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Our Guilt.

The Goodness of a Good Man.

BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D.

He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.—Acts 11:24.

You remember how once a young man came to Jesus with much beautiful youthful purity in his life, and youthful enthusiasm in his heart, and in his eager way prefaced his question with a lightly-uttered "Good Master." Christ answered by trying to make him feel how much more the word meant than he had ever seen. "Why callest thou me good?" said he, not thereby rejecting the term for himself, but setting the youth to ponder its deep meaning. And whenever we have learned to feel "how awful goodness is," we shall be ready to listen to Jesus saying further: "None is good but one, that is God." By that saying he neither means to deny his own goodness, nor that of men who will take up their cross and

light-inquirer, who was so ready with his conventional bestowment of the epithet, and so eager to know what he was to do for eternal life, that there was one source—and only one—of goodness, and, therefore, that the only way to be good was to have our emptiness replenished by his fullness.

I, a good man, then, is a man who draws his goodness from God, the source of all perfection, the home of all things fair. Whatever things are lovely and whatsoever things are venerable—all that we call virtues, all to which hearts and consciences ascribe praise—dwell in God as in their native home. In the abyss of his being the streams of goodness, which part into many heads to fertilize the wilderness and sweeten the salt marshes of human nature, rest undivided. He is the reality of which our conceptions of goodness are but the fragmentary representations, the substance of which they are but shadows. Not only so, but as all life is an effluence from him with whom alone is the fountain of life, and as it is his light in which we see light, so all the goodness which is in men is from above, and cometh down from the Father of light. All light and heat are from the sun, and all goodness is of God. All virtues are radiations from him. "They are broken lights of thee." He alone is good of himself and by himself. Drawing his being from none, he owes his character to none, to no outward help or occasional his own, to no importation of his beauty. Receiving from none, he gives to all, and every drop of fair goodness that man has ever done, at the last analysis, has been to the doer no less than to the beholders or the hearers of the gift of God.

He would not be good unless he delighted in bestowing himself. Goodness is communicative, and all love has its object defined in giving away itself. As the sun "rejoices to run his race," and as it is the very nature and property of light to radiate, and of gases to diffuse themselves, so he can not be stayed nor sealed up, but rejoices to impart. And, certainly, there can be nothing in God which

he so much delights to bestow as his goodness, since it is that in which most chiefly do we bear his image, and by which we are most closely knit to him. His highest purpose concerning us all is that we should be partakers of his holiness. Happiness, wisdom, life itself, all in some measure and fashion, offshoots from his own, he delights to give; but these are but means to an end, and these moral likenesses to himself in his aim in all his other gifts. God had rather have us good than great, and makes us sometimes glad and sometimes heavy that by both we may be made to desire, and so be able to receive, more resemblance to himself in holiness. This is the meaning of life. This is the dearest desire of our father for us. This is the gift which he—the infinite love—is ever longing to bestow on us.

The goodness, then, affords a presumption that he will make us good. That is a profound word of the Psalmist: "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in his way." The more clearly we see the perfect purity and goodness of God, the more conscious shall we certainly be of our own unlikeness to him. But in that discernment of his luminous perfection, and patient recognition of our own sinfulness, there lies hope, not despair. We may be sure that he loves us too well to keep such sovereign completeness to himself and leave his poor children stumbling here in the mud and mire. What he is, he assuredly will desire to make us, so far as it may be. He is the "giving God," and the poorest and most impure of men may be sure that God does desire to give him purity of heart and life, and may lift up the hopeful and bold prayer, "Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness."

II. Surely, too, it needs but little more of his life to feel that, if we are ever to be made good, a divine power is needed to do it. A very small amount of honest attempt to mend our own characters might teach each of us that the viper has got each too tight to hold on us for us to shake it into the fire, and so that its poison is in our blood. If you have ever tried to cure a bad habit, you know how hard it is, and some of us could tell how the sins that we loathe most hold us in a grip none the looser because of our disgust at them, and our self, and, like a reefer's knot, their cords are tied the tighter by the pressure of our resistance against them. It is as impossible for a man to make himself good, for the deepest need of the word, as it is for him to lift himself by his own hand into his own collar. There must be some power outside him to raise. God only can strengthen us to cast out our sin. God only can enlighten our eyes to electric evil. We only can give an energy to our wills to root it up, though we drag bleeding fragments of our hearts with it; he only can give the positive goodness which is more than mere freedom from evil, and can fill the empty chamber with a good strong enough to keep out the returning demon and all his crew.

So his holy Spirit is given to us, if we will, to make us holy. We may, if we will, have that divine guest in our inmost spirit, molding us anew, purging the fountain of our will, enlightening our blindness, fixing our love on all things pure and high, burning up all our evil, with which in our own strength we have vainly fought, and kindling in us a flame of self-forgetting love, in which, as in the central fire of the earth, all the elements of the new nature to be formed within us are molten together, ready to crystallize into beauty like precious gems, or to consolidate into strength like the granite mountains. Any man may, if he will, be "full of the Holy Ghost,"—as a vessel is filled with precious elixir poured into it. Any man may, if he will, have his whole nature influenced and inhabited by that mighty Spirit, of whom we may all be the temples, and which dwells in us not as the image of the good abides in a shrine, but as our spirits animate our bodies, being dif-

fused through all our nature, the eyes of our seeing, the heart of our love, the will of our resolve, and in all of us the source of our goodness, and the life of our better life. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Let us remember that this penetration of all our nature with a divine spirit dwelling within us is the promise of Christianity to every man. No more love of God the Father, even if it were brought to us in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, would be enough without the communion of the Holy Ghost. Calvary and Olivet are not sufficient for our victory over sin without the upper room and the rushing mighty wind. And let us not forget that the spirit thus given to all Christians is the spirit of illumination indeed, the spirit of power, rich in his seven-fold energies, and the source of every endowment of mind and hand and tongue and heart that we possess, but that his highest and most universal office is to make us good and his best name the Holy Spirit. Let us court earnestly the best gift, but seek more earnestly still that gift which needs no special capacity to receive nor any special circumstances to exercise, but may be claimed by the poorest, and will ennoble the loftiest. Let others seek for gifts; do you pray for grace. Let who will be great, do you try to submit to the working of the good Spirit who makes you good.

III. Our text carries the analysis a step farther and shows us how Barnabas came to be full of the Holy Ghost. It gives us the condition of goodness. He was good because he was full of the Spirit, and he was full of the Spirit because he was full of faith. This is the final explanation of his character. The Spirit of God dwells in a man through his faith. One text speaks of "the Holy Ghost which they that believe on him should receive," and everywhere similar language is held as to the connection between faith and the dwelling of the Spirit of goodness in our hearts. By the act of trust in Christ, the Lord of the Spirit, we open our nature for the entrance of the sanctifier, who ever waits to enter in. A man has to shut his door and pull down his blinds to keep the light out. If we open ever so minute a crevice, a beam will come in, and the wider we open, the broader the stream that pours in. So in simple faith, we open the door and there pour into our hearts the quickening energies of that good Spirit. The amount of our faith measures the amount of our possession of the Spirit who makes us good.

Thus faith becomes the condition of goodness, because it is the condition of the Spirit of God dwelling in us. It brings us into contact with the electric battery, completes the circuit, and as soon as the current is completed the spark comes. It is also the condition of goodness, because it implies self-oblivion and self-denial, and is the opposite of that self regard which, as we have seen, is the root of all evil. The germ of all helliness is in faith, not only because it brings us under the operation of the divine power which makes holy, but because it is itself the great antagonist of selfishness.

So Christian morality is the very opposite of the practical atheism which lies at the bottom of so much of the teaching of to-day. Trust thyself, say many voices at the beginning. Distrust thyself and trust Christ; says the gospel—thereby alone will thou be made pure and blessed. The Babylonians tried to get up to heaven by their own building. The Titans tried to storm it by playing mountain on mountain, but "so man hath ascended up to heaven." Better for us to rise thither by that ladder which now binds together heaven and earth, even Jesus Christ, our brother and our Lord, by whom almighty-winged angels of help and heavenly light come to minister to us, and by whom we at last, perfected in goodness, shall pass into that presence, of which the radiant purity

would blast all that had one talent of goodness.

Learn the conditions, then, on which you can be good. No goodness without God's Spirit—no Spirit without faith. You can not make yourself better, can not hammer or pare your own nature into purity and holiness. But you can put your confidence in Jesus Christ, who will take your nature into his hands and mold it into a fairest likeness to himself. You can trust him, who will breathe into his Spirit to make you holy. If my epitaph is ever to be, "He was a good man," it must first be said "He was full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Let us give up the weary, hopeless work of trying to make ourselves good, and yield ourselves to him that he may make us like himself, and that we may have a mightier power ever working in our nature till they are all of beauty and "holy as God is holy."

Strength is Weakness.

Doubtless the apostle's paradox has puzzled not a few. He says, "When we are weak, then am I strong." But is not this the experience of every Christian? How often are we compelled to say "Without Christ we can do nothing, but with him we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." When we realize our own weakness most, then it is we are disposed to seek Divine help, and when we receive this help, then it is we are strongest. This is why it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of praise, and why it is necessary to humble ourselves if we would be exalted.—Christian Commonwealth.

JERVIS FIELD has done John Chinaman a good turn. In regard to the San Francisco laundry ordinance, he says:

"The Chinese out of the business, he has decided that every Chinaman now in this country 'has, under the pledge of the nation, the right to reside and follow any of the lawful ordinary trades and pursuits of life without let or hindrance from the State or any of its subordinate municipal bodies, except such as may arise from the enforcement of equal and impartial laws. His liberty to follow any such occupation can not be restrained by invalid legislation of any kind—certainly not by a municipal ordinance that has no stronger ground for its enactment than the miserable pretense that the business of a laundry—that is, of washing cloths for hire—is against good morals or dangerous to the public safety."—Examiner.

The Examiner thus truly states the prospects of success in foreign missions: "There are those who sneer at the foreign mission enterprise as a chimerical plan. They declare that nations like those of India and China are not to be misused from the ideas which have reigned among them for thousands of years. Such should remember that Christianity triumphed over the old Roman Empire, and why can it not triumph over that of the Hindoo or Chinese as well? If the sneer be cast at the missionaries themselves, the question may be asked whether there is any ground for saying that the foreign missionary of today are as a class inferior to the preachers by whose labors the religion of the Roman Empire was reconverted? If it be declared that the results of missionary work are meagre, we may ask whether the success of modern missions in the eighty years since they were established has not been as great as the progress of Christianity in the Roman Empire in the corresponding period of time. It is no more unreasonable to expect that 200 years from now Christianity will be the prevailing religion of India and China, than it was to expect its triumph in the Roman Empire two centuries before such triumph was completed. If men would study the history of missions in the earlier centuries, they would have more confidence in foreign mission work at the present day."

Obstructive Christian.

When the blind man of Jericho begged with urgent and importunate pleading that his sight might be restored, "many rebuked him that he should hold his peace;" and, no doubt, among the "many" were some or all of the disciples and apostles. Nor was this case singular. When the tender mothers brought the children that the Lord should put his hands on them and bless them, the disciples rebuked those that brought them. And again, when the Syro-phenician woman besought for the healing of her demoniac daughter, the disciples urged "Send her away, for she crieth after us."

It was a strange sight—the apostles and disciples whose real work it was to lead people to Christ, to bring men under his healing and saving power, instead of this repelling men, discouraging them. But strange as the scene was, it has been so often repeated that it might well cease to excite amazement. Over and over again through all ages, men have been prevented from coming to Christ by the obstructiveness of men professedly Christian.

It is not difficult to speak of the false and persecuting forms of religion; of the unutterable horrors inflicted by the Inquisition and by Alva and Louis XIV, or the agony which the Scotch Covenanters endured at the hands of the English Episcopates. Indeed the history of Christianity down to very recent times has been the history of the same, calling itself Christian keeping men from Christ.

And then how often have professed Christians, by their lives repelled men from the religion of Christ. When the candid and observant Christians exhibiting a standard of business morality lower than prevails at the Board of Trade, the effect on him is what might be expected. And every missionary reports that the great obstruction to the progress of Christianity in heathen lands is the lives of the representative Christian nation.

Sometimes this obstructiveness comes from pure selfishness and wickedness. But often it is the result of a misconception of the object of Christianity and the church. Men look on the church and its various ordinances and instrumentalities as an end rather than a means. This was the error of the disciples who rebuked blind Bartimeus. They were afraid that he would disturb them and the Master. But what were they there for? What was the Master there for?

Not far from 50 years ago, the church in a village in Central New York was holding a series of special meetings. One young girl, slight in stature, of little personal presence, came as an inquirer, and kept coming with a quiet persistence that led a deacon to exclaim: "Goodness! does that little girl think that we have got nothing to do but to pray for her all winter?" But what else were the meetings for, and the church, and the deacons? Well for the deacon if in heaven he is permitted to teach the ben of her garment. It would have been time and labor well expended if the only fruit of all this series of meetings had been Emily Chubbuck Jackson.

When any reform comes along and demands the attention of the church, men and ministers are very apt to rebuke those who urge it. They say, "Oh, don't; do let the church alone; you are going to destroy our peace." So it has been with the temperance cause, and so it has been with missions not seldom, and with Sunday-schools. Men say: "Oh, we must keep all these things out, for fear of dividing the people." All the world (or at least a fraction of it) know of the colored preacher who objected to preaching against stealing, because if it would throw a coldness over the meeting, he would throw a coldness over the meeting." But what was the meeting for, if not to make people better?

There are plenty of people sitting on the broad aisle and paying fair fees who would not want to hear preaching about commercial honesty according to the standard of the Mountain Hermon. It would destroy all their enjoyment in the service and the sermon. Plenty of people shudder at a district secretary for a collection, because they don't want to have their minds distracted from the precious gospel.

These men forget that Christianity is a revolutionary force, that the church is an army, that Christ came not to send peace on earth, but a sword; that he who sits on the throne saith: "Behold, I make all things new." They forget that Christianity is at war with the world, and that war is WAR.—National Baptist.

JUDAS THOMSON thinks that the success of the temperance movement in Iowa was due to women. "There have been no torchlight processions," says he, "no public dinners, no canoes, and no certainly no treating to drinks. Yet behind all these means, and so overwhelmed by them that the nature of the work in progress was almost unsuspected, a band of earnest women have labored, telling everywhere the story that, even when most exaggerated, holds too terrible truth not to make its way. Every woman who had seen husband or brother or son in danger even in remotest degree from the whisky band worked with an eagerness of energy to bind and render it forever powerless." This is true. Why can not the Christian women in our churches do as much for the cause of Christ? They can, if they will apply themselves with the same diligence, enthusiasm, earnestness and tact to the Christian work. Indeed they can accomplish far greater and better results. The Christian women of America could revolutionize this land in twenty years.—Indiana Baptist.

In a letter to the Examiner Dr. J. W. Jones thus refers to the Professors in our Theological Seminary: "Dr. William Williams—one of the oldest thinkers, one of the best teachers, one of the grandest preachers the Lord of the harvest ever sent into his vineyard—has 'fallen on sleep' and gone to wear his fadeless crown—but Dr. Hayes, Broadus, and many noble trio of true, yet-forgotten, still stand at their posts, and with the scholarly Whitist and the able young Riggan, are making our noble Seminary a success of which its founders scarcely dreamed, and which is but an earnest yet more glorious things to come."

MEXICO will be open as a book before long. The railroad is being laid from one end of the land to the other. It is in fact, the chief activity of the day. Four international roads, we are told, are now in process of construction in New Mexico. When these have reached completion we shall be brought within easy reach of the great capital of Mexico itself. That has always been so far removed from the lines of advanced civilization that it has almost an antipodal city to us. Brought into direct connection with New York and San Francisco, it will begin to respond to the life-throb which energizes this northern nation. Let us hope that the influences felt will not be all baneful.—Standard.

WATSON the flight of a straw, theology leads in the list of books published in England last year. There were 945 of these theological volumes. Of course education came next, there were 880 educational volumes. And yet there are about 1,000 people in England calling themselves Agnostics. Compulsory and optional education makes more noise than the 30,000,000 of people who read the old theology. And every now and then somebody that says more, you know. The trouble with this little minority that imagines itself the whole world is so much skepticism as a disorder known in the rural districts as "the big-head."—The Methodist.

The Family Circle.

A POEM BY DEAR STANLEY.

O Death! how sweet the thought! That this world's strife is ended; That all we feared and all we sought In one deep slumber ended.

Notes of Interest.

A father talking to his careless daughter said: "I want to speak to you of your mother. It may be that you have noticed a certain look on her face lately."

she errs. Pay her for picking berries, hemming towels, shelling peas, and dozens of other small tasks, stipulating that they must be done well and "on time."

The way to learn how to work is to work. In order to understand how to manage funds, one must have had some experience.

She can not be instructed too soon in the great truth that care of her body—in its purity, health, and strength—is a duty she owes to herself, to her kind, and to God.

How to Manage the Little Folks.

It is needless to endeavor to make a child control his temper if you give way to your own; to tell him to be truthful while you are not strictly so; to inculcate neatness while careless of your own dress.

Our Little Folks.

Verth Thinking of. I utterly reject the common notion that the warmest hearted and noblest and best of men are most likely to become drunkards.

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Under his wings shall thou trust. "Under his wings shall thou trust," "Not," "shalt thou see?" If a little angel wanted to see for itself what was going on, and thought it could take care of itself for a while, and hopped from under the shadow of the wings, it would be no more safe nor warm.

Remember, too, that it is a command as well as a wish that you are to do to-day, all day long: "Under his wings shall thou trust!"

Domestic Education. The whole system of the domestic education of boys and girls with respect to making, keeping, spending money is pernicious, yet fearfully consistent in all its sections, from the cradle to the tomb of her whom the laws of most of our States hold as a minor in perpetuity.

Set a reasonable value, then, on Mamie's work, and let her have what she earns. Pay her for picking berries, hemming towels, shelling peas, and dozens of other small tasks, stipulating that they must be done well and "on time."

Our boys come of age in course of time, and pass from our guardianship but not from our thoughts. Recently wondering what had become of Frank H., the superintendent wrote the gentleman who had cared him, who replied as follows: "When Frank came of age, and after I had paid him his money (\$250), he worked one summer for me on the farm. Then he went to learn telegraphing at a railroad station near by, and for two years paid for his board in town before he was sufficiently advanced to

take an office. He went from here to Cairo, Ill., and was employed at \$40 per month for one year. Then he was transferred to St. Louis, Mo., and his salary was advanced to \$60 per month; but soon after the railroad changed hands, and that caused him the loss of his situation. However, he had saved \$300 of his wages. He came home and visited us for four or five weeks this spring, then started off in March to the North-west in search of employment. He soon found a position at Felton, Minn. He is now saving \$25 per month after all his expense are paid. Frank was always a good boy. He won the esteem of all who knew him. He was free from all bad habits, truthful, and strictly honest."

The Straight Path.

"The Bible" so strict and old-fashioned," said a young man to a gray-haired friend, who was advising him to study God's word if he would care to live. "There are plenty of books written nowadays that are moral enough to their teaching and do not bind one down as the Bible does."

The old merchant turned to his desk and took out two rulers, one of which was slightly bent. With each of these he ruled a line, and silently handed the ruled paper to his companion.

"Well," said the lad, "What do you mean?"

"One line is not straight and true, is it? When you mark out your path in life, do not take a crooked ruler!"

Preve It by Matter.

While driving along the street one day in my sleigh, a little boy six or seven years old asked me, "Please, may I ride?"

I answered, "Yes, if you are a good boy."

He climbed into the sleigh; and when I again asked, "Are you a good boy?" he looked up pleasantly and said, "Yes, sir."

"Can you prove it?" "Yes, sir."

"By whom?" "By my mother."

I thought to myself, "Here is a lesson for boys and girls." When children feel and know that mother not only loves them, but has confidence in them, and can prove their obedience, truthfulness and honesty by her, they are pretty safe. That boy will be a joy to his mother while he lives. She can treat him with the best of her heart, feeling that he will not run into evil. I do not think he will go to the saloon, the theatre or the gambling house. Children who have praying mothers, and mothers who have children whom they can trust are blessed indeed. Boys and girls, can you "prove by mother" that you are good?—Erlie Line.

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SYMPTOMS OF WORKS.

When the eyes are pale and lashed-out, with occasional flashes of a dimmed vision on one or both cheeks; the eyes become dim and watery, and the vision is blurred; the head aches, particularly at the temples; the face is flushed; the heart is palpable; the stomach is disordered; the bowels are constipated; the appetite is lost; the sleep is disturbed; the memory is impaired; the nerves are exhausted; the system is generally debilitated.

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New York Sun: A number of letters have been received at the Sun office deprecating the statement made last week in regard to Mr. Gould's intended trip to the West. ...

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