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HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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The Rectory,
Halsall,
13th July, 1965.

My dear Friends,

August is a quiet month. Parochial organisations close down. I visualize families on holiday in various regions of Britain, and more than ever these days on the continent—some following the sun, others simply concerned with relaxation and a change. May we all enjoy the month after our own fashion!

The subject of worship was our main theme in the last magazine and we will continue to think about it this month. What are the principles of worship?

If a man does not know and remember how much is above him, he will see nothing true. He will begin by thinking himself big, and will end up by finding himself and everything else little. He must look up because the truth of his nature is to belong and to depend. He cannot stand alone. His own strength is weakness. He is strong or wise only by what is given him, and put into him. Or he will begin by thinking he can do everything and will come to think that he can do nothing, and that there is nothing to do that is really worth doing. He must look up because the best in us is not what we are, but what we aspire to be. A man who does not look up has no ideals, no sense of mystery; he lacks reverence and reverence is essence of manhood. Without it life is dry and petty and vulgar.

To worship, therefore, is man's highest glory. He was created for fellowship with God; and of that fellowship worship is the sublimest expression. All the exercise of the religious life—meditation and prayer, love and faith, surrender and obedience, all culminate in worship.

Recognising what God is in His holiness, in His glory, and in His love, realising what we are as sinful creatures, and as the Father's redeemed children, in worship we gather up our whole being and present ourselves to our God to offer Him the adoration and the glory which are His due. The truest and fullest and nearest approach to God is worship. Every sentiment and every service of the religious life is included in it: to worship is man's highest destiny, because in it God is all.

He who worships the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, must in all the qualities of his soul, in all the relations of his life be a **better** man than the atheist, i.e. the man who denies the existence of God. The man who worships a stone is a better man than he who worships nothing.

The man who falls down before carved wood, or worships the beasts of the field, is of grander nature than he who never bows his head in prayer, and never lifts up his heart in aspiration and religious desire. The tendency of worship is to elevate our nature.

He who worships sincerely, however ignorant is the better for his worship; he is enlarged in his nature, his outlook upon things is widened, he is led away from self-trust and is taught to depend upon a power, not lower but higher and in his estimation better, than his own.

To become dependent on God not only makes a person strong, but also clothes him with God's own almightiness.

To render homage to Almighty God, therefore, is to take one's appointed place in the Universe and to do what each one of us was born to do: for we are all bound to God.

According to an ancient Danish tale, a spider once lowered himself from a tree into a bush by a thread and wove a web there. He was an unusually successful spider, catching all the food he could eat. Then one day, while making a survey of his establishment, he found one thread which led, as he thought to nowhere. So he cut that thread to be rid of it.

Thereupon his web fell, and he fell with it, caught in its meshes. What happened was that the thread that he thought ran to nowhere was his thread up to the tree, upon which his whole establishment depended.

And so there is no man, or woman or child on earth without that thread leading upward, that connection of human life with the Divine. And more than we sometimes think, the entire scheme of worthwhile earthly living depends on that connection. The good life is possible only through it, and we sever it at our own peril.

There is but one God. This God is a Spirit. This God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. This God is Infinite. Self sufficient, Eternal, Unchangeable. Man's chief end is to glorify this God and enjoy Him for ever. God is therefore the Object of our worship, and we must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Such then are the principles or the primary sources from which worship proceeds.

May God bless and strengthen all our worship at St. Cuthbert's.

God bless you all.

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH

A STORY FOR OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

My dear children,

Here is another story for you, I hope you like it. It is a story of World War II when black-outs were common.

A soldier was hurrying along a certain street in order to be in the barracks before dark, when he became aware of tapping sounds not far away from him. Tap-tap, tap-tap they echoed along the street. Looking towards the place from which the sounds came, he saw a man with a cane on the opposite side of the street. He was tapping his way cautiously. Sometimes he would stop and listen, then he would go on again, still tapping the pavement with his stick. He appeared uncertain and confused.

Guessing that he was a blind man in unfamiliar surroundings, the soldier went to him at once. "May I help you?" he asked. The blind man turned towards him and smiled, saying at the same time, "It is very kind of you, sir. I shall be glad of your help. You see, I am in a street that it is not very well known to me, and I am not quite sure of the way here. If I can only get to the end of this square, I shall be where I know the way well."

The soldier took his arm, and they walked along. How different was everything for the blind man now.

He was able to walk rapidly. There was a certain confidence in his step. His hesitancy had all disappeared because he trusted his guide—the soldier.

They enjoyed each other's company. By the time the daylight was quickly fading, and the inconvenience of the black-out was uppermost in the soldier's mind. The soldier was about to make some remark about the inconvenience to the blind man, when he suddenly remembered that the black-out meant nothing to him, for he lived constantly in darkness. Then the soldier said to him, "It is nearly night. I suppose the black-out is no inconvenience to you?" He laughed quietly as he answered, "No, not really excepting that seeing people sometimes bump into me." He still laughed. It was a good-humoured laugh. Then he added, "They should be more careful, don't you think so?"

They came to the end of the square. "Now," said the blind man, "I think I know where I am," and saying that he could find his way home, and thanking the soldier for his assistance, he left him.

The soldier watched him go. He walked down the street with a swinging gait, happy to get out of the unfamiliar way where the soldier had found him.

Now, boys and girls, we are all very much like that blind man. Life for us is an unfamiliar road-way. Sometimes we feel confused, and we hesitate: at other times we are rather frightened. We come across others, too, who are trying to find their way about in this strange world. We do need a guide. One who can see. Such a guide is Jesus Christ. He comes to us and He says, "I am the Light of the World. If you will only trust me, I can lead you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

That is why Jesus came into the world, in order to help us and guide us. He can be your guide and mine. If we make Him our Friend and Companion; if we follow His teachings, if we trust in Him, we cannot go astray. Shall we allow Him to lead us?

God Bless You All,

Love from

THE RECTOR

PARABLE OF THE MONTH

"The Parable of the Two Sons," St. Matthew, chapter 21, verses 28 to 32

"But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son go work today in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented himself, and went. And he answered and said, I go sir; and went not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first." . . .

There is much food for thought here. In the first place it has a special message to parents and god-parents who bring children to be baptised, and agree—promise in fact—to do all in their power to bring up the child to be a good Church member. Like the second son in the above parable, they agree to do something, but how many, like him, never do it? Only by interesting themselves in the child's religious training, and above all, by coming regularly to church themselves, can they fulfil the promises they have made. Secondly, there are those who have sought

Confirmation, which implies an agreement to use the Church's services—particularly Holy Communion—with the utmost regularity. How many in Confirmation are like the second son who said "I go," and went not?

On the other hand there are many people who have never made these promises, some who have even openly refused to do so, but who will eventually repent themselves and do what so many have so easily promised to do, but have not done. And those who have never made any promises—never, for example, been Confirmed; even if they never are Confirmed they will still be truer people than those who have, but have not fulfilled what they agreed to do.

There are many ways in which this parable can be applied. It is one of the many sayings of Christ which challenge our sincerity.

SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTING TO BLACKPOOL

Tuesday, 17th August, 1965

Children 11/-, Adults 18/-, inclusive of tea.

There will be no charge for members of the Sunday School and Choir Boys.

Any member of the Parish wishing to go on this outing may obtain tickets from the undermentioned names.

Mrs. Moorcroft (Barton), Mrs. Gaskell, Miss B. Townsend.

GEORGE PORTER

SOME SOCIAL VIRTUES

Blow, blow thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.

Shakespeare had a horror of ingratitude. This fact is apparent in many of his greatest plays. He regarded it as a most bitter experience to be a victim of ingratitude and one of the most awful sins to be guilty of it himself. In this matter, as in so many others, he reflects feelings which are deeply rooted and shared by most of us.

I am largely indebted for these observations, and for the theme of this essay, to the opening chapter of G. B. Stern's book, "Benefits Forgot," in which she observes, "I believe I would reckon my three favourite virtues as gratitude, courtesy, and mental honesty."

Undoubtedly, these virtues will be prominent characteristics of any society which aspires to fineness of culture, vigour of thought, and frankness in social relationships. There are other virtues, perhaps greater ones, but those three are essential to the preservation of the graces of life, and all three of them are so apt to be neglected.

Gratitude cannot be forced either in ourselves, or from others. It is a spontaneous reaction coming from the heart, like love itself. Yet how often we find it difficult to show gratitude. It fidgets our vanity, and takes away our sense of importance. Arrogance would always like to be the benefactor. (We are more arrogant than we are prepared to admit, even more than we are aware of.) But in a real sense, "It is more gracious to receive well than to give—and far

more difficult." Especially is this so from a person poorer than ourselves, or from a stranger. We so easily miss the point. We refuse to accept not just a gift but the goodwill, and the friendly gesture. The more truly generous a man's disposition, the more easily will he receive from others, because he understands the true basis of generosity.

Gratitude should be a permanent and never-fading disposition. There is so much for which everyone should be grateful—for things reassuringly familiar, and for things marvellously strange. Here is a list quoted from "Benefits Forgot." Gratitude for:

"Hospitality, unasked and unexpected.

Affection which can still care as warmly that justice should be done outside as well as at home.

Those who genuinely forget an injury.

Those who shelter us from bad news, and injurious gossip.

For wounding reminders held back.

For our mistakes swiftly and unobtrusively covered."

There is no end to the list, but the past of most of us is strewn with "benefits forgot"—advances repulsed through false pride, or sheer blindness or obtuseness; benefits received, but taken for granted, or unrecognised, or accepted arrogantly as our due. Indeed, gratitude is closely allied to courtesy.

Courtesy implies thought for others, often requiring the imagination to put oneself "in the other person's shoes." It is a far deeper thing than is called for in the more conventional courtesies. The graces of living concern our approach to, and impact on, other people. Amongst other things courtesy means that we do not go through life wielding a bludgeon with which to smash other people's opinions and ways of looking at life; nor yet with a sword with which to pierce, or cut them to the heart with sarcasm, ridicule, or indifference; nor yet with chisel and spade to gouge and ferret into their most secret and private domains. If we stick to the use of metaphor, courtesy is to go through life with an artist's brush which recognises tones and shades of feeling; which can so easily smooth out the harsh contours and soften the clash of violent contrasts, but if need be can still produce the bold stroke and the clear-cut horizon.

Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, hated questioners—the people who must probe, and ruthlessly demand as a right to uncover the last secret of a friend's mind and heart—because this attitude so often arises from lack of trust or from intolerance, or again from lack of sensitiveness. Take these examples from "Virginibus Puerisque":

"Do you forgive me?"

"Madam and sweetheart, so far as I have gone in life I have never been able to understand what forgiveness means." (Between friends the question does not arise, nor does it between intelligent and enlightened people.)

"Is it still the same between us?"

"Why how can it be? It is eternally different, and yet you are the friend of my heart."

"Do you understand me?"

"God knows, I should think it highly improbable."

One might not be inclined to accuse Stevenson's enquiring lady of discourtesy so much as of over-anxiety, but none of the questions needed to be asked. If she was "the friend of his heart" her questions reveal a lack of confidence in him, and her own lack of perception.

Courtesy assumes the best in other people and respects the other man's personality. As St Paul put it, "In honour preferring one another." It can only show itself in one who is devoid of arrogance, conceit; who has no disproportionately exalted view of self, and who possesses that other virtue of mental honesty.

Mental honesty means that we try to see ourselves truly; to see and to admit to ourselves why we act and think thus and thus towards other people; to root out our arrogance—the independence which makes us incapable of gratitude, and the self-regard and clumsiness which make us incapable of courtesy. (How far do I make others have to make allowances for my temper, touchiness, jealousy, little-mindedness, selfishness?) How often do we deliberately refuse to see reason—deal in half-truths—persist in deliberately misjudging others' motives—blaming others for things we know ourselves are guilty of as well?

Everyday life is so cluttered with obstructions, complications, problems and pleasures that we rarely stop to think and examine our own behaviour. Yet there is need to study these arts and graces of living—gratitude, courtesy and mental honesty. Behind each is ultimately love and respect for our fellow men. These virtues are light in the world. There are a thousand ways of living, and endless ways of reacting to other people, but only the virtues springing from love and respect for others make possible the best life.

"The night has a thousand eyes

And the day but one;

Yet the life of the whole world dies

With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes

And the heart but one;

Yet the light of a whole life dies

When love is done."

H.B.

THE HYMNS WE SING (10) COMPANIONSHIP

27 Abide With Me

This well-loved hymn was written by Henry Francis Lyte in 1847, three months before his death. The hymn commences with a hint of the New Testament story of the walk to Emmaus, "Abide with us for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent." However, the real clue to this hymn is found in Psalm 139, vv. 11 and 12 beginning "If I say surely the darkness shall cover me . . ." and 1, St. John, ch. 1 v. 5, "GOD IS LIGHT and in him is no darkness at all."

Abide with me! It is the cry of the solitary man, the lonely man. It is the evening. Things walk by night that dare not encounter the sun. We are reminded of that lovely psalm found in the evening service of Compline 'the pestilence that walketh in darkness.' (Ps. 91.). This homely but sombre truth is the starting point of the hymn. Charles Wesley put it in this way.

My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee.

The second verse shows us what line the rest of the hymn is going to take. Here we have a contrast between transitory human life and the eternity of God. We must be on our guard not to make this hymn too subjective. 'O thou who changest not' It is not only the pessimist and the desolate who notice the changeableness of things. It is, on the contrary, the realist who dares to observe them for what they are, and to notice that they point away from themselves to things eternal.

'I need thy presence every passing hour.' The cry becomes more urgent for the ebb and flow of night and day is nothing compared with the ebb and flow of the soul's fortunes in the spiritual battle. We are reminded of the writing of the apostle Paul. 'We wrestle not with men of flesh and blood but with every kind of intangible darkness, and ultimately with death.' Like the apostle we must face up to the situation fairly and squarely. In interpreting these two verses, the third and fourth, we may be guided by St. Paul. He wrote in his first letter to the people of Corinth. "It is sin which gives death its power, and it is the Law which gives sin its strength." He goes on to ask 'Where is death's sting.' Given that which will answer the first of these conditions given the forgiveness of Christ which roots out the fearfulness and despair of sin, then there is nothing to be frightened of in Life or Death. The darkness is no darkness at all.

And so, when death comes, with the Cross in view, and the victory of the Cross in mind, the singer knows himself secure. He can, on the evidence of the Risen and Living Christ, contradict the conclusion of his senses. For he who had been asked to abide with his friends on the Emmaus road was indeed the Risen Lord.

Next month: "Hark my soul, it is the Lord."

D.T.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Thank you for your gifts of flowers. If any corrections are needed in the following list please let me know.

(Dates are 1965 they vary of course).

H.B.

- Jan 3—Mrs. R. Heaton
10—Mrs. K. Edwardson
17—Mrs. H. Gaskell
24—Mrs. T. Sutton, Mrs. R. Lewis
31—Mrs. Sumner, Mrs. D. and M. Dickinson
- Feb 7—Mrs. H. Dickenson
14—Mrs. W. Barwiss
21—Mrs. J. Morris
28—Mrs. H. Dean
- April 25—Mrs. W. White

- May 2 Miss Mawdsley and Mrs. Parker
9 Mrs. H. Sergeant and Mrs. H. Banks
16—Mrs. W. Martin
23—Mrs. E. Lord
30—Mrs. E. Grimshaw
- June 13—Mrs. C. Shacklady
20—Mrs. H. Grimshaw
27—Mrs. J. Huyton
- July 4—Mrs. H. Gaskell
11—Mrs. J. Silcock
18—Mrs. J. Pounds
25—Mrs. P. Saunders
- Aug 1—Mrs. H. Grimshaw
8—Mrs. Moorcroft, Mrs. Sephton
15—Mrs. Stopforth
22 Mrs. McCoy
29—Mrs. Crook
- Sept 5—Mrs. Taylor
12—Miss Wilson
19—Mrs. Blundell and Mrs. Park
26—Miss Mawdsley and Mrs. Parker
- Oct 10—Mrs. Moorcroft and Mrs. Townsend
17—Mrs. W. Halsall
24—Mrs. T. Rimmer
31—Mrs. Ainscough
- Nov 7—Mrs. Hesketh and Mrs Winstanley
14—Mrs. L. Heaton
21—Mrs. Neale
28—Miss Kniveton
- Dec 5—Mrs. L. Huyton
12—The Guides
19—The Sunday School

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- Aug 1 a.m.—T. Swift, T. Hunter
p.m.—E. Serjeant, D. Swift
7 a.m.—R. Dutton, T. Grimshaw
p.m.—C. Shacklady, J. Balmer
15 a.m.—W. Robinson, E. Blackhurst
p.m.—H. Baldwin, W. White
22 a.m.—J. D. Grimshaw, G. Midgley
p.m.—R. Heaton, J. Colley
29 a.m.—J. Cheetham, H. Gaskell
p.m.—R. Lewis, H. Rimmer
- Sept 5 a.m.—W. Leadbetter, N. Britnall
p.m.—G. Porter, S. Park

SERVERS ROTA

- Aug 1—8 a.m. John Gaskell
8—10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Malcolm Serjeant
15—8 a.m. Roger Dutton
22—8 a.m. Brian Heaton
10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, John Pounds
29—8 a.m. Peter Balmer
- Sept 5—8 a.m. Jim Heaton
12—8 a.m. John Davies
10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Tony Gaskell

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

"In sure and certain hope"

- June 24—Sidney Joseph Scott, age 48 years, 44 New Cut Lane, Halsall.

HOLY BAPTISM

"Entered into the family of Christ's Church"

- July 11—William Maxwell, son of Herbert Maxwell and Jessie Hilton Boardman, 44 Gregory Lane, Halsall.

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