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GEORGE TAYLOR.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

IN the years 1820-21, Princeton, New Jersey, was blessed with a precious revival of religion. The work was still, solemn, and powerful. Among the subjects of it were some who became useful ministers of Christ. Others besides college students felt its power. The distress of many before attaining settled peace of mind was pungent, and often continued for days. There are pangs as well as joys in the new birth. He who believes the contrary, deceives himself. He who teaches the contrary, deceives others. The degree and duration of this anxious concern are determined by Him, who doeth all things well, and "giveth not account of any of his matters." He knows what best suits each case.

In the village at that time was an Englishman, whose name is above given. He was poor, feeble in mind and body, and much afflicted with rheumatism. He was honest, but very ignorant of divine things. He felt the powers of the world to come. He had a deep sense of his sinfulness, and awful apprehensions of the wrath of God. At first his case was not distinguished from that of many others. But while others obtained relief, and were begotten to a lively hope, he sunk into deeper distress. His state of mind excited the affectionate interest of the pious around him. He manifested a solemn attention to any thing that showed him his vileness. His sleep was short and disturbed. His burden of guilt was "a vast oppressive load." His appetite almost left him, and like David, he "forgot to eat." "His bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long; for day and night God's hand was heavy upon him. His moisture was turned into the drought of summer." He often feared that it was too late for him to repent and turn to God. Yet he could not give over seeking.

His chief difficulty was to conceive *how* a just and holy God could forgive sin, and particularly his sins. He saw that the law was holy, just, and good, in its precept and penalty. But he could not see how such a God, with such a law, could consistently forgive such a sinner as he was, or indeed any sinner. Many conversed with him, and tried to show him how God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly who believe in Christ. He also heard some excellent sermons on the work of Christ as a Redeemer. Still, all was dark. "How should man be just with God?" was the perplexing question. Such phrases as are commonly and very properly used to teach the nature of the offices of Christ in behalf of sinners, conveyed no idea to him. He knew not the language of Canaan. The effect of his distress was plainly perceptible in his face. The pious deeply commiserated his state, and the more so because no one had been able to afford him any relief. At last one explained to him some of the sacrifices under the law. He told him how a lamb was brought by a guilty man, and laid bound on the altar, and how he who had sinned laid his hands upon it, confessing his sin, and how its blood became the blood of atonement, and how he was thus set free from the guilt of breaking the ceremonial law. His friend then said, "Christ is our lamb," and, suiting the gestures to the words, repeated these lines of Watts':

" My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand
And there confess my sin."

This was enough. To poor George it was life from the dead. The day-spring had visited his soul. He said, "I understand it now. All is plain. Christ is the lamb to take away our sins. Why did not some one tell me this before?" His friend said, "We have been telling you the same thing all along, but in different words. Did we not tell you that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him?"

George Taylor was received into the church of Princeton, August 10, 1821; and for a few years, till his death, led a devout, consistent life. He held fast his integrity, and is now, I trust, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

This short narrative is not intended to illustrate the whole of that great change which must pass upon men in order to salvation. Nor is it given as a type of conversions. God deals variously with men. But it may teach some useful lessons.

1. The use of learning is to make things plain.

2. There is milk as well as meat in the word of God—milk for babes, and meat for strong men. Let each have his portion in due season.

3. Whoever would come to Christ, must be taught of God. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." Reader, if God is drawing you, now is your time. If he is calling you, rise and follow him. He will not always call. Left to yourself, you will never find the way to God. You must be led by the Spirit. Pray like David, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

4. God works when, how, and by what means he will. He offers salvation to the rich and the poor, to the learned and the rude. But how often are we reminded of those words of Christ, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let us thank God that he reveals these things to babes, to the weak-minded and ignorant who are willing to learn. "The entrance of thy word giveth light." "It maketh wise the simple."

5. Let none despise the Gospel because it is preached to the poor, nor because the child and the simple can understand enough of it to be saved. Pride is as damning as murder, and pride of intellect is as ruinous as pride of person, family, or estate. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God." "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "The proud,

and all that do wickedly, shall be burned up." You must humble yourself as a little child, if you would be saved.

6. It is always safe to tell of Christ and his love, of his death and his grace. This theme has awakened thousands, and brought millions to salvation.

7. How transforming is the doctrine of the cross, whenever understood and received. It is life and it is spirit. It cheers, it purifies, it puts men to praying, it makes them zealous of good works. Such were its effects on George Taylor, as many saw; on the Greenlanders, as the Moravians testify; on the Indians of New Jersey, as Brainerd declares; on the people of Kilmany, as Chalmers states. The cross at once subdues and wins. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

8. And now, dying mortal, you too are a sinner, and you too need a Saviour no less than poor Taylor. Unless you are brought to strive to enter in at the strait gate, you will never be saved. Unless you are brought to loathe and abhor yourself, you must perish. You must find the Lamb of God, by whose blood alone your guilt can be washed away. "He that believeth not, shall be damned." It is said of a poor Greenlander, that the first time he heard the love and death of Christ explained, he said, "If this Saviour died for me, he shall be my Saviour." If you will rest all your weight upon the precious blood of Christ, your soul shall be saved, your sins shall be blotted out, and heaven shall be yours.

O repent and believe; for why will you die?
 Since God in great mercy is coming so nigh—
 Since Jesus invites you, the Spirit says, Come,
 And angels are waiting to welcome you home.

If you die in your sins, many will rise in the judgment and condemn you. If you now receive Christ, you will be safe for eternity. Will you not receive him? Will you not receive him *now*? The Bible presents no alternative but NOW or NEVER.