts of Adam and his wife the happy confidence

that God's goodness had created in them, and God lost them, — He lost the choicest and best of His creation, the crown of all His work. Have we sufficiently considered His cry in the Garden when He came down to commune with Adam in the cool of the day, "Adam, where art thou"? Wounded love throbbed in those words. I say it with the greatest reverence; Adam's sin was a stab at the very heart of God. God was the first to suffer. The story of the prodigal (Luke 15) is the New Testament answer to Genesis 3 and the Father's joy in the return of His son in that chapter teaches us how keen His sorrow must have been at his departure.

- **Adam's sin was also against the commandments of the Lord.**

His act of disobedience was rebellion; it meant, "I'll be a god to myself; who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" it was a challenge to God's supremacy. Let us have no doubt about this, sin would dethrone Almighty God if it could. If there had been any weakness in God and He had condoned the sin because He loved the sinner, and sacrificed His justice for His love, it would have meant the abdication of His throne; He would have ceased to be God. It is necessary that we should realize that sin is not only a stab at God's heart but an attempt on His throne. God is love: that is His nature, and He is a just God; that is His character, both His nature and His character were challenged and attacked by Adam's sin and are still challenged by all the sin of his race.

With what hurried steps sin advanced to trespass against man's neighbor, which is counted as a trespass against the Lord. As soon as there was a man to sin against, the trespass was done, and the startled earth drank the blood of the first man slain, not by a demon from a nether hell, nor by a wild beast from the forest, but by his own mother's son. In the murder of Abel, Cain had trespassed in that "which was delivered him to keep," and he had "taken away by violence" his brother's life. His sullen retort to God's enquiry as to his brother, "Am I my brother's keeper?" showed clearly that he knew that he was.

The next thing to notice is that the trespasser was not left to estimate the extent of the injury his trespass had done. Moses, who represented God, had to measure it after the shekel of the sanctuary (chap. 5:13). We may be sure that the deplorable laxity of the day and the shallow conviction as to sin, even in those who profess God's Name, is because God's estimate of sin is neither known nor desired. We set up our own standard, or compare ourselves with others and excuse ourselves, because in our judgment we are better than they; and worse, we "Compound to sins we are inclined to By damning those we have no mind to."

It is only in God's presence that we begin to learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin in its challenge to God and the injury it does to our fellows, and then, and not till then do we realize and acknowledge the need of a great atoning sacrifice.

It will be noticed that while the offerings for atonement for sin, according to the law of the sin offering, were graded, ranging from a young bullock to a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, there was only one offering that could adequately meet the trespass and make atonement for the trespasser, no matter what the trespass was, the offering could not be less than a ram without blemish. The first time a ram comes into the divine picture is in Genesis 22, where one caught by its horns in a thicket died instead of Isaac. That gives the thought of substitution, but who could be a true and adequate substitute for sinful men whose trespasses have not only filled the earth with violence and corruption but risen up to heaven in defiance of God?

There is only one answer to that; it is the Son of Man. And He, in the greatness of His love has taken this place. He said "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:14). "Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The ram also signifies strength and determination. It typifies the Lord as

coming forth from heaven saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." Nothing could divert Him from that will, "He set His face as a flint," "He was not rebellious, neither turned away back" (Isa. 50:5). But further the ram would indicate full growth and maturity. There was no immaturity or lack of knowledge in the Lord. In the full knowledge of God's estimate of sin, and the demands that eternal justice must make upon the One who stood as substitute for the transgressor, He came, and when the suggestion was made that He should seek an easier path His answer was, "Get thee behind Me, Satan, thou art an offence unto Me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God." And again. "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it." Finally, as with all the sacrifices, the ram was to be without blemish. The Lord was the sinless substitute; no trespass did He commit either against God or His neighbor. "He loved the Lord His God with all His heart and His neighbor as Himself."

What a great day and to be remembered is that on which for the first time it dawned upon the sin-convicted sinner, that Christ died for his sins, according to the Scriptures and that through the perfect and complete atonement that He made by His blood, his trespasses are forgiven. "The priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord: and it shall be forgiven him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein" (chap. 6). "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." We come now to that part of the type which must fill every one of God's children with joy, as it will fill heaven with everlasting praise. Restitution will fill heaven with everlasting praise. Restitution had to be made for every trespass and a fifth part added thereto. The injured party had to be recompensed by far more than he had lost. Certainly no sinner could do this, and yet it is in and through ransomed sinners that this added part is gained; but the One who brings it to pass is the One who made atonement for the sin. It is the voice of Jesus that says in the Psalm, "Then I restored that which I took not away." Consider the injury done to God in His love for men, so terrible was it

that the Lord had to say, “They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father, ” and “the carnal mind is enmity against God.” Could such deep rooted enmity be removed and the enemies reconciled? The answer is, “When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, ” and we read now of “them that love God” (Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 2:9). And mark well the character of the love, it is not now the love that Adam might have had for a beneficent Creator, but the love of children to the Father. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God.” Thus has God Himself been enriched and will be glorified forever as He could not have been if Satan had not succeeded in making man a trespasser, for the very trespass gave the Son of God the opportunity of bearing the judgment, and in adding infinite wealth and glory to God against Whom the trespass was committed. And God has even now, as He will have forever, a response to His great love from the hearts of His redeemed children.

Then the trespass against the commandments of the Lord has been met, and the fifth part added thereto, in that we who once yielded our “members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin” and were “not subject to the law of God” now find that “His commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3). We can thank God that through His grace, we have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine that was delivered unto us (Rom. 6:17), and that God gives the Holy Ghost to them that obey Him, and that we “delight in the law of God after the inward man.” We are spoken of as “obedient children, ” and it is wonderful how often willing obedience to God is spoken of in the Epistles. It were well for us to be in continual exercise of heart that we may not fail in this, lest we be found holding back from God that which Jesus died to secure in us for Him.

-Finally, as to the trespass against our neighbor.

“When we were in the flesh” we affected and influenced others by our words and ways, and lived in the spirit of Cain, saying, “Am I my brother’s keeper”? We lived to please ourselves often

to the hurt of others. In the type a man might trespass against his neighbor by lying unto him and deceiving him, and must not we plead guilty to that? But what must be the answer to that in us now? “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another” (Eph. 4:25). A man might trespass in taking away a thing violently as Cain took away Abel’s life. Now hatred of another is incipient murder, and to speak evil of another is really a blow at a man’s life, and these things were easy for us in those former days, but now the answer to all that in us is “Hereby perceive we the love, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16); a man might trespass against his neighbor in denying that a thing was delivered him to keep, as Cain denied his responsibility for Abel, the answer to that in us is, “the members should have the same care one for another” (1 Cor. 12:25). Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works (Heb. 10:24) “Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification” (Rom. 15:2). “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:3). In this way has God triumphed and does triumph as we, to whom the very life of Christ has been imparted, manifest that life in practical living. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all things put on love, which is the perfect bond. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” What glory to God there must be in such a life!

J.T.Mawson

EXERCISE

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

LETTERS TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS!

1. On Reading the Scriptures

My dear young friends,

It is not sufficient for you to read about the Scriptures, you must read the Scriptures for yourself. A Christian ignorant of his Bible is practically defenseless against the attacks of the world, the flesh, and the devil. He is a spiritual dwarf, for he cannot grow without the sincere milk of the Word (1 Peter 2:2). He is overcome by the wicked one, for he is unable to wield the sword of the Spirit, the word of God (Ephesians 6:17). He stumbles into snares and pitfalls and wanders into byways, for he is without that lamp for the feet and that light for the way which the word of God supplies to all who consult it (Psalm 119:105).

You will find it of immense help to you to form the regular habit of reading the word of God every day. We see that the Bereans were specially commended in that they searched the Scriptures "daily" (Acts 17:11). You will have to overcome many difficulties in order strictly to observe this rule. But nothing that is really worth doing at all is done properly without taking pains and exercising self-denial. And most probably, if you do not mean to lose your daily portion, you will have to rise earlier, or to deny yourself some form of recreation. But whatever you may give up in this way, you will certainly be no loser.

You will observe that the Bereans searched the Scriptures. This implies an eager, earnest endeavor to understand what is read. It is the willing heart that is taught of God. The listless reader will gain neither pleasure nor profit.

Do not forget that Christ is the key of the Scriptures. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was an enigma to the Ethiopian eunuch, for he knew not Christ. But directly Philip "preached to him Jesus," his soul was filled with divine light. It is the Lord's own word concerning the Scriptures that "they testify of me" (John 5:39). The Jews believed

not Christ, and therefore understood neither the law, the prophets, nor the psalms.

Read your Bibles with implicit faith. Receive every word as from God Himself. Do not create difficulties by setting one passage against another; but believe both to be true. For it is “through faith we understand” (Hebrews 11:3). In the writings of men, it is well to seek to understand before believing. But the Bible comes to us with the authority of God, and the first thing required of us is to accept it with all the unquestioning faith of little children.

But do lay to heart the necessity of being regular in reading your Bibles. It will assist you to have a definite plan to follow as far as possible. Some find one method suitable, some another.

We should be glad if some of our readers would write and tell us what plan they find best, how much they read daily, and what portions of the Word they read. If their plans were made known through the medium of these papers, they might be of service to others.

We trust that this invitation will be responded to because we believe that a good many may be thereby helped in what constitutes a very practical difficulty to them. We refer to the difficulty some find in reading regularly at a particular time.

Some have to leave their homes at a very early hour. Some have little or no spare time throughout the day. Others return to their homes late at night and excessively wearied in body. Some again seem to be unable to find a quiet time to read the Bible in private. These circumstances are magnified at the suggestion of the Evil One into insuperable obstacles, and are made into excuses for serious neglect of the Scriptures.

We hope therefore some of our correspondents may be able to give useful hints that may assist others in overcoming these small hindrances and in forming the habit of reading the Word of God daily.

But whatever plan is adopted, helpful as it may prove, the main point will be missed unless the Scriptures are read in the proper frame of mind and attitude of soul. Handle the Sacred Volume with reverence. Turn its pages with pious fear. Receive its words with lowliness and readiness of mind. Treasure its teachings in the heart. Come to it with

eagerness and leave it with regret. Carefully ponder over every verse. Meditate long, but pray without ceasing.

Remember above all things that the word of God is designed to form the affections of the heart as well as to develop spiritual intelligence. It is not sufficient for you to know the various ways in which the love of God has been manifested, that knowledge must move the very inmost depths of your being. It must quicken the energies of your soul into ardent love to God as well as to those that are His, indeed to all men. It is well to have clear views of scriptural truth. This should be our hearty desire. But oh! how necessary to sit in quiet meditation at the Master's feet and allow His blessed words to distil into the soul and animate and inflame the affections towards Himself. Beware therefore lest the head grows at the expense of the heart.

This may be prevented by being careful to put into practice whatever He shows us is His will. It is the heart desirous to do His will that is taught of Him (John 7:17). This again brings us back to the necessity of reading the Bible daily. For God shows us His word "here a little, and there a little," as we require it. And, so to speak, God will set us our daily tasks if we only humbly, reverently approach His word and attentively listen to what He has to say.

2. Reverent and Habitual Prayer

A little while ago I wrote to you on the necessity of systematically reading the word of God: I now desire to make a few practical remarks on the subject of prayer. And, in the first place, I feel impelled to say that it is extremely necessary for you to remember that in prayer you address God. The Psalmist said, "Unto Thee will I pray. My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer to Thee, and will look up" (Psalm 5:2-3). Prayer is the exercise of heart Godward in earnest petitions for needed blessing.

Though persuaded you know this elementary truth as well as I do, yet I believe I am not mistaken in supposing you are in great danger of forgetting the high and holy character of the One to Whom you pray. I am not now overlooking the fact that God is our Father, and that our relationship to Him is very near and dear. But, at the same time, He is God as well as Father; and therefore a spirit of reverence becomes us, and is indeed inseparable from every true prayer. We ought not to

forget that the privileges of grace never remove or obliterate the responsibilities of the creature.

On this account seek to feel in Whose sacred presence you are. Bow down your heart before Him. Have it impressed on your very soul that He is omniscient as well as omnipotent—that He reads your inmost thoughts more easily than we can a book.

You will admit, I am sure, the tendency of your heart, even on the solemn occasion of addressing the Lord, whether silently or audibly, to wander to other and improper themes. In the language of Scripture, your lips draw near, but your heart is far off. This arises from a lack of apprehension, or from the fault of forgetting the real nature of this sacred occupation and the inexpressibly holy presence into which you come.

You find, I dare say, that you fall into this snare more commonly during your habitual prayers, in the mornings and evenings, for example. You suddenly become aware that you are quite mechanically presenting the ordinary round of petitions, and at the same time your thoughts are travelling in all directions. This fault, if unchecked, will cause your prayers to become “vain repetitions,” hateful to God, and injurious instead of beneficial to yourself.

The only safeguard against this error is to take care before ever you commence to pray to have it well on your mind that you are about to address GOD, with Whom you dare not trifle. The soul of the believer will then instinctively assume the proper attitude of “reverence and godly fear.”

But I referred just now to the practice of habitual prayer. This is an important point and demands a word or two. I hope it is true of every one of you, for prayer is, undoubtedly, the secret source of spiritual power. And just as the natural body requires regular supplies of air and food, so does the soul ever need regular supplies of heavenly grace to meet the constant vicissitudes of daily life. You should therefore make it a very rigid rule to spend an allotted time in earnest prayer at least twice a day.

You must arrange these seasons according to your own particular circumstances; but morning and evening are certainly the best times. In saying “twice a day,” however, I only mention the minimum

allowance. You will doubtless recollect there is scripture for praying always as well as everywhere. So whatever opportunities you may have in this respect, you are at liberty to take the fullest advantage of them.

Some are afraid of making a “rule,” but I think they have more reason to be afraid of breaking it when it is made. I hope none of you would seek to excuse yourselves for passing a whole day without prayer by the plea of not wishing to be in bondage to a rule. For myself, I must risk the charge of being somewhat commonplace by saying that I think good habits are very good things to possess, and bad habits are very bad things to get hold of and worse things to get rid of; while the best way to avoid bad habits altogether is to acquire good ones.

Be persuaded, therefore, to put yourself, if necessary, to a great deal of pains to become an orderly Christian. And remember there can be no spiritual order in the soul unless it be in the right frame Godward. Open your Bible and let God speak to you; fall on your knees and breathe out your requests to God.

The Christian is like a diver at the bottom of the sea, whose very life depends upon the maintenance of a connection with the surface. There is nothing around him to sustain life, but the reverse. A slender tube supplies him with air to breathe, and in his hand he holds the means of summoning help from above in the moment of danger. But this connection must be maintained constantly. Even so must the believer be in continuous, not spasmodic, communication with the power on high. This must be done by regular habits of prayer.

If you start the day with prayer you are not so likely to forget to pray before you give a passionate reply to the person who insults you to your face. “Pray without ceasing.”

Hoping, if the Lord permit, to return to this subject.

From Letters to Young Believers

W.J. Hocking

REST

“Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?”

GOD IN EVERYTHING!

Nothing so much helps the Christian to endure the trials of his path as the habit of seeing God in everything. There is no circumstance, be it ever so trivial or ever so commonplace, which may not be regarded as a messenger from God, if only the ear be circumcised to hear, and the mind spiritual to understand the message. If we lose sight of this valuable truth, life, in many instances at least, will be but a dull monotony, presenting nothing beyond the most ordinary circumstances. On the other hand, if we could but remember, as we start each day on our course, that the hand of our Father can be traced in every scene—if we could see in the smallest, as well as in the most weighty circumstances, traces of the divine presence, how full of deep interest would each day’s history be found!

The Book of Jonah illustrates this truth in a very marked way. There we learn what we need so much to remember, that there is nothing ordinary to the Christian; everything is extraordinary. The most commonplace things, the simplest circumstances, exhibit in the history of Jonah, the evidences of special interference. To see this instructive feature, it is not needful to enter upon the detailed exposition of the Book of Jonah, we only need to notice one expression, which occurs in it again and again, namely, “the Lord prepared.”

In chapter one the Lord sends out a great wind into the sea, and this wind had in it a solemn voice for the prophet’s ear, had he been wakeful to hear it. Jonah was the one who needed to be taught; for him the messenger was sent forth. The poor pagan mariners, no doubt, had often encountered a storm; to them it was nothing new, nothing special, nothing but what fell to the common lot of seamen; yet it was special and extraordinary for one individual on board, though that one was asleep in the sides of the ship. In vain did the sailors seek to counteract the storm; nothing would avail until the Lord’s message had reached the ears of him to whom it was sent.

Following Jonah a little further, we perceive another instance of what we may term God in everything. He is brought into new circumstances, yet he is not beyond the reach of the messengers of God. The Christian can never find himself in a position in which his Father's voice cannot reach his ear, or his Father's hand meet his view, for His voice can be heard, His hand seen, in everything. Thus when Jonah had been cast forth into the sea, "the Lord prepared a great fish." Here, too, we see that there is nothing ordinary to the child of God. A great fish was nothing uncommon; there are many such in the sea; yet did the Lord prepare one for Jonah, in order that it might be the messenger of God to his soul.

Again, in chapter four, we find the prophet sitting on the east side of the city of Nineveh, in sullenness and impatience, grieved because the city had not been overthrown and entreating the Lord to take away his life. He would seem to have forgotten the lesson learned during his three days' sojourn in the deep, and he therefore needed a fresh message from God: "And the Lord prepared a gourd." This is very instructive. There was surely nothing uncommon in the mere circumstance of a gourd; other men might see a thousand gourds, and, moreover, might sit beneath their shade, and yet see nothing extraordinary in them. But Jonah's gourd exhibited traces of the hand of God, and forms a link—an important link—in the chain of circumstances through which, according to the design of God, the prophet was passing. The gourd now, like the great fish before, though very different in its kind, was the messenger of God to his soul. "So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." He had before longed to depart, but his longing was more the result of impatience and chagrin, than of holy desire to depart and be at rest forever. It was the painfulness of the present, rather than the happiness of the future that made him wish to be gone.

This is often the case. We are frequently anxious to get away from present pressure; but if the pressure were removed, the longing would cease. If we longed for the coming of Jesus, and the glory of His blessed presence, circumstances would make no difference; we should then long as ardently to get away from those of pressure and sorrow. Jonah while he sat beneath the shadow of the gourd, thought not of departing, and the very fact of his being "exceeding glad of the gourd" proved how much he needed that special messenger from the

Lord; it served to make manifest the true condition of his soul, when he uttered the words, "Take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." The Lord can make even a gourd the instrument for developing the secrets of the human heart. Truly the Christian can say, God is in everything. The tempest roars, and the voice of God is heard, a gourd springs up in silence, and the hand of God is seen. Yet the gourd was but a link in the chain; for "the Lord prepared a worm, and this worm, trifling as it was when viewed in the light of an instrument, was, nevertheless, as much the divine agent as was the "great wind," or the "great fish." A worm, when used by God, can do wonders; it withered Jonah's gourd, and taught him, as it teaches us, a solemn lesson. True, it was only an insignificant agent, the efficacy of which depended upon its conjunction with others; but this only illustrates the more strikingly the greatness of our Father's mind. He can prepare a worm, and He can prepare a vehement east wind, and make them both, though so unlike, conducive to His great designs.

In a word, the spiritual mind sees God in everything. The worm, the whale, and the tempest, all are instruments in His hand. The most insignificant, as well as the most splendid agents, further His ends. The east wind would not have proved effectual, though it had been ever so vehement, had not the worm first done its appointed work. How striking is all this! Who would have thought that a worm and an east wind could be joint agents in doing a work of God? Yet so it was. Great and small are only terms in use among men, and cannot apply to Him "Who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in heaven," as well as "the things that are on earth." They are all alike to Him "Who sits on the circle of the earth." Jehovah can tell the number of the stars, and while He does so He can take knowledge of a falling sparrow; He can make the whirlwind His chariot, and a broken heart His dwelling place. Nothing is great or small with God.

The believer, therefore, must not look upon anything as ordinary, for God is in everything. True, he may have to pass through the same circumstances, to meet the same trials, to encounter the same reverses as other men; but he must not meet them in the same way, nor interpret them on the same principle; nor do they convey the same report to his ear. He should hear the voice of God, and heed His message, in the most trifling as well as in the most momentous

occurrence of the day. The disobedience of a child or the loss of an estate, the obliquity of a servant or the death of a friend should all be regarded as divine messengers to his soul.

So also, when we look around us in the world, God is in everything. The overturning of thrones, the crashing of empires, the famine, the pestilence, and every event that occurs among nations, exhibit traces of the hand of God, and utter a voice for the ear of man. The devil will seek to rob the Christian of the real sweetness of this thought; he will tempt him to think that, at least, the commonplace circumstances of everyday life exhibit nothing extraordinary, but only such as happen to other men. But we must not yield to him in this. We must start on our course every morning, with this truth vividly impressed on our mind—God is in everything. The sun that rolls along the heavens in splendid brilliancy, and the worm that crawls along the path, have both alike been prepared of God, and, moreover, could both alike cooperate in the development of His unsearchable designs.

I would observe, in conclusion, that the only one who walked in the abiding remembrance of the above precious and important truth was our blessed Master. He saw the Master's hand and heard the Father's voice in everything. This appears preeminently in the season of the deepest sorrow. He came forth from the garden of Gethsemane with those memorable words, "The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?" thus recognizing in the fullest manner, that God is in everything.

C.H. Mackintosh

Answers to Scripture Search!

1. Benjamin (Deuteronomy 33:12)
2. Christ
3. Anna (Luke 2:36)

WHAT THEN...?

A young man came to the dean of a renowned university, his face beaming with enthusiasm. He informed the old man that the long-cherished desire of his heart was at last fulfilled: He had entered law school and meant to spare no labor or expense in pursuing his studies. Thus he continued to talk for some time. When he paused, the old man, who had been listening to him with great patience, kindly replied, "Well, when you have finished your studies, what do you mean to do?"

"Take my doctor's degree," answered the youth.

"And then?" asked his venerable friend. "Then," continued the youth, "I shall have a number of difficult cases to manage, and by my eloquence, learning, zeal, and acuteness, I'll win a great reputation."

"And then?" repeated the professor.

"And then," replied the youth, "there can be no question but that I shall be elected to some high office in the state, and shall become rich."

"And then?"

"And then," continued the would-be lawyer, "I shall live comfortably and honorably in wealth and respect, and look forward to a quiet and happy old age."

"And then," repeated the old man again.

"And then," said the youth, "and then—and then I shall die."

Here his listener raised his voice, and again asked with solemnity and emphasis: "AND THEN?" The young man made no answer. He hung his head and walked thoughtfully away. He had not considered the most important thing of all—the eternal welfare of his never dying soul.

God's Word, the Bible, tells us with divine certainty what lies beyond.

You may get rid of the Bible; you may despise its warnings; you may reject the Savior of whom it speaks. It is in your power to burn this and every other such tract that comes into your possession. But consider the prospect before you! Your little day will soon be past. Your pleasures will have an end. Your occupations will be worthless to you in the solemn hour when your body is reduced to a few handfuls of dust.

Is there not a cause for this? Is it by mere accident that a creature with such powers and capacities should come to such an end? There is but one answer, listen!

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Romans 5:12

The fall of man is a fearful reality. "Sin" is not simply an ugly word in the Bible. It is a dark, foul reality, which blights the world by its presence. "Death is passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" "You are implicated in this matter. Upon YOU the sentence of death has passed; and very soon it may be said of you—"He died."

One second after your death it will be a matter of no consequence to you whether you die in a palace or in a cellar. But your whole eternity will hang upon the state in which you die.

There is no denying the fact that, "The wages of sin is death;" but it is equally true—"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Yea, God commends His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died on the cross for us. Divine love would bless the sinner, but divine holiness would not make light of sin. The full penalty of guilt passed upon the sinless Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. He took our place in death and judgment that we might have life. The love of God—the work of Christ—urges you to turn to the Son of God whose words are, "He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).