

Excerpts from Unspoken Sermons, Series Two

George MacDonald

Following are a few interesting portions from George MacDonald's "Unspoken Sermons, Series Two." MacDonald (1825-1905) was a pastor and a writer of fiction and non-fiction; and a significant influence on C.S. Lewis. MacDonald believed that God will ultimately save ALL mankind, and he made many very open statements to this effect in his writings.

"The Voice of Job"

I protest, therefore, against all such teaching as, originating in and fostered by the faithlessness of the human heart, gives the impression that the exceeding goodness of God towards man is not the natural and necessary outcome of his being. The root of every heresy popular in the church draws its nourishment merely and only from the soil of unbelief. The idea that God would be God all the same, as glorious as he needed to be, had he not taken upon himself the divine toil of bringing home his wandered children, had he done nothing to seek and save the lost, is false as hell. Lying for God could go no farther. As if the idea of God admitted of his being less than he is, less than perfect, less than all-in-all, less than Jesus Christ! less than Love absolute, less than entire unselfishness! As if the God revealed to us in the New Testament were not his own perfect necessity of loving-kindness, but one who has made himself better than, by his own nature, by his own love, by the laws which he willed the laws of his existence, he needed to be! They would have it that, being unbound, he deserves the greater homage! So it might be, if he were not our father. But to think of the living God not as our father, but as one who has condescended greatly, being nowise, in his own willed grandeur of righteous nature, bound to do as he has done, is killing to all but a slavish devotion. It is to think of him as nothing like the God we see in Jesus Christ.

It will be answered that we have fallen, and God is thereby freed from any obligation, if any ever were. It is but another lie. No amount of wrong-doing in a child can ever free a parent from the divine necessity of doing all he can to deliver his child; the bond between them cannot be broken. It is the vulgar, slavish, worldly idea of freedom, that it consists in being bound to nothing. Not such is God's idea of liberty!

[And a bit later in the same sermon ...]

'O Lord, they tell me I have so offended against thy law that, as I am, thou canst not look upon me, but threatenest me with eternal banishment from thy presence. But if thou look not upon me, how can I ever be other than I am? Lord, remember I was born in sin: how then can I see sin as thou seest it? Remember, Lord, that I have never known myself clean: how can I cleanse myself? Thou must needs take me as I am and cleanse me. Is it not impossible that I should behold the final goodness of good, the final evilness of evil? how then can I deserve eternal torment? Had I known good and evil, seeing them as thou seest them, then chosen the evil, and turned away from the good, I know not what I should not deserve; but thou knowest it has ever been something good in the evil that has enticed my selfish heart—nor mine only, but that of all my kind. Thou requirest of us to forgive: surely thou forgivest freely! Bound thou mayest be to destroy evil, but art thou bound to keep the sinner alive that thou mayest punish him, even if it make him no better?

A CD ROM including 47 of MacDonald's books can be ordered from www.george-macdonald.com

– Bob Evelyn -