

DIVINE PARADOXES

"Because Thy loving kindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." – Psalm 63:3.

THERE are two ways in which this text may be viewed, both of which are very proper. One way is to consider it merely from the viewpoint of the Psalmist and what he meant. The other is to consider it from the standpoint of prophecy. We understand the Prophet David to mean that to have God's favor is more desirable than life; that is to say, he would rather die than to live without Divine favor. The other way, of viewing it prophetically, is to suppose that here, as in many other places, the Psalmist represented The Christ, Jesus the Head and the Church His members.

Our consecration is unto death. God has invited us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto Him, and He has given us exceeding great and precious promises for the life to come. Therefore, because of our love for Him and for the principles of righteousness for which He stands, we are not merely *willing* to lay down our lives, but *glad* to lay them down. We are glad to lay down our human lives in doing the things that are pleasing to God.

Another of David's Psalms gives us the thought that in God's favor is everlasting life. (Psalm 30:5.) These paradoxical statements are in harmony with the other [R5476 : page 173] Divine paradox, that "he that loseth his life shall find it." He that surrenders his earthly life shall gain glory, honor, immortality, the Divine nature. We are glad that we can appreciate these glorious things represented in the Divine favor extended to the Church; and we gladly lay down our lives. We have chosen the better part.

"Therefore my lips shall praise Thee." The Scriptures declare "that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) We may say that to live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord. Yet there are some who try hard to live pleasing to the Lord, who might be restrained from making a confession of Him. There are reasons for the blessing which we receive by confession. One reason is that it is a witness to the world – showing forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness; and a second reason is that this witnessing has a good effect on ourselves. We enlist our natural forces to support this witness, and thus bring into unison all the powers of our nature.

The preaching of the Gospel brings opposition. If our Lord had gone about casting out demons, healing the sick, etc., and had not told anything about the Divine Plan, He would probably have been looked upon as a fine [R5476 : page 174] character – as a man going about doing good. But because He preached differently from the Scribes and Pharisees, and His preaching of the Truth infringed upon the teachings of those about Him, it roused their ire.

So it is today. All the persecution comes about from the making known of the Truth. In no time that we know has this not been true. In the Dark Ages and throughout the Gospel Age, the preaching of the Truth has brought upon those telling the Good Tidings persecutions from those whose minds have been benighted by the Prince of Darkness. In proportion as we open our lips and tell of the Gospel of the Lord, we are opposed by Satan and those who are blinded by him. With the lips one might praise God, and with the lips he might injure men. The lips of this class consecrated to God – those who are laying down their present life in His service – should be devoted to His praise, to showing forth the glorious character and lovingkindness of our God, to telling forth the wonders of the Divine Plan, which is marvelous in our eyes.

[R5477 : page 174]

ALMOST HOME

My frail barque rudely tosses on the sea,
In terror, Lord, I feebly cry to Thee,
"My faith increase, as darker grows the night,
Oh, make me strong in Thee and in Thy might!"
He hears my prayer, He answers, with a smile,
"We're almost home, have faith a little while!"

Nor sun, nor moon, nor any star is seen,
Not e'en the faintest rift of blue between;
The chilling waters deeper, darker flow,
The storm-clouds lower, the winds more wildly blow –
Yet hark! Above the strife His voice, so mild,
"Be brave, be strong, we're almost home, My child!"

* * *

Do eager hands lie folded on thy breast,
And hath the Lord of Harvest bid thee *rest?*
Dost see the happy laborers go by,
Nor canst refrain a tear or longing sigh?
Be calm, poor heart, and sink into His will –
"We're almost home, dear child, lean harder still!"

April 19, 1914.
GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.
