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THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Luke 10: 30-36.

"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.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?"

"And he said, He that shewed mercy on him, Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was rough and and lonely, and infested with thieves and robbers. These lawless men lived in the wild hills around Jerusalem and made their living preying on the defenseless traveler.

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is the way of life, rough and unseasoned to the feet of the friendless and poor. To these the way of life is still infested with thieves and robbers. Men who drive hard bargains with the man of extreme necessity, men who consider any price, any wages, fair that the poor can be forced to accept, privileged classes that lay down hard and unfeeling social laws for the helpless.

"Friedrich, the man-coming...
"Ours is a good world...
"It is the very worst world...
"Tis a very good world...
"Tis the very worst world..."

"'Tis a very good world that we live in,
To lend or to spend or to give in.
But to beg or to borrow or to get one's own,
'Tis the very worst world, sir, that ever was known."

For the man with a good steady job, a sufficient income, or sure possessions, it is a smiling friendly world. But for the poor traveler who has fallen among thieves and robbers it a harsh, cruel and bitter world. It was so then, and still is.

The Lord does not tell us who the traveler was. It is generally supposed he was a son of Abraham. But what does it matter. He was a man and in trouble, that is all that mattered to the Lord. Jesus did not love men's souls. He loved men and women. He loved them just as they are. He loved them in their poverty, He loved them in chains and afflictions, He loved them in their misery and helplessness. He even loved them when their faces were dirty and their clothes ragged and torn.

A poor Hindoo, who was sent to England to be educated, when he finished, went back to India and the religion of his fathers. Later he said he might have been

a Christian, if the people of England "had loved him a little more and his soul a little less." He saw the beauty and purity of the Christian religion, and knew it was superior to his own. But when he saw the application of its great truths, even by the men who taught it, all its beauty was turned to dust and ashes.

The poor traveler fell among thieves, "which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." A man or woman does not have to be wounded in the body to be slain. The weapons used to slay a man's spirit are sharper and far more deadly than the sword of the highwayman. Greed, extortion, and usury have slain far more men and women than the desperado and the robber. The highways of industry and commerce are still infested with thieves and robbers. Their methods may be more genteel and refined than the highwayman of old, but they are far more deadly and effective. They gather golden eagles where he only gathered silver pocket change. And they still leave their victims naked, wounded, and half dead. Every little child robbed of an education, every cripple robbed of medical attention, every infant robbed of a safe and intelligent birth, every family living in a wretched hovel is a victim. The millions today who are looking on life's battle in dumb hopeless despair are as near to death as this poor traveler was. The only difference is, theirs is a spiritual death, his a physical one.

"And by chance there came down a certain priest that way." Of all men he should have been the most ready

to help. The very badge of his office was mercy. But he passed by on the other side. Perhaps he offered up a prayer for the poor wounded man as he passed. It is so much easier to pray for a man in trouble than to stop and help him. I asked a man one day what would he recommend as the best way to overcome your dislike for a person. He said, "Pray for them." I told him I knew a better way than that. Jesus said the Pharisees prayed long prayers over the widows and orphans that were being robbed, but they did nothing for the widows and orphans. It is a fine thing to pray for a man after you have done all you can to help him.

Perhaps the man was on his way to church, and considered his devotions to God superior to his debt to his neighbor. Lots of people do. They have a spirit of devotion that is beautiful if it is useless. When I was a young man, teaching school in a county village, there was a little white church just across the road from the school building. No one ever went to the church either on week days or Sundays/. The building was freshly painted and well kept, although it was never used. One of the older boys offered to go with me one day to see inside the church, assuring me there would be no objections. Inside it was as beautiful and clean as it was on the outside. The pews and altar were carefully dusted, the curtains spotlessly clean. He told me the church was kept in order by a woman who lived in the village. She must have spent a good deal of her time caring for and adorning this empty shrine, for it showed the care of gentle loving hands. But all around her were hundreds of poor white people and Negroes

who were sorely in need of her love and sympathy. To most of these she was a total stranger. She daily saw hundreds of little children growing up in ignorance of the God she worshiped. She was so busy keeping the shrine of her Lord she forgot her neighbor. "Inas much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my bretheren, ye have done it unto me." He was in haste to meet his Lord, and his Lord was lying there by the roadside wounded and in sore distress. But he passed him by.

"Abou Ben Adhem---may his tribe increase,--
 Awoke one night from a sweet dream of peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, and like a lilly in bloom,
 An angel, writing in a book of gold.
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the Presence in the room he said,
 "What writest thou? The vision raised its head,
 And with a look made all of sweet accord,
 Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
 "And is mine one?" said Abou. "nay, not so,"
 Replied the angel; Abou spoke more low,
 But cheerily still; and said, "I pray you then,
 Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

"The angel wrote and vanished. The next night,
 It came again, with a great awakening light,
 And showed the names whom love of God had blessed;
 And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

The only service you can render God is what you do for men and women. He says, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." What if you do praise Him? He has choirs of angels that can do it much better. What if you do build shrines to His worship and honor? The costliest and most splended of these are cheap and shabby when compared to the clestial temples. Some think you can love God without loving men and women. "He that loveth not

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his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God when he hath not seen?"

"And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." His religion was the same as the priest's. It was full of shadowy themes, empty phrases, and dead devotions. The only thing that could give it life was lowly service to men and women. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

"But a certain Sararitan, as he journeyed, came where he was." You notice He says, "Came where he was." The others passed by on the other side. To sympathize with a man in trouble you must get very close to him. You can not sympathize with a man in a thin coat on a cold day, and you with a warm overcoat on. But if you pull off the coat and let him wear it awhile you will sympathize with him. You cannot sympathize with the man tied to drudgery twelve long hours a day unless you have been there with him. You cannot sympathize with the hungry man when every meal is a banquet.

You can love a man's soul with a wide social and economic gulf between you. But if you love the man you must cross the gulf and live on his side. Ezekiel says: "Then I came to them of the captivity,*** that dwelt by the river Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days." To rightly love a man you must sit where he sits for awhile.

One reason there is so little love between the

whites and Negroes is the wide social gulf between them. They may live in two blocks of each other by geographic lines, but one lives in one world the other in another. Every effort to bring the races closer together has met with the most stubborn prejudice. The one ghost that is always raised, the one that almost turns the white man's hair gray, is the amalgamation of the races. Men have shouted from the house tops, that if the gulf is narrowed there will be an amalgamation of the races. This ghost has the least substance of any ever called up to frighten and intelligent people. The amalgamation of the two races is going on now, at a rapid rate, has been going on steadily ever since they began living together. It is not going in spite of the hard social lines that separate them: it is actually helped by them. Every intelligent sober-thinking man knows that it will continue to go on as long as the social and economic status of the Negro woman is at its present level. The greatest blow ever given the amalgamation of the races is the work of Christian uplift that has been done among the Negro women. And most of that was done by white men and women who dared to cross the gulf and live on the Negro's side.

If we ever lead the Negro to a noble Christian civilization we will have to cross the gulf that separates the two races. We will have to come "where he is." When social laws crush human hearts, when social laws kill hope before it is born in the human breast, when social

laws violate the highest law of Heaven it is time they were changed.

"And went to him, and bound up his wounds." A wound is an ugly humiliating thing. It disfigures a man, and makes him feel inferior. Wounds on the soul disfigure a man more, and are more humiliating than those on the body. All men who have wounds try to hide them. They cover them up the best they know how. But hard social customs tear away the covering and leave them bare. O Christian, it is your task to cover up the wounds of men.

"Pouring in oil and wine." This mixture was very soothing to the aching wound. Wounds on the body are very painful at times. But if they are severe enough they may deaden the senses so they are no longer felt. But a wound on the spirit is a living thing. The deeper it goes the sharper the pain. It takes a great love to heal these.