

MAN'S WAY AND GOD'S.

BY GEO. C.

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THERE are four groups of words in the closing chapters of the Gospel of John which, taken together in the order in which they come, give us God's order in the blessing of souls.

In chapter xix. 30 we have the three precious words, "*It is finished.*" Not "*I have finished,*" as though He had done *part* of the redeeming work, and left the other part for us, but "*It is finished.*" All the work was done.

A poor old woman, in her eightieth year, came one evening to a cottage meeting in a small hamlet in South

Lincolnshire. She was among that vast number of honest though mistaken souls who are "doing *their* best" for salvation. She had taught herself to read when more than fifty years of age, so that she might, among other good things, read the Bible for herself. After this she made it her practice for many years to stay up every Saturday night, an hour later than the rest of the family, to read and pray, in order to fit herself, as she thought, to spend a holy day on the Sunday, considering that this would "go a long way toward her salvation!" However, the night she attended the cottage meeting she heard of the "finished work of Christ." This completely changed the whole aspect of things in her soul,

and, with tears chasing each other down her deeply furrowed face, she exclaimed at the close of the meeting, " To think *I* have been doing so much to get salvation, all these years, and now to find the work was finished on the cross by Jesus ! "

Yes, reader, " It is finished ; " and *your* part, if you would find salvation, is to trust that precious finished work.

Then come those three gracious words from the lips of the risen Saviour to the trembling hearts of His poor followers, " *Peace unto you* " (xx. 19).

It is knowing that the Saviour's precious blood and finished work have fully met all that God had righteously against us that gives the guilty conscience peace. The

chastisement to effect our peace was laid upon Him, and "with His stripes we are healed."

Then comes the Saviour's challenge to Peter, "*Lovest thou Me?*" (xxi. 15).

It is when we see that He has laid down His life in meeting that which disturbed our peace—the judgment of God which our many sins deserve—that the affections of our hearts are drawn out to Him, and "we love Him *because He first loved us.*"

Like Jonathan, who, when he saw David with the giant's head in his hand, was knit in heart to the worthy victor, so are we drawn to love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and when love is in activity, the response to the last three words before us, viz., "*Follow*

thou Me" (xxi. 22), comes in as a natural consequence.

It is not hard to follow one we love, nor hard to love One who has laid down His life for us, and whose love will never end.

Thus we have seen that God's order is—

"It is finished."

"Peace unto you."

"Lovest thou Me?"

"Follow thou Me."

While man's is the very reverse.
He—

"*Tries to follow Christ,*"

"*Tries to love Him,*" and

"*Hopes to get peace*"

"*When all is finished.*"

Which has my reader been adopting? Remember that "there is a

way which *seemeth* right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." If you would have God's salvation, you must bow to God's way of getting it.

GEO. C.

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