

## The Beauty of Christian Universalism

*Christian* Universalism appears to me very simple, consistent, and beautiful. It regards this world as God's, and the whole human family as His children. It accepts without distrust the fundamental fact of the gospel, that God, out of his great love to mankind, now alienated from him by sin, sent his only begotten Son to seek and to save that which was lost, and by redeeming men from sin, to restore them to their right relations with God, and thus fit them to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

It teaches that whatever mystery or difficulty there may be in the work of redeeming and saving souls, it is precisely the same in one and all. The truth, the grace, the love, the spiritual power, that can seize and transform one sinful soul, yours or mine, a Peter's or a Paul's is able to seize and transform all souls, for it can accommodate itself to all possible diversities of character and all conditions of life.

It is in virtue of this comprehensive power and fitness for the work it has in hand,

that the gospel of Christ is qualified to be, and is to become, in fact, a universal religion. If there is one human soul in the universe that Christ cannot subdue and bring into willing subjection to his law, he is not "***the Saviour of the world,***" as inspiration proclaims him, and not the Saviour the world needs.

Yet this redemptive work, let me add, is always carried on in perfect accordance with man's moral nature. Transcendent and divine as the power is, it operates in harmony with all human powers, so that, while Christ subdues our hearts to his will and brings them in subjection to his holy law, there is no violence done to our personality or our own will. We never act more freely than when we recognize the divine love, and sweetly yield our wills, ourselves, to its all-conquering power.

It was his prophecy and promise, as he stood in the immediate presence of the cross, that if he were lifted up from the earth, thus signifying by what death he was to die, he would draw all men unto himself (John 7:32). And this word "*draw*" expresses admirably the attractive forces of the Christian religion and Christ's method of accomplishing his work. Men are not driven to goodness and heaven,

but are drawn thither. And we cannot properly consider the power of the divine love, as exhibited in the mission of Christ, without feeling convinced that it is sufficient to do all that Christ undertook. Prophecy assures us that he will not fail nor be discouraged in his work, but bring it at last to a glorious consummation.

As there is one God, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, so there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (I Tim. 2:3-6). And that Christian seems to me weak in the faith who does not see in his Lord and Master a will, a love, a patience, a persistence, equal to the great work he came to do.

Nor do the various punishments which necessarily befall the sinner, whether here or hereafter, in any manner interfere with Christ's redeeming purpose, or interrupt the processes of his grace. On the contrary, they may always be, as we know they often are, the means of breaking the stubborn will, and so preparing the heart for the readier reception of the divine love and law. And as Christ in his history has experienced all

the states of human existence, having sojourned and suffered in this world, descended into Hades, and ascended into heaven, that as the Apostle says, "**he might fill all things,**" so he embraces in the arms of his redeeming power and love the whole human family in all their possible states of being, whether alive upon earth, or whether they lived before the flood, or are to live in the ages to come. He tasted death for every man, and is therefore to be the Saviour of the world.

In the language of the Apostle we say, "**Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father**" (Phil. 2:9-11). And it needs no argument to show that universal homage to Christ and this confession of him as Lord can be nothing else than a personal and individual act. No man can make this confession for his neighbour and the Apostle elsewhere assures us that these acts of homage and allegiance can be performed in no other

temper than that of profound sincerity. "**No man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit**" (1 Cor. 7:3).

In the realm of the spiritual, forms and ceremonies count little, and unmeaning or forced confessions, in which the heart does not utter its own feelings and convictions, count nothing at all. The Apostle, in declaring that every knee is to bow in the name of Christ, and every tongue to confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father, was surely not speaking of any mere outward service or any hypocritical homage, and quite as little of that confession which orthodoxy madly dreams will be extorted from the damned in hell.

The salvation of the whole human race is what God proposed in the creation. It is what Christ came into the world to effect, and for the accomplishment of which he was given all needed power in heaven and earth. To this end he died the death of the cross, and thus tasted death for every man; and I submit that such self-sacrificing love cannot suddenly cool, or readily give over to endless torment souls for which it thus willingly suffered.

I should be ashamed of myself, if, believing in God and in Christ, I still feared their ultimate failure in this great work of redemption, whose history fills the Bible. God never fails. I cannot associate failure with him even in thought. It is for him who inhabits eternity, and who is at once omniscient and omnipotent, to say, "**My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure**" (Isa. 46:10). And I beg those of the contrary part to reflect that the final issue of the divine government, whether it be in harmony with our theology or theirs, must be what God saw it from the beginning, and what, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, he himself proposed.

**Rom 5:18..Therefore as by one offence sentence came on all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came to all men to justification of life**

### **Recommended Websites**

[www.christianuniversalist.org](http://www.christianuniversalist.org)  
[www.godslovewins.com](http://www.godslovewins.com)  
[www.hopebeyondhell.net](http://www.hopebeyondhell.net)  
[www.kingdombiblestudies.org](http://www.kingdombiblestudies.org)