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SERMON LXXIII.

THE CROSS BORNE FOR US, AND IN US.

PHIL. iii. 8—11.

“Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my FATHER, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteousness which is of GOD by faith, that I may know Him and. the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”

THE cross of CHRIST is now preached every where; we exult to say that our salvation is through HIM alone, our righteousness from HIM, that “there is no other Name under Heaven whereby men may be saved.” So far is well: the right foundation has been laid, but the foundation is not the building. What then has been built thereon? We believe that our righteousness is in CHRIST; are we seeking to have His righteousness in us? We look to the Cross of CHRIST for refuge; are we, who believe in it, bearing it? are we “taking up our Cross and following HIM?” These are earnest questions: for much knowledge and little practice; much light and little heat; many leaves and slender fruit; much “drinking in of the rain that cometh oft upon us,” and scanty produce; these things suit not together; of such GOD saith, “It is rejected, and nigh unto cursing, whose *end is to be burned.*” “The *knowledge* of the FATHER may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea,” yet the earth be as barren as the sea-shore; the pale cold light of the moon, which enlightens but warms not, putrifies what it falls upon. An especial judgment is throughout Scripture denounced on those who have much knowledge, but little love and cold deeds. The judgment of Sodom (“set forth,” as it is, “for an ensample, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”) shall be “more tolerable” than that of Capernaum; Tyre and Sidon, of which not a trace remains, more tolerable than Bethsaida. GOD give us, who have the wealth of Tyre, and the knowledge of Capernaum, grace in this our day to lay it to heart!

Our Church every where remarkably brings together faith and obedience; following herein her FATHER, Who gives us no other rule whereby to judge of our state,—“If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”—“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” Nor is it less remarkable how St. Paul, in this and other passages, while setting forth the free grace of the Gospel, insists on the self-denial, and sacrifices, and sufferings of the Gospel,—or how we are wont to separate what GOD by him has joined, and dwell on them as a heart-uplifting description of what GOD has done for us, and forget what these same Scriptures speak of, what is to be done in us and by us. Most consciences probably would bear witness that they had often read, and exulted in this passage, in its rejection of “the righteousness which is of the law,” and its fervid description of faith in CHRIST, without so much as a thought that it implied or required any sacrifice of self, much less with any serious thought of practising or increasing self-denial in compliance with it. It seems to us a great thing to hold nothing as of any account but CHRIST,—

to “count all things but loss that we may win HIM,”—to cast away all dependence on ourselves and our own works, for the righteousness which is by faith in HIM; these are kindling, glorious truths; but they do not stand alone in St. Paul, nor may they in us. St. Paul speaks not only “of *counting* all things but loss,” (so a man might do and yet deceive himself,) but he adds, “for whom also I *have suffered* the loss of all things:” he speaks not only of the righteousness, which for CHRIST’S sake had been through Baptism imparted *to* him, but of the righteousness which had been realized *in* him, the “power of the Resurrection of CHRIST” in raising him, the sharing of *His* sufferings, being likened and fashioned to *His* death. His was not merely renunciation of self-righteousness; it was renunciation of self: not a listless, costless confession of the worthlessness of works which oftentimes are none, but the abandonment of all the merits of real hard service in the sweat of his brow, and of all which that service had attained, reputation, power, station, esteem, triumph, to be “the offscourings of the world,” and to “die daily.” St. Paul *had* “the righteousness which is of the law;” he *had* “after the strictest sect of his religion lived a Pharisee.” He could appeal to all his persecutors “who had known him from the beginning,” “known his manner of life from his” very “youth,” that he had lived holily and unblameably, according to the holiness of the law: he too had, with the twelve tribes, “served GOD instantly day and night,” longing for “the promise made of GOD unto the Fathers;” he had all the chiefest privileges of his nation, descent from one of the two tribes who dwelt again in the Holy Land, circumcised the eighth day, learned in all the learning of the law; with all the reputation of that sect held most in repute; and not a “Pharisee” only, but “zealous;” not zealous only, but as “touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” These things “were gains,” great gains; he had been intrusted with much, and he had traded with it, and obtained “gains,” even “the righteousness which is in the law:” he was in favour with man, and he might think himself in favour with GOD: yea, he was in favour with GOD, since what he did well he did faithfully; wherein he sinned, he sinned “ignorantly,” and GOD revealed HIMSELF unto him, and in His Mercy summoned him to renounce all these “gains;” that HE, of His free mercy, might give him what was far better—gains, to which these were “loss,”—even CHRIST. This, we know, St. Paul did promptly, instantly: “immediately” he conferred not with flesh and blood; hesitated not; asked “LORD, what wouldest Thou have me to do?” and did it; he “*suffered* loss of all things,” all things past and all future; all which he had so many years toiled, to gain; all, nothing excepted; for glory, shame; for wealth, poverty; for station, to be an outcast; for honour, dishonour; for good report, evil report; for being well-known, to be unknown; for the chiefest highest sect, of all respected, to be of that sect which was “every where spoken against;” all which he had his whole life long toiled to gain, every thing he had valued, prized, sought, loved, abandoned at one stroke; for Saul the admired Pharisee, Saul the despised Galilean. It is difficult for us to realize this trial of his faith; we behold him now, the aged Saint, the Martyr, the Converter of the nations, the inspired deliverer and writer of the Word of GOD, “the prisoner of JESUS CHRIST,” whose “race is finished” whose “crown is laid up,” who is even now, through his example, his sufferings, his holiness, the Word of GOD spoken through his mouth, converting, strengthening, ripening his brethren; him, who even in this life knew of his future judgment and his crown. Amid all this accumulated glory, it becomes difficult to think of the time when all this was future, when all had to be won, and Saul the persecutor had, in middle life, to abandon all for which, he had hitherto been preparing himself, to begin, as it were, again from the beginning, undo habits long formed, and now part of himself; he who had “sat at the feet of Gamaliel,” to unlearn all which he had learnt, and the man of full-developed energy to come and sit, like a little child, at the feet of CHRIST, to tame his strength, and to be strong only

in suffering. And this too, when the disciples of the CRUCIFIED were but a small despised handful, sheep scattered abroad, their SHEPHERD unseen, Jew and Heathen alike saying, "Where is their GOD?" Nay, what had before obtained for him repute, this he was henceforth to count sin, and himself,—not in words only, nor echoing words provided for him, but in their very depth—the "chief of sinners."

Such then to St. Paul was the doctrine of the Cross; and well might he set forth himself as an ensample to his children in the faith, as one who *had counted* "all things as loss that he might win CHRIST;" for Whom also he "*had suffered* the loss of *all* things." All those long catalogues of his sufferings, the "signs of his Apostleship," which the heretical teachers extorted from him, are so many comments on *his* doctrine of the Cross. The Disciple was as his MASTER; the Apostle of the CRUCIFIED was daily crucified, until the Martyr's sword was the release from his daily martyrdom; and he having been likened here to his LORD, in his life and in his death, for His Church, again was joined with HIM.

The whole of the Gospel is the doctrine of the Cross, but that two-fold; the Cross borne *for* us, and the virtue and power of the Cross by the Sacraments communicated to us, and henceforth to be borne *by* us. By Baptism are we made members of HIM, Who for us was crucified; and our life from baptism to our death should be a practice of the Cross, a learning to be crucified, a crucifixion of our passions, appetites, desires, wills, until, one by one they be all nailed, and we have no will, but the will of our FATHER which is in Heaven: and in the prospect of each lesser cross, such as are allotted to us, not merely when laid upon us, and we cannot escape them, we too could take up our MASTER'S words, "Not my will, but THINE."

These two St. Paul conjoins, and they are inseparable: of ourselves we could have no will, no power to bear the Cross; we could not "crucify our old man;" this must be and has been done for us: but this done, we must, by the strength given us, keep it crucified; see that it strive not, rebel not, break not its bonds, much less ourselves seek to undo them.

These two points, then, we find uniformly in St. Paul's teaching; a past act whereby we were crucified, have died with CHRIST in Baptism, have therein been buried with HIM, and a present state in which we remain crucified, are to remain dead, and are actively employed in crucifying our own desires, in mortifying or putting to death, the deeds of the old man.

"GOD forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom the world *hath been* crucified," (so is it in the original) "unto me, and I unto the world." The world had been nailed motionless to the Cross of CHRIST, and was dead; and he had been nailed to the same Cross, and was also dead; so that the things of the world being dead, had no more power to tempt him; and he had died to them, and had no more longing for them, than one dead for things that were dead, and were laid bare in their intrinsic deadliness, and nothingness, and corruption. But this Cross had left upon him the marks of suffering, "I bear about," I bear them as in triumph, "the marks of the LORD JESUS," the prints of His nails, the sufferings of His Cross.

Again, "I through the law *have died* to the law, that I might live to God;" i. e. the law brought me to CHRIST, and through HIM I *have died* to the law, that I might live unto GOD? And wherein was this life? He goes on, "I *have been* crucified with CHRIST ("in Baptism," says St. Chrysostome) and so having been slain, and made a partaker of CHRIST, and CHRIST having given me life, "I live, yet no longer I, but CHRIST liveth in me." Unspeakable words! his life is no longer his natural earthly life, but the life of CHRIST has been transfused into him, yea CHRIST HIMSELF lived in him, having united him to HIMSELF. Blessed Spirit! he had remained dead to sin, and alive to righteousness: had loved CHRIST, obeyed HIM, cleaved to HIM wholly, mortified

all besides HIM, so that henceforth there was within him only a soul which obeyed CHRIST, and CHRIST Who governed his soul, so that his life was not himself, but CHRIST living in him. How must he have crucified self, in whom CHRIST so abode, that his life was the life of CHRIST within him!

Yet were not this privilege or these duties St. Paul's only: they are the common duties and responsibilities of Christians. "Set your affections on the things above, not on the things on the earth," such is the exhortation,—living on earth to live in heaven,—and whence the strength? "for *ye have died*, and your life is hid with CHRIST in GOD." The first earthy man has been slain in you: "has been buried, not," says St. Chrysostome, "in earth, but in water, not by death destroying it, but by HIM Who destroyed death; been buried not by the law of nature, but by a sovereign command mightier than nature." Ye have, by Baptism, been made members of CHRIST, so that ye and your life are in HIM, and since HE is with GOD and in GOD, then your life, being in HIM, is hid in GOD; the life here below is not your life; your life is above, not yet revealed what it shall be, hid with CHRIST in GOD, and to be revealed at His coming. "When CHRIST your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with HIM in glory." Your life and the glories of your life are absorbed within the unapproachable glories of the invisible GOD; in the very depths of Divinity, IN GOD, in the bosom of the FATHER, where your SAVIOUR is, is your life hid. "Mortify therefore," the Apostle adds, "your members, which are upon the earth." Here are again the same two points: on the part of GOD, our past death unto sin with CHRIST in Baptism, a death wherein sin was slain in us, and a new life imparted from GOD HIMSELF; on ours, thus new created, the putting to death all these things, which would again live and destroy our life, to keep them dead. "Mortify," i. e. put to death, utterly extinguish "your members, which are upon the earth," all that is in you savouring of the earth, belonging to the earth, "inordinate affections, evil desires, covetousness, which is idolatry, anger, wrath," as well as what men account heavier sins.

Again; "knowing this, that our old man *has been crucified* with HIM," (this is past) "that the body of sin might be destroyed," (this is what is to be accomplished). We have by Baptism (for of Baptism he has been speaking, "whoever of us have been baptized into CHRIST, were baptized into His death,") by Baptism we have been made partakers of the Cross, the Death, the Passion, the Burial, the Resurrection of CHRIST; we have been joined to CHRIST; His Death and Life are ours, that henceforth "the whole body of sin," sin in all its members and all the parts of which the old man is composed, may be utterly "destroyed," that we may no longer "serve sin," serve it no more than the "dead, who is freed from sin." For the life that ye now live, is not your own, but from GOD and "to GOD, IN JESUS CHRIST our LORD," in Whom we His members are.

And so in like cases; "that ye put on the new man, which after GOD hath been created in righteousness and true holiness," i. e. ye have been re-created after the image of GOD, see that ye clothe yourselves with it more and more closely, bind it nearer to you: "we preach CHRIST crucified, CHRIST to them that are called the power of GOD, and the wisdom of GOD;" power whereby men conquer Satan, flesh evil spirits, weakness the powers of darkness, and, as one of old times said of Christians, "men become like the angels and lead angel lives."

The conclusion of the whole then is this; we are not simply bid to die to sin, to crucify our old man, to abolish the whole body of sin; nor again are we simply told that CHRIST died for our sins, was crucified for our sins, "blotted them out, nailing them to His Cross;" but we are told both; first of His dying for us, and through our adoption into His Body, by His Sacrament, imparting to us the efficacy of that Death, yea that Death itself, and then of our remaining dead, crucified, motionless, stirring neither hand nor foot towards those sins, whose curse HE bore for

us, and which HE once slew in us.

And now we may go back the reader to the teaching of the text, and the neighbouring verses; St. Paul rejects not any righteousness of a Christian; he teaches us not to lay this aside, but all, whether of the Jew or Heathen, all whether of the Jewish or moral law, all which is *out of* CHRIST. A Christian has no righteousness but *of* CHRIST; how should he, since by Baptism he is *in* CHRIST and CHRIST in him: as they spake in old times, he “beareth God.” “By grace we are saved through faith, and that” (not even faith) “not of yourselves, it” (even your faith) “is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast, for we are His workmanship, *having been* new-created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD has before appointed that we should walk in them.” It was not of yourselves, that ye were brought to CHRIST, not of yourselves, that ye do good works, “for he who hath received how should he glory as though he had not received?” we ourselves, and any thing that may be good in us, are “the workmanship,” the making, of CHRIST, how should we have any thing of our own? Yet neither may we disparage the works done in us; in *us*, did I say? I mean not in this weak and self-indulgent generation, who come not up to the measure of their fathers, but of the blessed saints and martyrs of old time, who “through faith wrought righteousness.”

St. Paul abandoned that righteousness which he had out of CHRIST, for that higher righteousness which he might have “of GOD through faith,” derived *of* GOD and *in* him. And this righteousness was, that he might “know CHRIST,” and feel within himself the power of the “resurrection of his LORD,” (rising himself with his risen LORD, and whither his LORD was) and the “sharing of His sufferings, and *the likeness* of His Death,” so that he who had before been by Baptism buried into the likeness of His Death now was made like to that Death itself, now dying in the body, as before to sin. So that from this likeness to his LORD, and being in his LORD, he filled up in his flesh that “which remained behind of the sufferings of CHRIST for His body, which is the Church.” His LORD suffered in him, as before in those whom he had persecuted; and bequeathed, as it were, this treasure to His faithful servants, that they should suffer for His body. Although His sufferings alone were meritorious, and all other sufferings were through HIM and His power, yet HE exhausted not the whole sufferings which were to be borne, that man might have the privilege of being like his LORD, in suffering for that body for which HE had suffered. As he says again, “always bearing about in the body the dying of the LORD JESUS”, i. e. day by day dying after His death and for His Church; or as he says, “always delivered unto death for JESUS’ sake, that the life also of JESUS might be made manifest in us,” i. e. that it may be seen that HE is indeed our life, since amid daily death, through HIM we still live.

The ancient Christians followed this example; they shared each other’s sufferings; they suffered one for another; the rich the poverty of the poor; they saw CHRIST in the poor, the prisoners, the captives, the sick, as HE bade them, and as HE had told them, and underwent sufferings for them; they “laid down their lives for the brethren.”

So then they well understood the two parts of the doctrine of the Cross; the Cross which was borne *for* us by CHRIST, and the Cross which was to be borne *by* us, in CHRIST’S strength and for CHRIST’S sake: and this not for a brighter crown only, but that they might be finally saved; “if *by any* means,” St. Paul adds, “I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead, not as though I had already attained, either were already perfected;” he felt within him “the power of the Resurrection,” he “shared his SAVIOUR’S sufferings,” that he might share his SAVIOUR’S life, and yet he counted himself not as yet certain of it; “if *by any* means I might attain.” And if he, the Apostle, the chosen vessel of GOD, the sharer of the Cross, the filler-up of the sufferings of CHRIST, if he were not yet certain, where and in what condition are we?

Men and brethren, soldiers, servants, ensign-bearers of CHRIST, what are we doing? We too were baptized into our SAVIOUR'S Death, our SAVIOUR'S Cross; we too bear upon our brows the imprinted Cross, unseen of men, but seen of angels, seen of Satan, the "seal of GOD upon our foreheads," which whoso "keepeth, that wicked one toucheth him not." But was it placed there an idle sign? had it no meaning? was the sign of the Cross to be worn in the midst of luxury and ease: were the 'sworn soldiers of the Cross' to live softly. Our LORD too, Who bore the Cross for us, preached the Cross; hear HIM!" He that taketh not his Cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me." "Then said HE to His disciples" (not to the multitude, hut to the disciples who *had* "left all to follow HIM") "if any will come after ME, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross *daily*, and follow ME." "Whosoever doth not bear his Cross and come after Me, *cannot* be My disciple." "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the Cross and follow ME." Are there other terms of being CHRIST'S *true* disciples now and then? (for some of these heavy sayings were meant to deter people from the great peril of being *false* disciples) other terms of being worthy of CHRIST now and then? Other ways of following HIM? Has HE repealed His "*cannot* be My disciple:" Those who would have been *unworthy* then, be "worthy" now? Have 1800 years made a difference in HIM Who "changeth not?" Or has HE died again, to "open the kingdom of Heaven" to those whom HE has called unworthy of HIM? Oh, then what madness and extreme misery, that men will think to be saved in any other way than HE Who is "the Way," has pointed out?

HE Who bare the Cross, Who knew what the Cross was, to Whom the Cross was what it could be to none besides, HE Who would bear the Cross in us, and make our Cross, as well as His, a joy to us, as it was to St. Paul, making us to "joy in tribulations," because they make us so far like HIM, HE, Who knows whereof we are made, our utter weakness as well as His own strength, "mighty to save," still calls aloud to those who will hear, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself and take up his Cross *daily*, and follow ME;" and "where I am, there shall he be also."

It threatens to be the curse and the sin and condemnation of this our people, that we have the Cross of CHRIST much in our mouths, hut little in our hearts; talk well about it, profess thankfulness for it, are glad to rely upon it, but touch it not with one of our fingers. We have awakened, in part only, from the listlessness of the last century: GOD by His tremendous judgments on a neighbouring nation, that tremendous judgment of leaving them to walk in their own ways, in some measure scared us from our carelessness. But although we have been in some degree awakened, we are not restored; we have become alive to some duties, and some portion of our privileges; but more to some doctrines of the Gospel than to its privileges, and more to our privileges than to our duties. Satan no longer hinders the preaching of the Cross; he would no longer make it a shame and a reproach; he would do what is far worse, he would make it popular; and meanwhile persuade men that they had it and held it, while he substitutes a counterfeit for it, dissuades us from realizing it, tells us at one time of its impossibility, at another of its hardness, at another of our weakness and inability to hold on under it; and so that when we ceased, we should lose both our labour and reward, and vex ourselves to no purpose; at another he would confound it in our minds with some abuse, and treat as excitement, or folly, or superstition, or popery, yea as opposed to the doctrine of the Cross, the habitual bearing of the Cross, as they of old time bare it: he says to OUR souls, "soul, take thine ease," "since GOD hath with His SON freely given thee all things;" whatever approaches to austerity, self-chastisement, "bearing hardness," he would decry as self-righteousness or the deeds of the law; an increase of more frequent, regular, and, as being a rule, more self-denying devotion, he would denounce as

fanaticism; he would substitute a costless egotistical activity about the concerns of others for renunciation and discipline of self; and as he once taught the Church of Israel in a savage age to sacrifice their sons and their daughters to devils, so he would persuade our easy, indolent, sensitive age, that its luxuriant feelings, its delight in the title of the Cross, its costless gifts out of its abundance, are the true and right and acceptable service. And so he would tell us that the bearing of the Cross is flatly against the doctrine of the Cross, that it is to dishonour or to supersede it; that the way which our LORD called strait and narrow is easy and broad. And so, while the doctrine of the Cross has been continually more preached, the practice of the Cross has continually more diminished; our luxuries and comforts have confessedly increased; luxury spreads downwards and around; every class, save the poor, in possession of luxuries which their fathers had not; every one conscious of it in some degree, and all having more of which they are not conscious: all admit the fact, almost all probably have at times misgivings about it; and yet none hold their hand, or return to the simplicity of their forefathers; nay, the evil continually deepens; and people philosophize upon it, and look upon it as a sort of necessity, and at last perhaps justify it, and then boast, that as a nation we understand our comforts, a boast which shows that we are no nation of the Cross, we are, 'as a nation,' no disciples of the CRUCIFIED.

Would St. Paul own *us* as disciples of the Cross, or rather would not his "spirit burn within him," at sight of so great a nation wholly given to that worst idolatry—idolatry of self? But whom the disciple would not own, how may we dare to hope the righteous Judge will own at the Great Day?

I speak not only of that which takes to itself the title of condemnation, and calls itself "the world," but of Christians: and I would have you, one by one, ask yourselves, wherein do I take up the Cross daily?

Would any know how to begin bearing the Cross? Some crosses GOD from our very childhood has in His goodness provided for us, that in them we may learn what of ourselves we should have had no courage to begin. We speak of the "crosses" of daily life, and forget that our very language is a witness against us, how meekly we ought to bear them, in the blessed steps of our HOLY LORD; how in 'every cross and care,' we ought not to acquiesce simply, but to take them cheerfully, not cheerfully only but joyfully: yea if they should even deserve the name of tribulation, to "joy in tribulation" also, as seeing in them our FATHER'S hand, our SAVIOUR'S Cross. *These* meet us most often in our earliest years, since then we are most subject to the wills of others; and to those, who are yet young, every contradiction of their will, whether from elders or from the rudenesses of those of their own age, every little ailment, every petty disappointment, will, if they take it cheerfully, become a blessing; it is a touch of their SAVIOUR'S Cross; and so, though painful at the moment, is sweet and healthful afterwards. So walking on earth we may be in heaven; the ill tempers of others, the slights and rudenesses of the world, ill health, the daily accidents with which GOD has mercifully strewed our paths, instead of ruffling or disturbing our peace, may cause the peace of GOD to be "shed abroad in our hearts through the HOLY GHOST Which is given us."

As our years and our sins for the most part increase, these involuntary crosses also deepen; the stream becomes darker as it rolls down wards; and as our sins grow heavier, so, if in His mercy HE abandon us not, doth His rod. Yet even sorrow and affliction, sent as the punishment of our sins, have their privileges. If borne humbly and penitently, to us also as to the penitent thief upon the cross, they may be the entrance into Paradise. If we also, when outstretched upon our deserved cross, abide, as he did, patiently upon it, confessing, "and we indeed justly," with him we may see by our side the SAVIOUR Who for us died upon the Cross;

with him we may hear HIM at the last say, "To-day shalt thou be with ME in Paradise." When sorrow and the cross come upon thee, seek not, with the world, to distract it; drive it not away with fresh sources of sorrow, but hid it welcome; cherish it as a heavenly visitant, as a messenger sent from GOD with healing to thy soul; and thou shalt find that thou "entertainest Angels unawares." Thou shalt find the bow in the cloud, His light arising out of darkness, His Form upon the troubled waters; and if HE hush them not, HE shall say unto thy soul, "Fear not, for I am with thee;" HE shall make it gladlier to thee to lie low in trouble and anguish, while HE is with thee, than ever any of the joys of this world were, while HE was less present with thee, or wherein thou forgettest HIM. The blessed lot is not to live joyously in the world, undisturbed by sorrow or suffering, having our "good things in this life," left (GOD forbid!) to our own ways; it is rather to have our "evil things" here, that we may by GOD'S mercy escape them hereafter; it is to lie low—well is it for us, if it be of our own accord, yet any how to lie low—under His Cross; though for the time it lie heavy upon us, it is not so heavy as sin; though it wound us, they are "the wounds of a Friend;" though its nails pierce us, they are but to let forth the disease which would consume us; though it bow us to earth, it places not so deep as we deserve to be: it casts us down only, that when we have learnt to lie there, in silence and humiliation, HE may raise us up. Does this appear to any a hard lot? What are any present sufferings to man's desert? what any sorrow of man's to His Who bore our sorrows? what the most grievous pains during the longest life? They are but as our life, "a breath which appeareth but for a little while and then vanisheth away." They must, any how, be short, since our life here is short also; they are short, are as nothing, if they be but the means whereby GOD would deliver us from the wrath to come, would chasten us for a little while, that HE may not deliver us unto death eternal.

Does any yet shrink from having the Cross thus laid upon him? Well may they, so they be content to bear it even thus, should GOD think fit to lay it on them! But if you would not have the Cross thus laid upon you, or (which were alone really to be feared) lose the Cross and its saving efficacy, take it betimes upon thyself. Even men, who knew not the Gospel, have felt by an implanted instinct that there is no excellence without self-denial: Christian excellence there is none without bearing the Cross of CHRIST; the truth has passed even into a Christian proverb, "No Cross, no crown." Every shade of self-denial, from the pettiest denial of our appetites to the Martyr's mangled and scarce-human form, are all included in "bearing the Cross:" the least, because HE has commanded it, and HE, for His own love's sake which He has given, accepts it; the greatest, still for no other reason; the Martyr's Baptism of blood, the child's infantine practice in saying "no" unto itself, the penitent's austerity in chastening and subduing the flesh which had rebelled and betrayed him into sin, the widow's two mites, the Disciples selling their lands or houses and bringing the prices to the Apostles' feet, the Missionary's self-devotion, the vigil by the sick bed, the nursing of a poor neighbour freely, the consecration of a life to acts of mercy, Paul's solitary lot, every wish and breathing of the heart cheerfully resigned to HIM—are all in their several degrees acceptable in one and the same way, in that they are crosses, sanctified through the Cross of our LORD, sacrifices acceptable through His sacrifice, and in dutiful grateful obedience to His Will. All are preparations for Heaven; for though we know not its unspeakable joys, or wherein they consist, this we know, that we must learn to do His will on earth as it is in Heaven, to be like the blessed Spirits who do His pleasure, swift and instant as the lightning, to count nothing labour, toil, or cross, which is to do His will. This portion of the Cross has a blessed privilege, in that it is *taken* willingly in obedience, not simply *borne* willingly, as the chastisement of disobedience: it is taken, in order, in what little way regenerate man is capable of, to become like his MASTER; it is taken out of love to HIM, and to do His

commandments. As a general rule, (1) think nothing too little; seek for the Cross in the daily incidents of life; look for the Cross in every thing. Nothing is little which relates to man's salvation; nor is there any thing too little, in which either to please GOD, or to serve Satan. Therefore it is that the Cross so often meets our eyes in common things, yea, that it is the commonest form in art and nature; it is impressed every where, from the courses of the heavenly bodies to some of the stones upon your shore, or the flowers of the field; it is presented to us by the very birds as they soar heavenwards; "the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea" float, as it were, upheld by it; the despised animal, which bare our LORD, bears on its shoulders the memorial of His Cross; the human countenance, "the image of GOD" is moulded upon it; it is raised aloft upon our ships; it is formed involuntarily (at least now) on our doors, our windows, our streets, our roads, on dress, on furniture, on ornaments, on the soldiers' sword and spear, on the very mills which prepare our "daily bread," that we may at all times think on it, and regard nothing common which GOD has cleansed and sanctified, as in CHRIST HE hath one world, and all which it contains. Think then nothing too little; keep the hold over thyself; cross thy own desires; deny thyself at one time in sleep, that thou mayest pray, or do some duty the better; at another, as to some luxury, or food; in what is called, and, if not in excess, is innocent pleasure; in thy words; in permitted enjoyments; relinquish what you wish, and practise what you wish not; make it your object so to do, in order to school yourselves and have the habit of self-denial. 2. Then also follow our LORD'S rule literally, "Take up thy Cross *daily*:" make it a rule *every day* to deny thyself something, because thy LORD has enjoined it; watch thyself, and if through human frailty thou forgettest it on any day, humble thyself, be the more diligent, and deny thyself the more resolutely on the next. 3. Fail not to observe any the slightest intimation given within thee to deny thyself; and if thou be faithful, GOD "will gird thee, and carry thee whither" of thyself "thou wouldest not" but on a way which leads to HIM and His eternal glory. 4. The fasts which GOD hath through His Church appointed, are an excellent way of learning to hear the Cross; they have many other ends; they will free thee from many temptations; they will tend to keep thee humble; they have the promise that "thy FATHER, which seeth in secret, HIMSELF shall reward thee openly;" but they are also a learning to bear the Cross. Let any observe the weekly fast of the Church on the day whereon his LORD died on the Cross for him; let him observe it in penitent humble memory of those Sufferings and of his own sins; and he will learn more of the doctrine of the Cross, he will be more drawn to his LORD, and to the Cross of his LORD, than by any profession of the lips, that he would know nothing but CHRIST, and HIM crucified: he will indeed know CHRIST crucified, if he bear His Cross, for HE will graciously make HIMSELF known to His disciples. 5. And as this is an austere part of the doctrine of the Cross, so it is very near another portion which is the most joyous, and the easiest to begin with—self-denying charity. Fast, that you may give to the poor what you deny yourself; deny yourself that you may give; contemn luxuries, or, at times, even comforts, that you may give; give up from time to time enjoyment; think what luxuries you may abandon; what superfluities you may part with; what habitual self-indulgence, if so be you may break off; what ornament of the person, or the table, what show, what, that in any way centres in self, you may dispense with; how you may diminish your expenses upon *self*, and enlarge your charity to your brethren, and in them "lend unto the LORD." "Sell that thou hast and give alms," is thy LORD'S lesson of the Cross; "and come follow ME, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven," is thy LORD'S reward.

There is much need of self-denying charity: every where in this Christian land CHRIST'S members are in want; are starving, starving in their souls; the young educated to sin; women to temporal misery as a foretaste of eternal; our prisons, pest-houses; drunkenness, theft, and all

other works of the flesh, stalking abroad; hundreds of thousands upon hundreds of thousands of undying souls, in this our land, where we boast of the pure light of CHRIST'S Holy Gospel, passing year by year from birth to Judgment, with no knowledge of their REDEEMER, because we, to whose comforts or luxuries they minister, are reckless about them; myriads cut off from the blessings of the Cross, because those who could relieve them will not bear it.

But we must not measure sacrifices by what seems great in the eyes of men: all are little in themselves; and the least will often be the greatest, the last first, the first last: the joy of building themselves a temple to their GOD, by that which cost them much, wherein perhaps their REDEEMER'S praise may be sung, and souls be gathered to His fold, until he comes again, might belong to many, but also to many not; but every one has something to give up, as a sacrifice to GOD; and so every one has some cross, which he may thus take, and thus be doubly blest, both for bearing his Cross and lending to the LORD. Think not then that you must wait for some great thing; what can be great to HIM Who saith, "I fill the Heaven and the Earth?" Think not whether it be small; recollect "the cup of cold water" given in your SAVIOUR'S Name, and take courage: St. Paul knew not, when he first took the Cross, whither he should be led, and he was led, step by step, to the glories of martyrdom, and an assured salvation; and GOD will lead you step by step, if you but take up your Cross and follow HIM. It will at first be difficult to us, in proportion to our former sloth; thrice blessed they, who have from their youth borne it; but blessed they also into whose hearts at any time CHRIST puts it to bear it: HE who put it there will help thee under it; HE will support thy lagging steps, and strengthen thy feeble knees; HE will gild it, and make it glorious and bright, and lighten it that it press not heavily upon thee, for HE Himself will bear it again for you, and make it joyous.

May GOD give us faithful hearts, that we may pray to be enabled in earnest to take up the Cross of our LORD daily; make us ready to be partakers of His sufferings, sharers of His death, bearers of His Cross, "if by any means we may attain to the Resurrection to eternal glory for His merits, who died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto HIM which died for them and rose again."

"Now unto HIM that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto GOD and His FATHER, to HIM be glory and dominion for ever and ever. AMEN.