



Now as these words show us that Christ in some way or other made a great sacrifice for us, what we want to find is how he came to make it and why He made it?

The great things we are to consider, as our subject suggests, are the different offices of Christ, but it is no more than proper that we should first consider the reason for His becoming our Substitute. The great reason is sin. Well, if sin be the reason, what is sin and where did it first make its appearance?

Sin is the devil, the evil spirit which is the source and cause of all the misery, pain and sorrow in this life; he is the prince and ruler of this world and is round about us everywhere. In order to find where he first made his appearance we have to go back ages; back so far upon the horizon of history, that the human mind can form no conceptions as to the real time; back to the beginning of the world. In order to appreciate the present history of anything, we must first find where and what the beginning was. You cannot appreciate any book unless you read the preface or introduction, and find out why and for what purpose it was written. We always like to read the early history of any great man's life, and so to find who Satan is, we must consider briefly his early history, as he plays an important part in our drama, being the cause of our need of a Substitute or Saviour, for by following his teachings, man lost his estate, which Christ bought back again with His life.

Traveling back ages, we come to what we know as the beginning of the world. Our first two characters to consider

are Adam and Eve, whose history is known in a way by almost every school-boy and girl; yet they do not know what their early history has to do with them. I do not think any of us realize half enough, what great responsibility lay with them. We do not think of them as the representative of millions of people; we do not think of them as breaking a path which all men after must follow: yet it is so, for to these two, we first see the devil approach in the form of a serpent, the vilest and most loathsome creature that God has created.

God had placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, a beautiful place to live, and I doubt if we can even imagine the glories of the place with surrounded them with everything that they could wish for.

God had now finished His work, and pronouncing everything good. When anyone finishes a piece of work or make any good thing, his always anxious to try or test it to see if it is really worthy to perform the work for which he has made it; so with God having finished His work, He proceeds to test it.

This is an all important step which we are now to consider, for a few moments, one for which the inability to stand has caused humanity to suffer ever since, and for which they will suffer until Christ comes again to relieve them.

The first test was that of obedience, and the Lord commanded man, saying "Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,

thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

First.

The test of Obedience

The devil in the form of a serpent approaches Eve while she is alone, and not letting her know that he is the enemy of God. If he had, perhaps Eve would not have listened to him, for she would have known that one enemy always seeks to misrepresent his adversary, and that is just what the serpent did in Eve's case. He misrepresented God's command to Eve, telling her that God is not a loving Father or He would not seek to deprive her of the blessings which come from 'eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil', says the serpent, for God doth know, that in the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall become as gods knowing good and evil, and God does not love you or he would not deprive you of this blessing, and so he continues in his smooth deceitful tongue until Eve begins to waver; and dear friends, just as soon as we give Satan a little hold upon us, he sticks like a leach, and it is impossible to get rid of him. Eve gradually let her faith in God become cold and accepted the seemingly good advice of one who was just waiting for the chance to overpower her; so dear friends, we must profit by Eve's experience and put on the whole armor of God, which is the only thing we can fight the devil with. He sees our weak points and aims for them. Let us be on the watch for him that he does not come upon us unawares.

The Disobedience

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, "she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

The devil left out an all important part in his conversation with Eve, namely, that they should know good without the power to do it, and they should know evil without the power to do good, and their very attempt to elevate their position only made them become powerless. Satan enslaved terrified miserable creatures, for as soon as they had eaten of the tree, they seemed to have dropped many degrees. Before they had eaten of the tree, they seemed to be living in a vale of glory compared with what they were afterward, for the first thing they realized when their eyes were opened, was their destitute and naked condition. The sad fruit of the tree of knowledge shed no beam of Divine excellency upon them, but a shadow of darkness and gloom, and they fain would have been back in their former state but know that was impossible. Dear friends, this that we have just heard is the fall of man.

Trial and Judgement.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden.

They now realized what they had done. God had told them that in the day that they eat of the tree, they would surely die, and they knew that God meant it, and now as they heard the Lord coming in the Garden, they were afraid to look at him, and ashamed because they had disobeyed Him: they had broken His commands and knew they would have to suffer the penalty, poor miserable creatures, supposed they could hide from God, but when God called Adam, he could resist no longer and had to answer. Adam says to the Lord, "I heard thy voice, but was afraid because I was naked". This was his confession. God knew he had eaten of the forbidden fruit or he never would have known this, then God clothed him and he was not ashamed.

Then we have God's conversation with Eve, and with the devil and his judgement upon both.

God says, "the seed of the woman (which is Christ our Substitute) shall bruise the serpents head, but the serpent shall bruise his heel."

Now great problems came before Adam. Sin had to be put away. He had brought it into the world, could he put it away? The serpents head had to be bruised, could he do that?

Death had to be abolished, could he do that? Nay, had by sin introduced it and given to it, its terrible sting. Adam realizes his inability to do this, but God does not require him to. God takes the matter all in his own hands, and forms a scheme that by the seed of the woman, a ransom is made. Dear friends, this seed is Jesus Christ our Substitute foretold so many years ago, but now having viewed the origin

of sin, we see why we need a Substitute, we see these things required by God, the putting away of sin, and the abolishing of death, which were impossible for Adam to overcome, while he had brought them into the world; still he was unable to overcome them, and for this God had condemned him and all his seed for ages to come to death. So God drove them out of the Garden of Eden and placed Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep them from returning to Eden, they were no longer perfect creatures, and no longer worth to live in Eden, which must really have been the vestibule to Heaven itself. He drove them out and made them work for their bread and from that time humanity has been groaning in pain awaiting for their Deliverer.

Now as Adam and Eve passed out of one entrance to the Garden, God had formed a plan, or a way in which they and all their posterity should enter it again by another entrance and this entrance is by Jesus Christ, our Substitute. Although this scheme has taken ages in which to mature and is even not yet fulfilled, still its consummation will be glorious to all, and from the time that Adam and Eve were driven from Eden, they and all nations afterward began to look for this Deliverer, they did not think it would be so many ages before He would come, still He was their only hope and they lived by faith in that which they had not seen.

When Moses and David and all the great prophets came, they thought surely it was the Messias, as they called him, but no, they were not, and after ages when He did come it was in such a different way from what they had expected He

would come, that they would not believe that He really was their Deliverer.

What a loving Father God is that when Adam and Eve were unable to stand the test and by their disobedience showed that they were unworthy of being His children, he did not immediately destroy them, but gave them another chance to redeem themselves. They had come so far short of His expectation, yet so great was His love for them, that He offers them a way to salvation, which is by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer whose life we will now consider very briefly.

#### Our Substitute.

It is not necessary for us to review Christ's birth in detail. We are all familiar with that ll important part, for every child born of Christian parents knows when very young of our Saviour's early life; but let us consider very briefly some of his offices and beautiful examples, that He set before us while here upon this earth among men, and as a man, the second Adam, the second perfect man that has ever walked this earth and the only one who lived a perfect human life.

#### First.

Christ is our example. His first example is that of humility shown first by His lowly birth, the poorest place that man ever was born in, and then by His early life as a mechanic. He lived and worked for His bread the same as the indigent peasant of those days, reaching us that it is no



shame for a man to have to work, even as the Son of Man worked for wages. Much might be said upon this, but we must hasten on. Here is His command to us, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," then after the last supper when He washed the disciples' feet. Oh! What an example of humility, the Saviour of the world washing the disciples' feet. This shows how we must bear with one another and help one another, those perhaps whose lots are not as easy as ours. We should not think ourselves above them, but if necessary, even wash their feet, for Christ said, "the servant is not greater than his Lord."

#### Our Propitiation.

Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works?

He paid the ransom with His own life, He was rich, yet He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

It was a perfect man that incurred the debt of sin in Eden. Adam was perfect before he fell, so none other than a perfect man could pay the ransom, God would not cancel the debt unless the ransom paid was equal to the debt.

After Adam proved unfaithful, God so longed for a perfect human creature, one who would submit entirely to His will. Christ's life was a perfect one, one lived in perfect obedience to His Father's will, He was obedient unto death, and when Christ gave His perfect life as a ransom for man's sin, God accepted it, as a propitiation or corresponding price,

canceling in full all that great debt of sin which Adam incurred in Eden. God blotted out that charge that He had against man with Christ precious blood which He shed voluntarily for man on Calvary.

This he did that we by His death might reap life Eternal. Such a Substitute has never since been found and never will, who to-day would give His life, even though by doing so He knew he would save nations from any great calamity. How can we reject so great a salvation, a salvation purchased at so great a cost. Oh! that we might realize more fully the love of Christ for us, for it was love and pity alone that prompted Him to give His life for us.

#### Our Life.

Christ is our life. He lives in us. I live: - yet not, I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in, the flesh; I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. These are beautiful words of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians. Here is one who lived in Christ and whom Christ also lived in: he was not afraid to do anything because he knew it was not he that did it, but Christ who dwelt within him. And so with us, we should not be afraid to start upon any holy commission, knowing as we do, that Christ is with us everywhere and will strengthen our weary feet, and will look after us in times of need. We are too often prone to look at ourselves, and say, "Oh! it is impossible for me to do that! At such times we forget that Christ lives in us if we are His children. You know at first Moses was afraid to undertake so great a task when he

reflected upon his own situation, but when God assured him that He would be with him, he was not afraid to undertake what seemed to him a very great undertaking, he realized that it was God that did the work, and that he was merely an instrument by which the work was done. So when we attempt anything, we should look to Jesus for help and realize that it is not us that tries to speak for Him, but Christ Himself who liveth in us, and we in Him, if we realize that he is part of us, sweeter will be the communion that we hold with Him, and nearer we shall approach him. Oh! that we may know how near Christ is to us.

#### Our Mediator.

Then Christ is our Mediator or our intercessor. Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John XIV : 6.

He is our access or our entrance to God. It is impossible to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven by any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ. He is our way, a path which shineth with rubies, a path not strewn with rocks and thorns, but a highway of holiness.

All He asks of us is faith in Him and in His sacrifice that He died for us, and whatsoever we ask of the Father in His name, shall be given. Nothing can be gained except through Him, not even temporal things. Every prayer we offer if it is not offered in His name and for His sake, will never be answered. There is no other name under Heaven given among men whereby we can be saved. All things are possible

only through Him who holds the key to our salvation, which He purchased with His own blood, and to-day He sits at the right hand of God and intercedes for us. He pleads with the Father in our behalf. Oh! what a blessed thought that we have a representative in Heaven who prays for those who believe that He came from God. The very thought of such should fill our souls so full of love for Him, that we should forget all the sorrows of this world and live only for Him and for the hope of blessings to come of which He will be the distributor.

If we have this glorious truth planted within our breasts, this life will be so much brighter, things that we did not love before, we will now love, and if we are oppressed in any way in this life and all others seem to get ahead of us, like the leper who could not bathe in the pool because others that were stronger got ahead of him, but when Christ came along, he interceded for him, and he received the blessing. This hope we have in One who pleads for us, will make us forget these temporal sorrows and struggles, knowing that in the world to come, we will be in just as high a place and perhaps higher than those who oppress us in this life which we now live. Oh! that we might realize more the true character of our Saviour.

#### Our Saviour.

Now let us look at Christ in the office of our Saviour. "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost". Christ came not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. His special mission was to save, to rescue us from death, to save

us from an awful doom; but no as Christ came into the world and died for us and purchased our pardon on Calvary's tree, still He did not save us against our will, and He will not to-day.

There is a certain spirit which we first have to manifest and it is very easy too, and may be best expressed in these words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He will save us if we but come to Him with contrite hearts. Put our hand in His and say, "Take me as I am. I give all into thy keeping which thou art able to keep against that day."

#### Our Elder Brother.

And lastly, the most beautiful office of Christ is as our great Elder Brother. I love to think of Christ as our Elder Brother, who has gone ahead to look after our great estate which we are heirs with Him too, and which He purchased with His blood, for which He sailed through bloody seas. He has gone ahead to prepare this estate for our reception. He says, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Oh! what a blessed thought that we will not have to make this journey alone, but our great Elder Brother is coming back to receive us, and take us with Him to enjoy the Mansion which He (as our Substitute) purchased for us.

And now dear friends, I hope I have explained Jesus in the true light of our Substitute, and if you now realize

the true position in which you stand to-night, some of you to whom Christ has knocked at your door, and asks admission will you longer reject Him, after you know what He has done for you. Take Him to-night, why longer delay? He has waited long, but He will not always wait. "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, and they that were ready went into the marriage feast." Are you ready for the bridegroom? The feast is ready and many guests have assembled, still there is room. Will you be the one to sit at the marriage feast? You may if you will. Will you come?