

A K E Y

TO OPEN

H E A V E N ' s G A T E

OR,

A R E A D Y P A T H - W A Y

TO LEAD TO

H E A V E N .

Written and Published

For the Benefit of all true Christians.

BY

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A
KEY
TO OPEN
HEAVEN'S GATE.

DEAR and beloved Christians. I would have you this much to understand, that all those that have a desire to go to heaven, must well and wisely endeavour themselves to follow this path way.

First; Thou must first remember, that our blessed Saviour says, 'I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and shall go in and out and find pasture,' John x. 9. Again he says, 'Knock, and it shall be opened to you.—To him that knocketh, it shall be opened, Matth. vii. 7, 8. Now, you see there is no way of getting into heaven but by Jesus Christ the Saviour, who is 'The way, the truth, and the life.' The Breaker, who has gone to heaven as our Fore-runner, after he had offered himself a sacrifice to the law and Justice of God for our iniquity. Therefore all who profess to believe in him for righteousness and strength, and as all their salvation and all their desire, will find him the true Key to open heaven's gate: But in going to the gate of Heaven, you must observe the following regulations which the King of heaven hath laid down for all those who wish to enter this celestial gate.

First

First, Thou must truly and unfeignedly labour to serve God, and to obey his commandments; which is a duty that ought to be done without delay: For he that is alive to-day, may be dead before to-morrow; and it will be too late to look after a way at death that you have never sought after in time of health and strength. 'Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, who will have mercy; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.' For he is a God of truth, justice, peace mercy and love; and willeth not that any should perish but that they should repent and return unto him, that they may obtain everlasting life.

Secondly There is another duty to be performed by all that would find the ready way to heaven: You must love your Christian brethren and neighbours, and cherish and comfort them; and not slight, wrangle, scold, fight, and go to law, until you have ruined them: For they that do such things, are gone far out of the way to heaven. Remember therefore what our Saviour Christ saith in the Gospel; 'A new commandment give I unto you: see that you love one another.' For if ye love not your neighbour, whom you see every day, how can you love God whom you never saw? Therefore consider,
and

and take heed in time what you do; he that hateth his neighbour, hateth his brother; and he that hateth his brother hateth God; and he that hateth God, will never find the way to heaven. Therefore let all them that are called by the name of Christians, shew themselves like Christians, laying aside all hatred, spite, envy, malice, lying, slander, backbiting, hypocrisy, and dissimulation, and withal to break such bread as you would have broken; and likewise to do unto all men as you would they should do unto you. This to be sure is the nearest way to heaven, but more than this is to be done, before ye come to your journey's end. You must repent of all your former iniquities; you must do good to them that have done evil to you; and you must forgive them their trespasses, as you look to be forgiven at the hand of God. And so far must your minds and hearts be given to quietness, that you must not so much as let the Sun go down upon your wrath: 'For vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it.'

Thirdly, Every Christian ought at all times both early and late, to pray unto the Lord, that he will add a blessing to their endeavours; and the better to be employed, let them follow after God's preachers, and hear them preach and teach, that are both able and willing to declare the word of God unto them, and so by degrees they shall find the mercie-

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of the Lord redoubled unto them : and thereby they shall be brought to ripeness of understanding, whereby to know and distinguish between good and bad, which may be a great furtherance to them in their way to heaven. True knowledge is of such excellent virtue, that it is sufficient to bring us acquainted with the principle things that are to be had in this life ; and after this life is ended it shall bring our souls into everlasting happiness. True knowledge makes you understand, that God the Father created us ; that God the Son redeemed us, and that God the Holy Ghost sanctifieth us, and preserveth all those that truly believe that Jesus Christ suffered death upon the cross, to save our souls from the tyranny of the devil, and from the torments of hell ; as you may read in Matth. xiii where it is said, ' Blessed are your eyes, for they see ; and your ears, for they hear ; and your hearts, for they understand.' And to be brief, true knowledge and understanding may very well be termed, ' A Key to open the gates of heaven '

Then, what man or woman will be so wilfully blind, as to neglect the seeking after such an excellent virtue ? Yet there are some, and too many in these sinful and wicked times, that are so careless and regardless, that they had rather chuse to follow the vain delights and pleasures of this wicked world, than to seek for the redemption of their souls

and the joys of heaven hereafter, which our Saviour Christ purchased with his most precious blood. Some there are likewise, that bear a show of Godliness, and yet they cannot spare one hour in the day to hear a good sermon, or to serve God in. Others there are, that do utterly deny, and as it were, make a scoff of the Scriptures of truth: But I wish that all such persons would consider, that at the last, it will be said to such, 'Behold, ye despisers! wonder and perish!' Jesus Christ the righteous Judge of all the world, shall say unto them, 'Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity: For if you believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will ye believe though one rose from the dead.'

And now, beloved Christians, I would have you to consider and think on this, That the day of judgment is near at hand, and every soul shall stand at the bar of arraignment, before the righteous Judge, and to render up an account of all their deeds and actions, good and evil; and then shall the good be severed from the bad; and the good, with joy and triumph, be received into everlasting happiness; and the wicked be cast into utter darkness, where nothing else is to be heard or seen, but weeping, howling, and gnashing of teeth. Moreover, I would have you consider, that at the general judgment, there are none to be exempted or excused from coming to this bar; and every one shall be forced

to appear in their persons: the rich and the poor, the king and the beggar, the strong and the weak, the bound and the free, all must come, whether they will or not; for God hath no respect of persons: And at that great and notable day of the Lord our God, there is no delays to be made. There shall be no lawyers to plead for you, for every one shall have work enough of his own to do; neither shall there be any bribes accepted of: Therefore prepare for that awful day, that the wrath of the Judge may be prevented while you may, and provoke not God to anger, lest your souls perish in his displeasure.

And for your further instructions I would wish you all to be well advised, and to follow the doctrine and counsel of the apostle Paul: 'Put on the breast plate of righteousness, and have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; taking up the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation.' And being thus armed, you need not fear all the enemies that ever can assault, or come against you, as you may read in Eph, vi. 14, 15, 16. How to come by this armour, and how to use it, you must learn that of your Captain the Leader Jesus Christ, who suffered many persecutions when he was upon earth; such as hunger, cold, banishment, scorning and taunts, whipping and buffeting, spitting in the face, and at last nailed to the cross and pierced

pierced to the heart with a bloody spear; in all which afflictions he was never seen to look on his enemies with a frowning brow, nor to give them an angry word: And when he was crucified, he took all things patiently and prayed for his enemies, saying 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' And with his last breath he cried, 'Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.'

Thus was our Saviour, Jesus Christ, made a sufferer for your sake, and all these torments did he undergo while he was on earth, to teach us the way to heaven; and this hath he purchased with his most dear and precious blood, to save us from the torments of hell. And after that Christ had suffered the sharp pangs of death, he arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, where he continues to make intercession for transgressors, at his Father's right hand, till all his people are brought to heaven. Therefore, to conclude, once more intreat you all never to leave off practising these holy duties which I have set before you, that you may find the way to heaven. For blessed are they only, who continue steadfast to the end. Amen.

FINIS.