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Present day sermons

Knox, D. Broughton

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PRESENT DAY SERMONS

D.B. KNOX

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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When I was in Cambridge last year I heard a lot of sermons. Without exception they were well prepared, well preached, and based on the Bible, but they all had one grave defect. Their subject matter was confined to our present life. That may seem very practical and of course the Christian faith has a lot to say about our present life, about forgiveness and the joy that comes through taking away of the guilt feeling, or about the way and value of prayer, for God answers prayer. As Archbishop Wm. Temple said "when I pray coincidences happen, when I don't they don't". Of course God is behind the coincidences, because he is in control of everything. Prayer to our heavenly father in the name of Jesus Christ is a very powerful activity which we have been given as Christians, bringing blessing to our own lives and homes as well as to others; we should engage in it daily.

Yet although this life is real and important, the main thrust of the Christian message looks beyond this life to eternity, for eternity is even more real and more important than the present and we will all enter into it whatever our views on the matter. As the Bible says "it is appointed to men once to die and after death the judgement". We all know we must die and if we reflect we know that we will have to give an account of how we have lived. Have we been conscious of God and anxious to obey him? Have we been thankful to him for life and health and blessing? Have we been kind to other people? Have we been forgiving, helpful and not lazy, considerate and not indifferent? We will be judged by what we know to be right but which we have neglected or flouted. And for Christians who have been forgiven and who have already begun to experience God's friendship in this life, the prospect of life beyond death should fill us with joy to go to be with Christ which is far better, as the Bible puts it. For by God's forgiveness we have avail...
have passed beyond the judgement; forgiveness which is available to all who will ask for it in Jesus name. We should be living in the light of this inheritance for it will fill us with joy and peace as we believe it and have our hope set not on this life with all its uncertainties but on God and his eternal purposes of blessing and joy and pleasures for evermore as the Bible puts it. That is why I was so sorry that the sermons in Cambridge confined themselves to this life and I fear that our local sermons may too often do the same. But whatever the preacher does, let us at least ourselves set our minds on things above where Christ is. That is where our hearts and hopes should be.

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