

1. - 112 H. 153 P.

2. - 85 H. 76 P.

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3. - 548 H. 32 P. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that

while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8

In this singularly beautiful, and masterly argument of the Apostle upon the doctrine of gratuitous justification, he presents us with an illustration of the Love of God which is exceedingly simple and yet which stamps it with an excellence that is at once mysterious and supernatural.

The fact of Xt's vicarious death, as the evidence of the Divine Love, suggests to the mind of the sacred writer, the idea of the possibility of one human being giving his life for another, and so

he furnishes us with a train of thought which taking its outset from the least ^{possible & proceeding} ~~probable~~ to the

more probable of such cases, ~~and~~ without even admitting that it would be certain in any

under even the most favorable circumstances,
case that ~~one~~ man would die for another, suddenly
places before us the amazing fact that the Infin-
ite God has done this very thing for us, - has "died
for us," - when we were not only neither "righteous,"
nor "good," but while "we were yet sinners." A closer
examination of this train of thought will be interesting.

"For scarcely for a righteous man, will one die," that
is to say: it is hardly to be expected that a man who
does all that the law and justice demands of him,
^{while he} who is precise and exact in all his conduct and in
all his dealings with his fellow-men, doing justly him-
self and exacting justice from all others, should in-
spire such a feeling of devotion, and love in the hearts
of those around him, as that they would any of them
be willing to die for him, if circumstances should seem
to demand it. The utmost that could be excited in

them toward such a character would be respect,
 feeble,
 cold, [^] unemotional respect, which would not
 lead to any considerable sacrifices. "Yet" the
 Apostle continues; "peradventure," by bare possibility,
 "for a good man, some would even dare to
 die." We can conceive that a man whose
 character was constantly illustrating the law
 of kindness and of love to others, might inspire
 such blended admiration, and enthusiastic
 love toward himself as to prompt some men
 to venture the sacrifice of their lives for him.
 In this act there would be exhibited a feeling
 of enthusiasm + romantic devotion which
 may have been experienced in the history
 of our world. In doing this we perceive
 that there would be the inspiration arising

from the reflection that this man for whom I die is every way worthy of my love and is prominent in Society for his traits of extraordinary excellences. Or, by his many and disinterested acts of kindness for me, has bound me by cords of gratitude & love. Besides all this my dying for such a man would crown my memory with imperishable honor & glory.

These cases the Apostle regards as ^{reaching} the very utmost limit of human sacrifice, and the greatest possible exhibition of human love. But after admitting these things, he evidently leaves the whole matter among events merely imaginary, and wholly uncertain. Yet and he has an object and a purpose in all this, - he states it as a fact that in the course of

this world's history, an exhibition of Love has been
 presented which overmasters all such imagin-
 ary cases, and eclipses the brightest pictures
 that can be conceived of human love. By
 contrast then he proceeds to say "But God
 commendeth His Love to us" - (i.e.) He makes His
 love to us more conspicuous - more remarka-
 ble, more wonderful, - "in that while we were
 yet sinners, Christ died for us." We were not
 righteous, - we were not even just; we did not ~~the~~
 meet ^{the} demands of common justice; We were not
 kind, and loving, and affectionate; but we
 were infinitely removed from him by moral
 corruption; we were long-continued rebels against
 Him; we were unbelieving and impenitent sin-
 ners against Him; and stamped with moral turpitude

tude, and justly exposed to His wrath and displeasure.

Yet, notwithstanding all this corruption, and enmity to God, & in the very midst of it all "Christ died for us!"

It is well for us now to understand the true meaning of this expression. What is ^{the} meaning of the expression "Xt. died for us?" In what sense is this true? We ascertain this by deciding the sense of the word "for" in this connection.

There is a sense in which others have "died for us," but it is not the sense of the word as here used. For example:- the criminal who has forfeited his life to the violated laws of his country, died for others:- he died as "a terror to evil doers;" The world that perished in the deluge died for others - a warning to

the enemies of God. The Israelites that died in the wilderness Paul says died as admonitions to us; the ~~loss~~^{death} of many a loved one was made to occur solely for us; — to warn us from earthly idolatry, and to teach us the frail tenure of earthly joy.

* But in no such sense did X^t. die for us.

The word "for" here is to be accepted as meaning "in our stead." But we shall never obtain a right conception of the death of X^t. "in our stead," until we properly understand

† His Priestly office. Let me repeat the words of your catechism in answer to the question;

"How doth Christ execute the office of a Priest?"

X^t. executeth &c. in His once offering Himself a sacrifice without spot to God to be a reconciliation for the

sins of His people, and in making continual intercession for them." The definition Paul gives of the office of a Priest is in these words: "Every High Priest taken from among men, is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." By analysing this verse we shall arrive satisfactorily at the proper meaning of the expression, "Xt. died for us."

1. The Priest must be of the same nature as that for which He serves "He must be taken from among men;"— He has the nature, — he is related to the race for whose welfare he acts. This is the general understanding of his relation to the race. But there is something more particular in this office.
2. He "is ordained for men;"— (i.e) for individual men; particular persons; & this points out special personal

relations to men. It is for them that He is expressly ordained; it is for them that He undertakes the office of a Priest; and for them He acts.

3. Then, He, in His office of Priest, acts with God as His object. So God all His actions are directed. "He is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God;" — ^{His Priesthood} "it propitiates God; it makes intercession to God;" — it satisfies God's justice; it pacifies God's wrath; it secures God's favor; it seals God's covenant love; it gives effect to God's eternal purpose & grace." Then we see

4. The object of His Priesthood; "that He may offer both gifts and sacrifices for Sins." This is indeed the great work & business of the Office of High Priest. To offer "sacrifices for Sins."

The peculiarity in His offering sacrifices which

distinguishes it essentially from all the offerings of other Priests, is that they offered other victims in sacrifice, He offered Himself. There was in their case a Priest, ^{also} a victim separate from the Priest. The Priest was one thing; - the victim another. But ^(at the same time both) X^t. was ~~the~~ the Priest and the victim. - The Priest & the Lamb.

But it is all important that we do not obscure the true glory of X^t's offering of Himself by representing Him as a mere passive victim, that perished by the will & power of another, a victim that was made to die by another, and who submitted to death as a mere endurance. "It is true He suffered death; 'the just for the unjust;' He was killed by wicked hands; the powers of Hell for a dreadful moment were let loose upon Him; 'The Sord bruised Him' -

"He endured the Cross," and submitted to Death.

That is all true. Death seemed to be the conqueror. But in all this we must be careful not to overlook the great fact that as a High Priest He was active - not passive - He offered Himself. He did it Himself. He died not merely submissively "but" by positive priestly action giving Himself to God. "Let us see how we are borne out in all this by S. S.

S. tells us "He poured out His soul unto death."

Paul "He loved the Ch., & gave Himself for it." Again: "Xt. also hath loved us and ^{hath delivered} ~~from~~

Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor; "He by himself purged our sins;" John in the Apocalyptic Doxology

exclaims: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from
our sins in His own blood;— X^t. too says of
Himself: "The Son of man came to give His life
a ransom for many; and then again;— The
good Shepherd giveth His life for the Sheep;"
"No one taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself."
"Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay
down my life that I may take it again."
"I have power to lay it down, & I have power
to take it again." Paul again (Heb.) says "Now
once in the end of the world, hath He appeared to
put away Sin by the sacrifice of Himself;" an
utterance of inspiration" says Martin, "which fearlessly
presents the sacrifice of the Cross as an offering
in suffering, and as suffering in offering."
We must guard carefully then against the in-

Scriptural idea that when X^t. died there was nothing in His death but the unflinching endurance of inconceivable sufferings; the being subjected to death as the penalty due to ~~Sin~~. For while this is all true — the danger is that ^{we shall think} His previous life was positive action, but now at the time of His death there was nothing but passive suffering. I cannot express this grand thought in words more appropriate than these which fall from the powerful pen of a great Modern Preacher:

"This representation of the Cross of X^t. is most inadequate. It exhibits the cross as the emblem & scene of patience merely, while it conceals those glorious and glorifying aspects of it in which it is seen to be an altar of Priestly agency,

a throne of powerful action; and a chariot of victory and triumph." The grand Scriptural idea that we must carry along with us is that while death seemed to be the conqueror it was so because X^t voluntarily submitted to it. He dismissed His own Spirit. And so while "Earth, and Hell, and Heaven; Earth's rulers & her rabble, her Kings & Priests and soldiers and malefactors, assailing Him; Her Jews & Gentiles; her dumb creatures even; Earth's forests furnishing wood; Earth's streams refusing water; earth's bitterness mingled in vinegar & gall; Earth's curse embodied in her thorns, in mockery & pain to crown Him; earth's founded steadfastness refusing to support Him; and her firmament to shine upon Him; Hell's utmost

force & fury gathered up against Him; Heaven's
 sword devouring Him & Heaven's God forsaking
 Him; Earth & Hell and Heaven thus in
 conspiring action against Him unto the
 uttermost of Heaven's extremest justice,
 and earth's and Hell's extremest injustice, -
 what is the Glory of the Cross if it be
 not this, - that with such action con-
 spiring to subdue His action, His action
 outlasted and outlived them all, and He
 did not die subdued & overborne into
 dying, - He did not die till He gave Him-
 self in death."

Such is the Scriptural doctrine of
 the Priestly action of X^t. in dying for
 us. When He died for us that was vicarious,

and as He died actively & voluntarily He was no mere passive victim.

III. But why did He die for us? What was the design of His death? Was it as an Example to us? This is what some say! But aside from the cold & unmeaning force of such a theory, there is the fundamental idea that He died as a Priest — an official death.

Is Example an Office? Others say He died a Martyr to the Truth! This is no office.

The same answer may be given to all the other heretical theories which men have put forth to interpret the design of X^p's death.

It was not Self denial — nor Self sacrifice
Nor Moral influence, nor a grand Govern-
mental display of God's anger against Sin.

IV The true design of Xth's death then was that

He died as an expiation of our guilt and to make reconciliation for the sins of His people. He died for us as a sacrifice, as a ransom, as our substitute, that He redeemed us from the curse of the Law of God being made a curse for us, that He once suffered for sins - the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God. I know it is fashionable in these days when men are carried away by sensational preaching, and sentimental neology, to repudiate all this as the obsolete creed of an effete system too antiquated for this era of advanced

thought. But I defy any man to abolish
& exclude this theory & understand the
Bible. If the atonement be not vicarious what
use serve all the types & ceremonies, the
altars & victims of the Mosaic dispensation?
Banish it, & how account for His sufferings
at all? He had no sins — & the theory that
is substituted for ours holds that He did not
die for the sins of others. What mean
the mournful yet blessed statements of Isaiah
"He was wounded for the chastisement
of our peace etc. with His stripes etc. All we like
sheep etc. iniquity of us all." Take away X
as my substitute & what shall I do to hush
the voice of an accusing Conscience? What
answer to the question "What shall I do" etc. Oh,

well may the grief-stricken mourner say to
 these miserable comforters "they have
 taken away my Sword & I know not
 where they have laid Him." But
 away with these miserable refuges of false
 doctrine & let me embrace the doctrine
 sweetly sung by the sacred Poet:— Jesus,
 my Great High Priest Offered His blood & died,
 My guilty conscience seeks no sacrifice be-
 side; His powerful blood did once atone, and
 now it pleads before the Throne." "Oh the
 sweet wonders of that Cross Where God
 my Savior groaned & died, My noblest
 life her spirit draws, From His
 dear wounds and bleeding side,"
 This things being true there are two great
 facts that grow directly out of them:

1. The Law of God has now no claim against the Sinner who has accepted X^t. by faith.
"There is therefore now no condemnation to
(The draughted man & his substitute in the Wars of Napoleon I.)

2. This very fact carries in it a power to kindle in us a flame of never-dying Love to our precious Savior. "We love Him because He first loved us."

The California emigrant's wife who died upon the burning ship to save the life of her child (.)

O for this love, let rocks & hills Their lasting silence break, And all harmonious human tongues The Savior's praises speak. "Amen & Amen!"