"Wholly a sinner, well!-but must I not get quit of some of my sins before I can expect blessing from Him?"

"No, indeed; He alone can deliver you from so much as even one sin; and you must go at once to Him with all that you have of evil, how much so ever that may be. If uou be not whollu a sinner, uou don't whollu need Christ, for He is out and out a Saviour: He does not help you to save yourself, nor do you help Him to save you. He does all, or nothing. A half salvation will only do for those who are not completely lost. He 'His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree'" (I Peter 2:24).

It was in some such way as the above that Luther found his way into the peace and liberty of Christ. The story of his deliverance is an instructive one, as showing how the stumbling-blocks of self-righteousness are removed by the full exhibition of the gospel in its freeness, as the good news of God's love to the unloving and unlovable, the good news of pardon to the sinner, without merit and without money, the good news of **PEACE WITH GOD**, solely through the propitiation of Him who hath made peace by the blood of His cross.

One of Luther's earliest difficulties was that he must get repentance wrought within himself; and having accomplished this, he was to carry this repentance as a peace-offering or recommendation to God. If this repentance could not be presented as a positive recommendation, at least it could be urged as a plea in mitigation of punishment. "How can I dare believe in the favor of God," he said, "so long as there is in me no real conversion? I must be changed before He can receive me."

He is answered that the "conversion," or "repentance," of which he is so desirous, can never take place so long as he regards God as a stern and unloving Judge. It is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance (Rom 2:4), and without the recognition of this "goodness" there can be no softening of heart. An impenitent sinner is one who is despising the riches of His goodness and forbearance and lona-sufferina.

Luther's aged counselor tells him plainly that he must be done with penances and mortifications, and all such self-righteous preparations for securing or purchasing the Divine favor. That voice. Luther tells us touchinglu, seemed to come to him from heaven: "All true repentance begins with the knowledge of the forgiving love of God."

As he listens light breaks in, and an unknown iou fills him. Nothing between him and God! Nothing between him and pardon! No preliminary goodness, or preparatory feeling! He learns the Apostle's lesson, "Christ died for the ungodly " (Rom 5:6); God "justifieth the ungodly" (Rom 4:5). All the evil that is in him cannot hinder this justification; and all the goodness (if such there be) that is in him cannot assist in obtaining it. He must be received as a sinner, or not at all. The pardon that is proffered recognizes only his guilt; and the salvation provided in the cross of Christ regards him simply as lost .

But the sense of quilt is too deep to be easily quieted. Fear comes back again, and he goes once more to his aged adviser, cruing, "Oh, mu sin, mu sin!" as if the message of forgiveness which he had so lately received was too good news to be true, and as if sins like his could not be so easily and so simply forgiven.

"What! would you be only a pretended sinner, and therefore need only a pretended Saviour?"

bought, but received; as men receive the sunshine, complete and sure and free. They are not to be earned or deserved by exertions or sufferings, or prayers or tears; but accepted at once as the purchase of the labors and sufferings of the great Substitute. They are not to be waited for, but taken on the spot without hesitation or distrust, as men take the loving gift of a generous friend. They are not to be claimed on the ground of fitness or goodness, but of need and unworthiness, of poverty and emptiness.

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## How Shall I Go To God?

Horatio Bonar (1808-1889)

IT IS with our sins that we go to God, for we have nothing else to go with that we can call our own. This is one of the lessons that we are so slow to learn: uet without learning this we cannot take one right step in that which we call a religious life.

To look up some good thing in our past life, or to get some good thing now, if we find that our past does not contain any such thing, is our first thought when we begin to inquire after God, that we may get the great question settled between Him and us, as to the forgiveness of our sins.

"In His favor is life"; and to be without this favor is to be unhappy here, and to be shut out from joy hereafter. There is no life worthy of the name of life save that which flows from His assured friendship. Without that friendship, our life here is a burden and a weariness; but with that friendship we fear no evil, and all sorrow is turned into joy.

"How shall I be happy?" was the question of a weary soul who had tried a hundred different ways of happiness, and had always failed.

"Secure the favor of God," was the prompt answer, by one who had himself tasted that the "Lord is gracious."

## "Is there no other way of being happy?"

"None, none," was the guick and decided reply. "Man has been trying other ways for six thousand years, and has utterly failed, and are you likely to succeed?"

"No, not likely; and I don't want to go on trying. But this favor of God seems such a shadowy thing, and God Himself so far off, that I know not which way to turn."

"God's favor is no shadow: it is real beyond all other realities: and He Himself is the nearest of all near beings, as accessible as He is gracious."

"That favor of which you speak has always seemed to me a sort of mist , of which I can make nothing."

"Say rather it is sunshine which a mist is hiding from you."



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So spake his venerable friend, and then added, solemnly, "Know that lesus Christ is the Saviour of great and real sinners, who are deserving of nothing but utter condemnation."

".nesodo siH io ano ad ton yem I zqedhar; "Pether; "sid Luther; "Pether i ngi not be one of His chosen."

"Look to the wounds of Christ," was the answer, "and learn there God's gracious mind to the children of mer. In Christ we read the name of God, and learn what He is, and how He loves; the Son is the revealer of the Father; and the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

"I believe in the forgivenese of sins," said Luther to a friend one day, when tossing no a sick bed, "but what is that to me?"

"Ah." said his friend, "does not htah include your own sins? You believe in the forgiveness of David's sins, and of Peter's sins, why not of your own? The forgiveness is for you as much as for David or Peter."

Thus Luther found rest. The gospel, thus believed, brought liberty and peace. He knew that he was forgiven because God had stati forgiveness was the immediate and sure possession of all who believed the good news.

In the settlement of the great question between the sinner and God, there was to be no bergaining and no price of any kind. The basis of settlement was laid eighteen than bundred years ago; and the mighty transaction on the cross did all that was reded as a price. "It is further," is God's message to the sonn are not in the price price of any that was reded as a price. "It is further," is food's message to the sonn are not in the trons did all that was reded as a price. "It is further," is food's message to the sonn are not in the trons and any the do to be saved?" This completed transaction supersedes all man's efforts to justify himself, or may allow and the do to be saved?" This completed transaction supersedes all man's efforts to justify himself, in the statest do in justifying him. We see Christ crucified, and food in Christ reconciling the world until the theory of the transference of the sinner's quilt to the Orivie sure ty was once and for ever accomplicated. It is cross, where the transference of the sinner's quilt to the Orivie sure ty was once and to rever accomplicate of that the accomplexity of the Strucification are accomplexed to the Struce of that the of that the accomplexed to the source of the sinner's store was," and whoosever believen it has the of that the accomplexed to the source of the sinner's dood news," and whoosever believen it that the section secured. If the store of the sinner's store of the sinner's and how the source of the sinner's the source of that the benefits which the the store secured.

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"If so, then ought I not to wait for His impulses, and having got them, may I not present the feelings which He has wrought in me as reasons why I should be justified?"

"No, in no wise. You are not justified by the Spirit's work, but by Christ's alone; nor are the motions of the Spirit in you the grounds of your confidence, or the reasons for your expecting pardon from the ludge of all. The Spirit works in you, not to prepare you for being justified, or to make you fit for the favor of God, but to bring you to the cross, just as you are. For the cross is the only place where God deals in mercy with the transgressor."

It is at the cross that we meet 6od in peace and receive His favor. There we find not only the blood that washes, but the righteousness which clothes and beaufifies, so that henceforth we are treated by 6od as if our own unrighteousness had passed away, and the righteousness of His own 5on were actually ours.

this is what the aposite calls "imputed in options (**Rom 4:5,8,11,8,3: Ki,8,6**, in or information of the output of the output

thirst presents us: and cod deals with us as representible to thim. Righteoursess mithin will bollow necessarily and inseparably, but we are not to wait in order to get it before are not able of the outpresence of the only proceed and the provided and the outpresence of the outpresence of

going to God for the righteourses of this only begrother son. The transpread of the right of the rest of the right of the righteousness sense of the rest of the rest of the t

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"Yes, yes, I believe you; but how shall I get through the mist into the sunshine beyond? It seems so difficult and to require such a length of time!"

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"Are there no difficulties, do you mean to say?"

".none sense, a thousand; in another, none."

"Stedt zi woH"

"Did the Son of God put difficulties in the sinner's way when He said to the "Did the Son of God put difficulties in the rest?"

"Certainly not, He meant them to go at once to Him, as He stood there, and st they stood there, and He would give them rest."

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"Vone, certainly; to speak of difficulty when I was standing by the side of the Son of God would have been folly, or worse."

"Did the Son of 6od suggest difficulty to the sinner when He sat on Jacob's well, by the side of the Samaritan? Was not all difficulty anticipated or put away by these wondrous words of Christ, 'thou wouldst have asked, and I would have given?''

"Yes, no doubt; the asking and the giving was all. The whole transaction is finished on the spot. Time and space, distance and difficulty, have nothing to do with the matter; the giving was to follow the asking as a matter of course. So far all is plain. But I would ask: Is there no barrier here?"

"Vone whatever, if the Son of God really came to save the lost; if He came for those who were only partly lost, or who could partly save themselves, the barrier is infinite. This I admit; nay, inside upon."

"Sbevez pried no ot reirier to our being saved?"

"Foolish question, which may be met by a foolish answer. Is your being thirsty a "Foolish question, which matter or is being poor a hindrance to your obtaining riches as a gift from a friend?"

"True, it is that this the for the water and up yover the this that the sint is and the solut." Gold."

"Ah, ges, the Son of Man came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. If you be not wholly a sinner, there is a barrier; if you be wholly such, there is snone!"

"Wholly a princer! Is that really my character?"

"No doubt of that. If you doubt it, go and search your Bible. God's testimonia to the to the to the to the to t you are wholly a simmer, and must deah with Him as such, for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."