

THE WORLD'S HOPE.

Notwithstanding the world's seeming indifference to the future, the vast majority believe that there is a future before them. All men instinctively cling to life, and even when dying to a hope of some existence in the great unknown. Modern as well as ancient philosophers reason from this *universal desire* for life, that man must be an immortal being; overlooking the fact that the same kind of logic would prove that every man is wealthy because there is a *universal desire* for wealth.

While denying that man is by nature such a being as could never cease to be, whose existence even God could not blot out, we have from time to time shown that God has a grand plan for the restitution of the world from death, and that his promise is, that to all who appreciate that gift, and will live in harmony with His righteous will, He will supply life sustaining elements by which they may live forever. We have seen too that He has provided this gift in a certain definite way – through the gift of His son – through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

The errors with which Satan has, as with leaven, permeated the faith of Christians, has helped to hinder the world from seeing the symmetry and beauty of God's plan through Christ. The world's hope is, that after all, it will be found that faith in Christ, is not essential to salvation, but that there is a general system of evolution by which all go from a human condition to some higher condition, the marks and conditions of progress being, not faith, but morality.

To these the Scriptural account of the fall of the race from perfection is all a mere myth, consequently the *ransom* of the race from the effects of that fall, are equally mythical, and the Scripture promise to the world of a restitution, or return to that condition which existed before the fall, is absurd. Since they think that they did not "fall," they reason that they need no Saviour, and as a result, all those Scriptures which speak of ransom, sacrifice, redemption, of our being bought, etc.,

are meaningless to them. They place Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Confucius, and Jesus Christ, all on a common level and in *their definition* of saviour these were alike and together saviours of the world in that they all taught righteousness, and virtue, and condemned sin.

Alas poor world! It knows not God, hence it knows not his plan of salvation through Jesus only. It was not in his teachings merely that Jesus was great. His greatness was in that he was able to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It was by virtue of his acceptable sacrifice as a ransom, that he was exalted to be a prince and Saviour and to *grant* repentance and remission of sins. This none other could ever do.

Thanks be to God that His gracious plans are so far reaching that he has made **[R753 : page 4]** abundant provision for man's willfulness and opposition, by not only redeeming them, but by providing a means by which they shall come to know and appreciate the truth concerning the only name, in order that through faith in His redemption they may live forever as it is written: God "will have all men to be saved [from death – the result of the fall] and [then] come to a *knowledge of the truth.*" 1 Tim. 2:4.

The great expounder of this, the world's hope, Mr. Henry Ward Beecher, in his discourse of Sunday, Feb. 1, '85, asked and answered this important question as follows: "*Must not a man have faith in Jesus Christ?*"

In regard to that I hold that the right understanding of Jesus Christ is the most powerful persuasion to a religious life. Nevertheless, if by any way a man has gone up; if he has found in himself the kingdom of heaven without knowing Jesus Christ, he will be saved. If you believe the old scheme of theology that men fell in Adam, that there was a council somewhere up in heaven and that a few were foreordained to be saved and that all the rest were to be damned, then you have not any room to believe anything I am telling you and my preaching is idle."

And yet Mr. Beecher calls himself a Christian and men call him reverend. Surely this is sailing under false colors. He speaks of "**a right** understanding of Jesus Christ," by which we understand him to mean an understanding such as he has; and since his understanding is the opposite of that of Jesus and the Apostles, we conclude that Mr. Beecher must be a new apostle of "another gospel," to which Paul refers (Gal. 1:6-9). Peter very clearly answers Mr. B. He says of Jesus: "This is the stone which was set at nought of your builders, which is become the head of the corner. **Neither is there salvation** in any other; for there is **no other** name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. This apostle of the new gospel not only contradicts Peter, but places himself squarely at issue with Paul and what he calls "the old scheme of theology, that men **fell** in Adam." The old scheme is stated by Paul in Rom. 5:15,17,18,19,8 to 10, and makes necessary the **ransom-sacrifice** of Jesus, to which the new gospel and its apostles object. The same is true of Jesus' statement of the "old scheme of theology": – he declared: "The Son of man is come to **save** that which WAS LOST." Matt. 18:11.

Of those who are building their faith on the foundation of the Apostles – Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, Mr. Beecher well says: "**You** have not any room to believe anything I am telling you, and my preaching is idle." This is well stated, and is just what we have been trying to show. Those who are building on the true foundation laid in the Bible, should speedily be convinced that all theories thus contrary to it are "idle," useless, profitless; and to those not **filled** with the truth, and who have a little room for it, this insidious form of infidelity may prove very hurtful. The more they look at it, and "wonder what he will say next," the greater the danger. Only one course is safe – when we have **proved** any theory, and find it contrary to our tried standard – [The Bible] – drop it and leave it finally. To handle such things is like handling **poison**; it is liable to be **absorbed** into the system unconsciously. We are all by reason of our fallen condition more susceptible to error than to truth; besides, evil is many sided, presenting itself in a hundred delusive guises, but truth is but one. Error always

presents itself as truth, and its messengers as the messengers of light. (2 Cor. 11:13-15). Hence it becomes us to test or prove such as come in our way and claim our attention.

Nor should we be always sipping and tasting of poisons so as to have no time to feed upon the truth, or a vitiated palate which cannot appreciate truth, for we have at hand a speedy and infallible test – the Word of God. Any system or theory which *rejects* or *ignores* the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles is not of God – hence of darkness, and leads to darkness. Any system which uses Scripture passages simply as texts, and ignores the teaching of the passage in its connections, is evidently a trap and a snare, and out of harmony with our standard. Any system which uses one passage of Scripture which suits it, and contradicts another passage merely because it does not suit its theory; or, which uses one text of Scripture as an offset or contradiction of another, is manifestly erroneous. Any system which attempts to use Scripture words or phrases but to deny or ignore or wrest their true meaning, is undoubtedly most deceptive and blinding error. Each of these methods would manifestly be "handling the Word of God *deceitfully*" [R753 : page 5] to make it prove their theory, instead of handling it honestly to prove to them God's theory.

All such, when *proved* false by our only standard, should be dropped at once. We cannot trust to our reasoning powers and stop to parley with error, for unless fully armed with a full, clear and comprehensive knowledge of the plan of God, many of Satan's misleading theories might seem at least possible. Even the Master would do no more than show that Satan's arguments were *contrary* to the teachings of Scripture by *quoting* Scripture in reply: "It is written," etc.

By following this method, how many would find that much of the preaching, though not as injurious as Mr. Beecher's, is nevertheless "idle," and a waste of time on the part of those who attend. If governed by this rule, how many would find, as Mr. B. suggests, that they have

really "no room to believe" what they hear? Judged by this scriptural test, how many theories which consume precious time, as well as confuse and perplex the mind, would be rejected as "idle"?*

*We recommend such a test of the teachings of the TOWER. If then you decide that its foundation is not laid in the teachings of God's Word, you should order it stopped. If you find that its teachings are built upon and supported by the Scriptures, it will give you the more confidence in the unfolding plan of God which it endeavors to present.

Let us always remember, however, that we are not to decide what is truth and what error by our prejudices and preferences, but by the Word; not by our general impression as to what the Word teaches, nor by a fragment of it imperfectly remembered, but by a careful examination of the text and context.

Any teacher who does not cite the text upon which he bases an argument claimed to be scriptural, is unworthy the name of teacher or expounder, and his products are unworthy of study. Those who do quote should be carefully examined, not only to ascertain that the Word of God is handled honestly and fairly, but also to impress the truth, upon the reader's heart.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1); but truth and error, light and darkness are *not brethren*, they are implacable and everlasting foes, and have been ever since error was born – for truth is eternal. And while the children of light and truth must from their very nature, love and sympathize with men as members of a common race, and whensoever they can may do them good, yet they should not sympathize in their course of error with those who have become children of darkness and whose influence is opposed to the truth. Hence, though we would not injure a hair of their heads, and would not even attempt to restrain their liberty in presenting error (because the time for *binding* evil has not yet fully come), yet we should be bold for the truth; we *must not shun* to

declare the truth and show the error, else we are unworthy a place or name among those called "the children of the light."

And this is the course marked out as the true path of love. Love to God is above all, and love to God's word Jesus puts next (Mark 8:38). The apostle claims that true love not only "rejoiceth in the truth," but it "**rejoiceth not** in iniquity." (1 Cor. 13:6). He teaches that those exercised by true love should "have **no fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather REPROVE them." Eph. 5:8 and 11. And we read "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [*i.e.* bring any other doctrine] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John 9:10. God who **commanded** the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts" "ye should show forth the praises of him who hath **called you out of darkness** into his marvellous light." "For what **fellowship** hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?...Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing." 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

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