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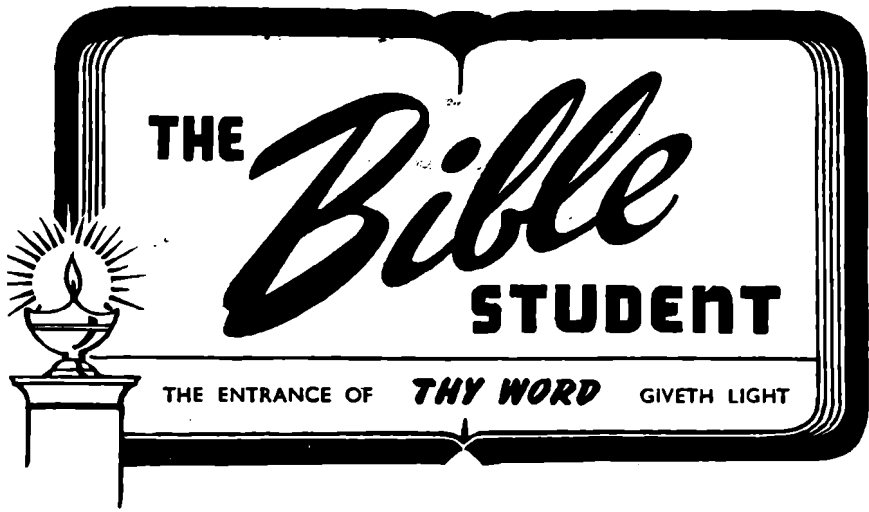
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*Verse 6. So that with good courage we may say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: what shall man do unto me?*—The verb *tharreō*, rendered 'with good courage', is used in the present participle, lit., 'being of good courage' (being bold), and thus conveys the thought of a constant habit. The quotation is from Ps. 118:6, where the Hebrew has 'Jehovah is for me', and divides the two sentences as here in the R.V.

*Verse 7. Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the Word of God;*—The verb in the original means 'guides' (the noun is formed from the article with the present participle, 'the ones leading'). What is signified here is not rule but leadership (by ministry of life and word), as in 2 Cor. 1:24. The aorist tense rendered 'spake' sums up their ministry. The same word is used in verse 17.

*and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith.*—*Anatheōreō* means to consider carefully, to review; it is used elsewhere in Acts 17:23. The word *ekbasis* (A.V. 'end', not signifying an aim) denotes the way out, pointing to the termination, but with the suggestion of the whole course of life which was thus consummated; this is indicated in the word *anastrophē*, a manner of life; it means the general ordering of one's conduct in relation to others (the synonym *biosis*, Acts 26:4, refers to one's course of life viewed in itself, not in relation to others). Their faith recalls the subject of chapter 11.

(To be continued)

## THE NECESSITY OF THE CROSS

MARTIN A. HOPKINS, Th.M., D.D.

[Having dealt, in the first article, with some of the multitudinous theories of the Atonement the writer now proceeds to a critique of these theories and the necessity of the Cross:]

### II. *A Critique of these Theories*

Out of my reading on the subject of the atonement there have emerged some clearly defined ideas:

1. No theory of the atonement is adequate which does not ground the originating motive of the atonement in the love of God. The critics of Anselm's theory no doubt have some ground for saying that he neglects this element. 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son'. 'God is love.' The atonement is not something that Christ has done to win God's love. For 'God commended His own love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8). The Cross was the result and expression and not the cause of God's love.

'Twas not to make Jehovah's love  
Toward His people flame,  
That Jesus from the throne above  
A suffering man became.

'Twas not the death which He endured  
Nor all the pang He bore,  
That God's eternal love procured  
For God was love before.

2. No theory of the atonement is adequate which does not find an absolute, metaphysical necessity for the atonement in the very nature and being of God—in His justice and holiness. This is the acid test. Even so great a thinker as Augustine said that there might have been some other, yea, many other ways, by which God could have forgiven the sins of men. Here is the 'great divide' for all theories of the atonement through the ages. Is there a metaphysical necessity for the atonement in the nature of God, or is there not? Could God have forgiven sin in some other way? Some say God can forgive sin without any sort of atonement at all, just as a man can forgive the offences of his fellowmen. Here is where the governmental theory breaks down. God could forgive sin by a mere fiat without atonement, but such a laxity on the part of God might cause men to go on sinning without fear. To prevent this God had to make a display of His hatred of sin in order to arouse a wholesome horror of it in the hearts of men. Let us pause long before we take such a view of the divine nature. It exalts God's might at the expense of His moral attributes. Is a thing right because God wills it, or does God will it because it is

right? I say God wills a thing because it is right. There is eternal, immutable justice in the nature of God, and He wills in accord with His own nature. Any other view makes God a capricious tyrant whose might makes right.

3. No theory of the atonement is adequate which does not give due emphasis to the ethical and spiritual effect of the work of Christ on man's nature. The aim of the plan of salvation is to make men holy. I am sure that some statements of the doctrine of satisfaction are open to criticism at this point. Also some of the critics of this doctrine are unjust and seem wilfully to close their eyes to the fuller statements of the doctrine of satisfaction, in which justification and sanctification are joined together in indissoluble union.

4. No theory of the atonement is adequate which does not take a serious view of the enormity and heinousness of sin as the transgression of God's law, which is but the expression of His righteous and holy nature. No theory can have much weight that supposes that sin is a thing of light consequence in the nature of man and in the economy of God. Anselm's theory, whatever be its faults, certainly had an exalted view of God's nature and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. This is what has given it its tremendous hold on the mind of man for nearly nine centuries. In reading the authors who espouse the moral influence theory, one cannot but feel that there is an underlying sense that sin is not such an awful thing after all. All man needs is a display of the love and compassion of God and he will forsake sin. But such a view is contrary to experience.

### III. *The Fourfold Necessity of the Cross*

With the foregoing as a background, I wish to say a few words here on the necessity of the atonement, stressing the word 'must' in John 3:14. There is a *fourfold necessity* for the atonement:

1. *The Scriptural necessity.* One great line of Old Testament prophecy spoke very plainly of the sufferings of Christ. These passages reach their culmination in the 22nd Psalm and the 53rd of Isaiah. The veracity of prophecy makes the Cross a necessity. When Peter struck off the ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus said

unto him: 'Put up again thy sword into its place, for they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Or thinkest thou not that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legion of angels? How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?' (Matt. 26:52-54). 'Thus it is written', said Christ after His resurrection, 'that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day' (Luke 24:46).

2. But the prophets prophesied that the death of Christ was necessary because there was an underlying necessity for it. It was not necessary because it was prophesied, but it was prophesied because it was necessary. There is, in the second place, a *cosmological necessity* for the atonement. The moral order of the universe in which we live demands an atonement for sin. If God forgave sin by a divine fiat without any atonement man would have an even lighter view of sin than he now has. Men would feel that God was indifferent to sin, and so would go on sinning. 'Man's inner sense of rectitude requires that vindication of the Divine law of righteousness be made. Man invariably feels that God must necessarily demand from Himself that which He requires of man, the vindication of His own righteousness, and the supreme value of the Cross of Christ is that it at once vindicates God's righteousness, and assures of Divine pardon' (Griffith Thomas). Now the governmental theory is correct in so far as it recognizes this necessity in the moral order of the universe. But it is not adequate as an explanation of the atonement. It places the emphasis on the circumference and not on the centre of the subject.

3. Then there is a *psychological necessity* for the atonement in the moral constitution of man. Man stands condemned not only before God, but before his own conscience. He knows himself to be a sinner. He has no inward peace. Now the moral influence theories are correct in so far as they recognize this manward aspect of the atonement. The atonement does terminate on man. The blood of Christ purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. 9:14). But this is not all there is to the atonement. 'This, therefore, must be the test of a satisfactory doctrine of atonement still, viz., its power to sustain the *consciousness of peace with God* under the heaviest strain which can be put upon

it *from the sense of guilt*, and of the condition which guilt entails' (Orr, *The Progress of Dogma*, p. 235).

4. There is a *metaphysical necessity* for the atonement in the nature of God Himself. God is eternally just and holy. What the Scriptures speak of as the wrath of God and the hatred of God are not mere anger or passion, but the reaction of His righteous and holy nature against sin and impurity. God is love; but He is also light and a consuming fire. God is love; but He is not all love and nothing else. His justice and holiness make atonement an absolute necessity. This metaphysical necessity in the nature of God is the background for the psychological necessity in the nature of man, who is made in God's image; and of the cosmological necessity in the order of the universe, because it is the universe of a moral God and so must be moral. And it is the background of the Scriptural necessity, for the Scriptures were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.

Now the strong point in the doctrine of satisfaction is that Anselm and those who followed after him seized upon this fundamental, eternal, immutable, metaphysical necessity for the atonement in the very nature and being of God Himself, and made it the centre of their system. This is the only theory that can adequately account for the tremendous fact of Calvary. It alone can answer the question *Cur Deus Homo?* (Why did God become man?) When stated in its fulness, embracing justification, regeneration, and sanctification, it includes all that is good in all the other theories, and completely satisfies the fourfold necessity for atonement. What God's own justice and holiness, man's own conscience, and the moral order of the universe demanded, and the prophets foretold, God's infinite love has supplied. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life'.

'There is no theory which is so intelligible as the theory of penal substitution; and there is no religious message which has brought the same peace and solace to those who have realized the sinfulness of sin, and the menace of the retributive forces of the Divine government, as the conception that the penalty due to sin was borne by the crucified Saviour, and that the guilty may be covered by the robe of His imputed righteousness (Paterson, *The Rule of Faith*).

IV. *The Plan of Salvation*

Now in closing I wish to present the best outline of the plan of salvation I have ever seen. It is a translation from an old Latin author. It begins with what God is, where every theory must begin. It combines the Godward and manward aspects of the Cross. Here it is—ponder it well:

*God is*

A Judge, Who cannot clear the guilty.	A holy God, Who cannot associate with the impure.
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*But we are*

Guilty

Impure

*Therefore to stand*

In the judgment

In the presence of God

*We need to be*

Justified, i.e., pronounced innocent.

Sanctified, i.e., made holy.

*This can only be done by*

The righteousness of Christ imputed to us.

The holiness of Christ imparted to us.

*Which is*

Christ's work *for* us, passive and active, suffering and serving.

Christ's work *in* us, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

1. The *originating* cause is the love of God the Father.
2. The *procuring* cause is the merit of Christ the Son.
3. The *efficient* cause is the operation of the Holy Spirit.
4. The *instrumental* cause is the Word of God.
5. The *receptive cause* is the faith of man.

*The result:*

We are

Justified

Sanctified

1. From all guilt.

1. In the whole man,

2. By one act.

2. By a progressive work,

3. Perfect on believing.

3. Perfect only above.

*N.B.*—The middle sentences are to be read with *both* left and right columns.