

Luke 10:30-34 (James Butler Stoney) 52913

Christian Truth: Volume 17, Ruin and the Remedy, The (10:30-34)

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." Luke 10:30-34.

Here man's ruin is fully depicted, and here we shall find the remedy is in divine perfection in every part. Where the ruin is sensibly felt, where the sinner is consciously awakened to his state, he feels he is painfully incapable to refuse any relief; and he feels he wants it. No state could be more deplorable. He needs relief, and yet he would refuse it if he could. If he were not so broken down, he would not accept it; so it is his very misery that makes him fit for grace. He has the wounds, and wounds only. He has nothing to commend him but his need.

And now he receives wine and oil into his wounds. Christ comes as the neighbor. Under the law, but not confining Himself to the limits of the law, He magnifies the law; and, while He meets man according to the measure of the law, He travels out beyond it into the depth and breadth of God's love. He not only pours oil and wine into his wounds—that is, cures him. This, of course, is the first thing; the man is cured. But were I to limit the remedy to this, while I admit much would have been done for the sinner, yet I should come very short of the remedy given me by God for him.

If I am sent to a suffering person with three or four distinct gifts which the mind of the donor (who is fully acquainted with the need of the sufferer) considers requisite, am I at liberty to give him only one, because that one gives great relief, and to withhold the others? Certainly not. I should err in a double way. I should not fulfill the commission entrusted to me, I should misrepresent the Donor, and I should deprive the needy one of the favors given me for him. The remedy reaches not only to the cure of the sinner, not only to an assured rescue from judgment, and unquestionable safety, but it meets him in his powerlessness, as we read, he sets him on "his own beast."

The ruin of the sinner is only partially relieved if he be only cured. It is undoubtedly most necessary, but it is not enough for a perfect remedy, which God in His grace supplies. The cured one is set upon a new power—the power of Christ; he is now to be borne along by the power of Christ, entirely in a new way, not according to man's power or ways. He has tasted of the bitter end of all of man, and as a cured one he enters upon a new course; a new life and a new ability are given him. He may very partially avail himself of it, but this new power is as much a part of the remedy as the cure is.

I must not limit it. The sinner should be impressed and convinced of the fullness and largeness of grace. Not only is a cure for the heart's misery sent through the work of Christ, but the life and power of Christ are also given to meet the powerlessness of his state. Otherwise, as we often see, a soul may be assured of cure—of forgiveness of sins—and yet have no idea of the power or walk which should characterize him now as a cured one. This part of the remedy may never have been made known to him. The remedy is one whole, though divided into parts, and I am not at liberty to insist on part of it, namely, the cure, and be silent about the other parts of it.

Were I sent to minister medicine, money, and a home to any indigent person, should I consider I had properly executed my work because I had given the medicine? Surely I should, in such a case, have deprived the invalid of two very important items necessary for his state. No one with any integrity would excuse himself for so grievous a defalcation of service.

Now, in ministering to souls, there is not only the loss of the benefits of the remedy if any part be omitted or withheld, but there is a correspondent deficiency or lack of testimony to the grace of God in the life and ways of the convert. Suppose I tell a sinner that Christ, through His work, will cure his sin-distressed soul, and he receives this truth in faith, he is cured. But, if I say no more about the remedy, this cured soul seeks to drag on in his weak, powerless state, the only real improvement in him being that he has been relieved of the fear of judgment—the penalty of his sins. How differently such a one would feel were I to insist that the same One who had cured him would now confer upon him His own power. For his ruin would not be adequately relieved unless he were given new power.

And this power is not the power merely of restored health, such as might be the effect of the cure. It is an entirely new kind of power— a power unknown before—the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, which necessarily would lead him into His line of things, outside and apart from man, to walk here as Christ walked.

And this power is not only offered, it is conferred. Thus it is shown in this parable. The relieved sufferer is set on "his own beast," the figure of the power in which Christ walked here. He brings him to an inn and takes care of him. Then his miserable condition is entirely met—cured, carried, and cared for. If the ruin has been terrible, the remedy is most effectual in every point.

Every convert may not enjoy the greatness or perfection of the remedy; yet it is important to assure every perishing soul of the full nature and scope of the remedy, so that he may be convinced, at least, that there is no limitation on the part of God, though he has not faith to grasp it. There is a vast difference between the state of the soul of the one who, though converted, never heard of the fullness of the remedy as set forth in this parable, and the one who, though he has heard of it, has not sensibly entered into it. In the former there is no exercised conscience; there is no sense of failure, because not enjoying what has been conferred upon him; but there is a sense of lack continually—a feeling of wanting something to render him fully happy, for he does not know and has never heard of the fullness of God's remedy for him. And hence he turns to earthly mercies to fill his cup. But the one who has been taught the fullness of God's remedy, even though he does not

enjoy it, is continually warned by his conscience of the greatness of the mercy vouchsafed to him. The one may not have, as far as his knowledge goes, the land from which he could produce all he requires, while the other knows he has the land, and that, if he would but till it, he would have all he needs.

How differently each must feel! The one craving and pining because he does not know what would fully satisfy his heart and relieve him of all the consequences of his ruin; the other, knowing it, and as he uses the gift through Jesus Christ, appearing before men in a new and wonderful condition. Intensely happy, because not only cured of his wounds, but invested with the power of Christ; thus set in superiority to all that affects and overwhelms man here; and consciously, under the care of Christ while pursuing his pilgrimage through this dreary world, he is a beautiful testimony on the earth of what Christ has done—of God's remedy for man's ruin—so that everyone seeing him will greatly marvel and glorify God.

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