

LESSON 50.

LESSONS IN HUMILITY.

378. Servility and weakness are two contemptible vices. They have been too often recommended to women clothed in the names of “humility” and “meekness,” to which virtues they are as opposed as north is to south. Presently we shall have a lesson on that badge of royalty, meekness; today we will risk a charge of being unoriginal by giving a lesson in “humility” in the language of Rev. Andrew Murray and Rev. Wm. Law.

379. Surely it is hardly necessary for us to explain here that there are, and always have been male Christian teachers who, like the above-mentioned Christian ministers, by example as well as precept, have shown the beauty and importance of these virtues in men as well as women. Let us say, *once for all*, that in noting the general unfairness and unscripturalness of masculine expositors, it is not incumbent upon us to pause at each step in order to call attention to exceptions. Suffice it to say, such expositors *are* exceptions, as far as the “woman question” is concerned. We are glad to make use of the language of the above-mentioned male religious teachers, as showing that our representation of the hatefulness of the sin of the love of pre-eminence in no wise goes beyond what good men have taught.

380. Says Mr. Murray: “No tree can grow except on the root from which it sprang. Through all its existence it can only live with the life that was in the seed that gave it being. The full apprehension of this truth in its application to the first and the second Adam cannot but help us greatly to understand both the need and the nature of the redemption there is in Jesus.”

381. “When the Old Serpent . . . spoke his words of temptation into the ears of Eve, these words carried with them the very poison of hell. And when she listened, and yielded her desire and her will to the prospect of being as God, the poison entered into her soul and blood and life . . . All the wretchedness of which this world has been the scene, all its wars and bloodshed among the nations, all its selfishness and suffering, all its ambitions and jealousies, all its broken hearts and embittered lives, all its daily unhappiness, have their origin in what this cursed, hellish pride, either our own, or that of others, has brought us. . . .”[\[2\]](#)

382. “Even as we need to look to the first Adam and his fall to know the power of sin within us, we need to know well the Second Adam and His power to give within us a life of humility as real and abiding and over-mastering as has been that of pride . . . In this view it is of inconceivable importance that we should have right thoughts of what Christ is, and of what may be counted His chief characteristic, the root and essence of all His character as our Redeemer. There can be but one answer: it is His humility. What is the incarnation but His heavenly humility, His emptying Himself and becoming man? What is His life on earth but humility? ‘He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.’ And what His ascension and His glory, but humility exalted to the throne and crowned with glory? ‘He humbled Himself, therefore God highly exalted Him.’ In heaven, where He was with the Father, in His birth, in His life, in His death, in His sitting on the throne, it is all, it is nothing but humility. Christ is the humility of God embodied in human nature; the Eternal Love humbling itself, clothing itself in the garb of meekness and gentleness, to win and serve and save us. As the love and condescension of God makes Him the benefactor and helper and servant of all, so Jesus of necessity was the Incarnate Humility. And so He is still in

the midst of the throne, the meek and lowly Lamb of God.”

“If this be the root of the tree, its nature must be seen in every branch and leaf and fruit. If humility be the first, the all-including grace of the life of Jesus,^{3/4}if humility be the secret of His atonement,^{3/4}then the health and strength of our spiritual life will depend entirely upon our putting this grace first too, and making humility the chief thing we admire in Him, the chief thing we ask of Him, the one thing for which we sacrifice all else . . . Until a humility which will rest in nothing less than the end and death of self; which gives up all the honor of men as Jesus did, to seek the honor that comes from God alone; which absolutely makes and counts itself nothing, that God may be all, that the Lord alone may be exalted,^{3/4}until such a humility be what we seek in Christ above our chief joy, and welcome at any price, there is very little hope of a religion that will conquer the world.”

383. “I cannot too earnestly plead with my reader, if possibly his attention has never yet been specially directed to the want there is of humility within him or around him, to pause and ask whether he sees much of the spirit of the meek and lowly Lamb of God in those who are called by His name . . . and his eyes will be opened to see how a dark, shall I not say a devilish pride, creeps in almost everywhere, the assemblies of the saints not excepted. Let him begin to ask what would be the effect, if in himself and around him, if towards fellow-saints and the world, believers were really and permanently guided by the humility of Jesus.”

384. Mr. Law says: “Pride and humility are the two master powers, the two kingdoms in strife for the eternal possession of man. There never was, nor ever will be, but one humility, and that is the one humility of Christ. Pride and self have the all of man, till man has his all from Christ. He therefore only fights the good fight whose strife is that the self-idolatrous nature which he hath from Adam may be brought to death by the supernatural humility of Christ brought to life in him,^{3/4}” *Address to the Clergy*, p. 52.

385. What an utter contrast to such teaching as this, of the grace of humility, is that sort of artificial instruction forbidding man to wear “the sign of subjection” because he is “*the glory of God*,” and which would put a veil on woman “in sign that she is under the power of her husband” (inserted by those who wish it were in the Bible, into the marginal reading of 1 Corinthians 11:10)! In the first teaching there is that which seals it to our inmost consciousness as *truth*; in the second teaching honest men and women cannot find rest for the sole of the foot. We all know something is wrong with it; and the falsity of the latter teaching must ever be suspected so long as it is set forth. Had uninducted women read and pondered Paul’s language for the first time, we are perfectly safe in saying it would never have occurred to them that Paul meant anything so extraordinary.

386. Men, by such teaching, vaunt themselves as the superiors of wife and mother. Women have not the right to content themselves as nourishers of such masculine weaknesses. “*Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him*,” Leviticus 19:17, is the teaching even of the Old Testament. The words of Jesus Christ are even a more stern commandment: “*Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him*,”^{3/4}Luke 17:3. There is something most weak and unworthy in woman’s acquiescence in man’s pride and egotism, for the sake of not incurring man’s displeasure. But at the same time let us see to it that when men vaunt themselves in our presence we do not add a wrong spirit to the wrong conduct on their part, and angrily speak otherwise than in kindness. Above all, let us

not “sin their sin” and be guilty of the same offense, by vaunting ourselves. We will be accused of this, at any rate, even if we should do no more than our duty and administer rebuke.

(To be continued.)

[2] This statement is not absolute: women (a few) have translated a part of the Bible, or the whole. But their work is ignored, and allowed to perish. But we refer here to those translators who have been on Translation Committees, or whose work has been allowed a place of influence i

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