Additional Writings
of
J. N. Darby

Volume 2
# Table of Contents

Alphabetical Listing of Articles .......................................................... v

Preface .................................................................................. vii

**Miscellaneous Papers** .......................................................... 1

- The True Grace of God Wherein Ye Stand: 1 Peter 5:10 ................. 1
- Part with Christ: John 13:1-17 .................................................... 4
- The Standing and State of the Believer ....................................... 12
- What Characterizes the Christian and Secures His Blessing: Romans 8 21
- “His Praise Shall Be Continually in My Mouth”: Philippians 4 .......... 29
- The Lord Himself Shall Descend {1 Thessalonians} ...................... 35
- God Manifested and Glorified: John 17 ..................................... 43
- A Just God and a Savior ........................................................... 51
- How the Lost Sheep Was Found ................................................ 55
- {The Eternal Sonship} 1 John 5:7 ........................................... 58
- Man’s Heart and Christ’s Heart: Luke 23:39-43 ......................... 64
- Unedited Notes of a Lecture -- Luke 12 .................................... 71
- The Disappointments of Life: “This Thing Is from Me”: (1 Kings 12:24) . 76
- True Greatness ..................................................................... 77
- “Some Better Thing” “God Having Provided for Us,” Christians .......... 78
- Address at the Funeral of Augustus James Clarke, 13 Years Old ........ 80

**Papers from Collectanea** .................................................. 85

- The Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalems ........................................ 86
- Revelation 22:7-17 ................................................................ 93
- The Word of God, and the Knowledge of It ............................... 96
- Revelation 1-20 .................................................................... 99
- 2 Samuel 22, 23:1-7 ............................................................ 104
- The Dispensations and the Remnants .................................. 107

**Nine Lectures on the First Epistle of John** ......................... 113

- Lecture 1 .............................................................................. 113
- Lecture 2 .............................................................................. 119
- Lecture 3 .............................................................................. 126
- Lecture 4 .............................................................................. 134
- Lecture 5 .............................................................................. 139
- Lecture 6 .............................................................................. 146
- Lecture 7 .............................................................................. 152
- Lecture 8 .............................................................................. 159
- Lecture 9 .............................................................................. 166

**J. N. Darby’s Hymns** ......................................................... 175

Preface to a Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs

Selected 1856 for the Little Flock

Revised 1881 by J. N. Darby ........................................ 221

**Papers from Miscellaneous Writings, Volume 5** ............ 225

- Nearness to Christ and its Effects .......................................... 225
- A Call to Gilgal ................................................................. 227
- Miscellaneous Notes on the Epistles .................................. 230
Justification and Righteousness Romans 1 ........................................ 232
Christian Place and Power Romans 6 ............................................. 235
The Vail .................................................. 240
   (1) The Vail on Moses’ Face ........................................ 240
   (2) The Vail Done Away in Christ ................................ 245
   (3) The Vail on the Heart of Israel ................................. 249
Christ Dwelling in the Heart .................................................... 255
To Live -- Christ ............................................. 258
Notes of the Meeting of Brethren at Guelph, Ontario: 1 John 3:4 .... 265
Copy of Notes from a Notebook of J. N. Darby: 1 John 4 ............ 272
Notes on Revelation .................................................. 273
Papers from Miscellaneous Writings, Volume 4 ......................... 275
   A Few Helpful Remarks for the Present Times ..................... 275
   The Glories of the Cross ....................................... 279
   A Letter on Atonement ........................................ 285
   Notes of Readings: Luke 15 ..................................... 289
   Notes of Readings: John 14 ..................................... 291
   The Father’s House: John 14 .................................... 294
   An Address on John 14 .......................................... 299
   The Acts of the Apostles ......................................... 305
      Acts 1 .................................................................. 305
      Acts 2 .................................................................. 319
      Acts 3 - 17 ......................................................... 333
      Acts 18 - 20 ......................................................... 346
   The Epistle to the Ephesians: Ephesians 1 ......................... 352
   What Is the Church and in What Sense Is it Now in Ruin?
      On the Epistle to the Ephesians ................................ 361
   Canaan and the Armor of God ...................................... 375
   Colossians 1 ...................................................... 385
   Notes of Private Conversation .................................... 389
   The Epistle to the Philippians ..................................... 391
   The Epistle to the Philippians ..................................... 392
      Philippians 1 ..................................................... 392
      Philippians 2 ..................................................... 394
      Philippians 3 ..................................................... 395
      Philippians 4 ..................................................... 396
   Philippians 2 ...................................................... 396
   Philippians 3 ...................................................... 399
   Thoughts on 2 Timothy for the Closing Days ...................... 407
   Eternal Life Manifested in Jesus, and Imparted to Us: 1 John 1 - 2:2 411
   The Rest, the Word, and the Priesthood: Hebrews 4 ............ 419
Subject Index .................................................. 425
Scripture Index .................................................. 435

Alphabetical Listing of Articles

2 Samuel 22, 23:1-7 .................................................. 104
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Call to Gilgal</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Just God and a Savior</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Few Helpful Remarks for the Present Times</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Letter on Atonement</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address at the Funeral of Augustus James Clarke, 13 Years Old</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Address on John 14</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canaan and the Armor of God</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Dwelling in the Heart</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Place and Power: Romans 6</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colossians 1</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of Notes from a Notebook of J. N. Darby: 1 John 4</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life Manifested in Jesus, and Imparted to Us: 1 John 1 - 2:2</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Manifested and Glorified: John 17</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“His Praise Shall Be Continually in My Mouth”: Philippians 4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the Lost Sheep Was Found</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. N. Darby’s Hymns</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification and Righteousness: Romans 1</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man’s Heart and Christ’s Heart: Luke 23:39-43</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes on the Epistles</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearness to Christ and its Effects</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine Lectures on the First Epistle of John</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 1</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 2</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 3</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 4</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 5</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 6</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 7</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 8</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture 9</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on Revelation</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes of Readings: John 14</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes of Private Conversation</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes of Readings: Luke 15</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes of the Meeting of Brethren at Guelph, Ontario: 1 John 3:4</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part with Christ: John 13:1-17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 2</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 3</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface to a Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs Selected 1856 for</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Little Flock Revised 1881 by J. N. Darby</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 1-20</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 22:7-17</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Some Better Thing” “God Having Provided for Us,” Christians</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Acts of the Apostles</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 1</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 2</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 3 - 17</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 18 - 20</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dispensations and the Remnants</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{The Eternal Sonship} 1 John 5:7</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Epistle to the Philippians</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Epistle to the Philippians</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 1</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 2</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 3</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 4</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalems</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lord Himself Shall Descend {1 Thessalonians}</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Disappointments of Life: “This Thing Is from Me”: (1 Kings 12:24)</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Epistle to the Ephesians: Ephesians 1</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Father’s House: John 14</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Glories of the Cross</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Standing and State of the Believer</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The True Grace of God Wherein Ye Stand: 1 Peter 5:10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rest, the Word, and the Priesthood,:Hebrews 4</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vail</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) The Vail on Moses’ Face</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) The Vail Done Away in Christ</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) The Vail on the Heart of Israel</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Word of God, and the Knowledge of It</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts on 2 Timothy for the Closing Days</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Live -- Christ</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True Greatness</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unedited Notes of a Lecture -- Luke 12</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Characterizes the Christian and Secures His Blessing: Romans 8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Is the Church and in What Sense Is it Now in Ruin?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Epistle to the Ephesians</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

Additional Writings of J. N. Darby, vol. 2, is an added volume to the Collected Writings of J. N. Darby and is composed of articles, from various pamphlets and books, thought not to be in the original collection. If the Lord will, this volume will be followed by two more.

The title of this book was chosen in order not to conflict with the volume numbering used in the Darby Disk, which uses volume numbers 35 and 36 for collections of papers found in two books that had been printed by Bible Truth Publishers. Many of the papers from those two books appear herein, and if the Lord will, the few not in the present book will appear in volume 3 or 4.

Some spellings have been modernized, some Scripture references have been added in braces { }, and Scripture references have been standardized in order to facilitate indexing. Footnotes and clarifications in braces { } have been added by the editor.

The reader should keep in mind that some articles may not have been edited and corrected by J. N. Darby. Usually this is indicated, where known.

---

1. The excellent Darby Disk requires Windows 98 for its feature to highlight searched text. Available from Present Truth Publishers is Writings of J. N. Darby on two CDs -- searchable with Adobe Reader© universally available free of charge. What the user sees on the screen is the pages in the books as they appear in the books.
God is made known to us as the “God of all Grace,” and the position in which we are set is that of “tasting that He is gracious.” How hard it is for us to believe this, that the Lord is gracious. The natural feeling of our hearts is, “I know that thou art an austere man”; there is the want in all of us naturally of the understanding of the Grace of God.

There is sometimes the thought that grace implies God’s passing over sin, but no, grace supposes sin to be so horribly bad a thing that God cannot tolerate it: were it in the power of man, after being unrighteous and evil, to patch up his ways, and mend himself so as to stand before God, there would be no need of grace. The very fact of the Lord’s being gracious shows sin to be so evil a thing that, man being a sinner, his state is utterly ruined and hopeless, and nothing but free grace will do for him -- can meet his need.

We must learn what God is to us, not by our own thoughts, but by what He has revealed Himself to be, and that is, “The God of all Grace.” The moment I understand that I am a sinful man, and yet that it was because the Lord knew the full extent of my sin, and what its hatefulness was, that He came to me, I understand what grace is. Faith makes me see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God. The Lord that I have known as laying down His life for me, is the same Lord I have to do with every day of my life, and all His dealings with me are on the same principles of grace. The great secret of growth is, the looking up to the Lord as gracious. How precious, how strengthening it is to know that Jesus is at this moment feeling and exercising the same love towards me as when He died on the cross for me.

This is a truth that should be used by us in the most common everyday circumstances of life. Suppose, for instance, I find an evil temper in myself, which I feel it difficult to overcome; let me bring it to Jesus as my Friend, virtue goes out of Him for my need. Faith should be ever thus in exercise against temptations, and not simply my own effort; my own effort against it
will never be sufficient. The source of real strength is in the sense of the Lord’s being gracious. The natural man in us always disbelieves Christ as the only source of strength and of every blessing. Suppose my soul is out of communion, the natural heart says, “I must correct the cause of this before I can come to Christ,” but He is gracious; and knowing this, the way is to return to Him at once, just as we are, and then humble ourselves deeply before Him. It is only in Him and from Him, that we shall find that which will restore our souls. Humbleness in His presence is the only real humbleness. If we own ourselves in His presence to be just what we are, we shall find that He will show us nothing but grace . . .

It is Jesus who gives abiding faith to our souls, and not what our thoughts about ourselves may be. Faith never thinks about that which is in ourselves as its ground of rest; it receives, loves and apprehends what God has revealed, and what are God’s thoughts about Jesus, in whom is His rest. As knowing Jesus to be precious to our souls, our eyes and our hearts being occupied with Him, they will be effectually prevented from being taken up with the vanity and sin around; and this too will be our strength against the sin and corruption of our own hearts. Whatever I see in myself that is not in Him is sin, but then it is not thinking of my own sins, and my own vileness, and being occupied with them, that will humble me, but thinking of the Lord Jesus, dwelling upon the excellency in Him. It is well to be done with ourselves, and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves, we are entitled to forget our sins, we are entitled to forget all but Jesus.

There is nothing so hard for our hearts as to abide in the sense of grace, to continue practically conscious that we are not under law but under grace; it is by grace that the heart is “established,” but then there is nothing more difficult for us really to comprehend than the fulness of grace, that “Grace of God wherein we stand,” and to walk in the power and consciousness of it . . . It is only in the presence of God that we can know it, and there it is our privilege to be. The moment we get away from the presence of God, there will always be certain workings of our own thoughts within us, and our own thoughts can never reach up to thoughts of God about us, to the “Grace of God.”

Anything that I had the smallest possible right to expect could not be pure, free grace -- could not be the “Grace of God.” It is alone when in communion with Him that we are able to measure everything according to His grace . . . It is impossible, when we are abiding in the sense of God’s presence, for anything, be what it may -- even the state of the Church -- to shake us, for we count on God, and then all things become a sphere and scene for the operation of His grace.

The having very simple thoughts of grace is the true source of our strength as Christians; and the abiding in the sense of grace, in the presence
of God, is the secret of all holiness, peace, and quietness of spirit.

The “Grace of God” is so unlimited, so full, so perfect, that if we get for a moment out of the presence of God, we cannot have the true consciousness of it, we have no strength to apprehend it, and if we attempt to know it out of His presence, we shall only turn it to licentiousness. If we look at the simple fact of what grace is, it has no limits, no bounds. Be we what we may (and we cannot be worse than we are), in spite of all that, what God is towards us is LOVE. Neither our joy nor our peace is dependent on what we are to God, but on what He is to us, and this is grace.

Grace supposes all the sin and evil that is in us, and is the blessed revelation that, through Jesus, all this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins -- nay, than all the sins in the world are to us; and yet, with the fullest consciousness of what we are, all that God is pleased to be towards us is LOVE.

In Rom. 7 the state described is that of a person quickened, but whose whole set of reasonings center in himself . . . he stops short of grace, of the simple fact that, whatever be his state, let him be as bad as he may, GOD IS LOVE, and only love towards him. Instead of looking at God, it is all “I,” “I,” “I.” Faith looks at God, as He has revealed Himself in Grace . . . Let me ask you, “Am I -- or is my state the object of faith?” No, faith never makes what is in my heart its object, but God’s revelation of Himself in grace.

Grace has reference to what GOD is, and not to what we are, except indeed that the very greatness of our sins does but magnify the extent of the “Grace of God.” At the same time, We must remember that the object and necessary effect of grace is to bring our souls into communion with God -- to sanctify us, by bringing the soul to know God, and to love Him; therefore the knowledge of grace is the true source of sanctification (see Titus 2:11-13).

The triumph of grace is seen in this, that when man’s enmity had cast out Jesus from the earth, God’s love had brought in salvation by that very act -- came in to atone for the sin of those who had rejected Him. In the view of the fullest development of man’s sin, faith sees the fullest development of Gods grace . . . I have got away from grace if I have the slightest doubt or hesitation about God’s love. I shall then be saying, “I am unhappy because I am not what I should like to be”: that is not the question. The real question is, whether God is what we should like Him to be, whether Jesus is all we could wish if the consciousness of what we are -- of what we find in ourselves, has any other effect than, while it humbles us, to increase our adoration of what God is, we are off the ground of pure grace . . . Is there distress and distrust in your minds? See if it be not because you are still
saying “I,” “I,” and losing sight of God’s grace.

It is better to be thinking of what God is than of what we are. This looking at ourselves, at the bottom, is really pride, a want of the thorough consciousness that we are good for nothing. Till we see this we never look quite away from self to God . . . In looking to Christ, it is our privilege to forget ourselves. True humility does not so much consist in thinking badly of ourselves, as in not thinking of ourselves at all. I am too bad to be worth thinking about. What I want is, to forget myself and to look to God, who is indeed worth all my thoughts. Is there need of being humbled about ourselves? We may be quite sure that will do it.

Beloved, if we can say as in Rom. 7, “In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing,” we have thought quite long enough about ourselves; let us then think about Him who thought about us with thoughts of good and not of evil, long before we had thought of ourselves at all. Let us see what His thoughts of grace about us are, and take up the words of faith, “If God be for us, who can be against us?”

PART WITH CHRIST

John 13:1-17

Three things, beloved friends, especially come out in this chapter:

1st, the full and complete finishing of the work which the Father had given the Lord Jesus to do; and

2nd, while that gives the full consciousness of the place we are in with God, there is the jealous care, and the holiness and watchfulness in the path in which we are called to walk down here; and

3rd, the blessed and gracious love of the Lord, “having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end,” and the way He made Himself a servant in order to minister to us.

It is important for us as Christians to see our place with God in Christ; to know distinctly what that place is; many sincere souls do not know it, do not know their relationship with God, what the blessed Son of God has done for them in dying for them and bringing them to God, and at the same time, how that bears upon holiness of walk.

The Lord shows here that no defilement can be allowed, and then adds the measure of this. Suitability of walk and conduct flows from the place you are in: you cannot expect any one who is not a child or a servant to behave as a child or a servant. Evidently, then, it is of all importance to know the place I am in, as all my duties flow from it. The moment the relationship is
there the duties are there, but you cannot get the relationship by doing the duties. It is of all importance to see the connection between the grace of God that brings salvation, and our walk and conduct; we must see what the relationship is before we can have the consciousness of its duties. The Lord would bring us, perhaps through painful exercises, to the consciousness of the place we are in, and the gracious, loving provision there is for us in that place, never to allow unholiness. You see, beloved friends, if it were only the being saved, that would be a blessed thing, but He brings us into positive relationship with Himself, in infinite love and perfect righteousness. He came into a world of sinners for this. We have the treasure in earthen vessels, but the relationship is settled. “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Therefore His first word to Mary after His resurrection is, “Go tell my brethren, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” {John 20:17}. My Father is your Father too. He puts them into His place; He has brought them into it and tells them where He has brought them.

But that is not all. The moment I estimate the cross according to the word of God, I get to this, as the apostle says, “If one died for all, then were all dead.” I see One who came in unspeakable love to save me; God said: I have yet one Son, one thing I can do to see if I can waken up right thoughts and feelings in these husbandmen. But when they saw the Son, they cast Him out and slew Him. In calling ourselves Christians, we profess to be in a world which has cast out the Son of God; we are in a world of sinners, condemned sinners.

God was dealing with man; He tried and tested man, who had got out of his place where God had put him in Paradise, to see whether He could reclaim his heart, and all that ended in bringing out the condition in which man was; it showed that he preferred anything to God -- money, pleasure, duties (I do not speak now of sin), but no object too small to govern the heart and to shut out Christ. Take dress: is that too small? Take money: it is the same case with all our hearts, you never found a natural man thinking of Christ as the object of his heart. If alone in a room for two or three hours, he thinks of his sorrows, of his joys, but not of Christ.

You never find a man ashamed of a false religion; a Mahometan {Muslim}, if you are making a bargain with him, will stop to say his prayers if the hour comes, and you may wait till he has done. Gods that even man might be ashamed of, they are not ashamed of, but you find true Christians ashamed of confessing Christ. The true God, people are ashamed of, but of a false religion, never!

Any object and every object in the natural heart has displaced Christ. I own Jesus the Son of God has come and died for me, and do I prefer a bit of dress to Him? All this tells us what scripture says, that the carnal mind is
enmity against God, that every object is dominant over it, and even when we do love God we are often ashamed of Him!

It is not now a question of trying to arrange ourselves a little and set things straight; but the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost; my natural condition is, I am lost.

Where men get their enjoyment, if you only bring Christ in, it is all spoiled; the natural man never enjoys Christ, and as Christians we have to watch ourselves, lest we slip into that state of things.

First comes the honest conviction that I am lost, and then I find what God has done, and that is another thing altogether.

The law came to require from me, but He came to bring salvation to me, because I was lost. If I own myself as a sinner, I cannot go into heaven as a sinner of course, so the question is, What has He done for me that I may be cleansed? Supposing I have been brought thoroughly to confess that I am lost, I turn to Christ, and what do I find there? That when I did not think of God, God was thinking of me; that is what I get, and I have then, with no seeking of mine, what the spring of God’s thoughts and heart were towards me, that He spared not His own Son. If I acknowledge myself as a sinner, I find what the blessed Son of God has done. I find the spring of His heart. He cannot allow sin, He is perfect in holiness and righteousness, and I find Him doing, what love always does when it is real, considering the whole state of its object. I was dead, and He comes into death; judgment was against me, and He takes the judgment. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and I see One coming in love and goodness and grace which astonishes me, as it did the poor woman by the well. He must bring us into truth and light. He says, You are so vile, you are not fit to show your face to a decent person; but there is the revelation of God in Christ; it comes not as a claim upon me, but as grace to me; it tells me I am a sinner, or why should it come? It brings all that out to me. If the highest measure of grace is the cross of Christ, it is the very thing that shows me where I was. Why should I go down into some dreadful ditch, if there was not some one there to pull out?

I get this perfect work done, finished, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,” so that He is set down at the right hand of God, accepted by God. He gave Him in love and accepted Him in righteousness. God is satisfied, more than satisfied, glorified about the sin. The cross is the place where good and evil met completely, absolutely. I get all the evil of man shown out against Christ; He was going about doing good, healing all their diseases, and even Pilate could say, What do you kill Him for? It was enmity against God.

But if I get all the wickedness of man’s heart, what do I find on the
other side? Absolute obedience and perfect love to His Father. “That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.” Where do I learn love? “Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us.”

There is no such perfect display of perfect righteousness anywhere, as in Christ drinking that dreadful cup. I get most solemn righteousness and the perfect love of God to the sinner too. If we look at the moral glory of the cross, I get the whole question of sin perfectly settled, and God has glorified Christ up there. What did He die for? For my sins, according to the scripture. If I come as a poor vile sinner to the cross, I see Him bearing my sins in His own body on the tree, and now {He is} in glory. Has He got them there? I see Him standing here for me in righteousness, drinking that dreadful cup, the very thought of which made Him sweat {“as it were”} great drops of blood, and then, having purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Not like the Jewish priests who were often offering the same sacrifices, but for ever sat down because the work is finished. If the work is not perfect, it never will be. I am not speaking now of your appreciation of it, but of the work itself; if we live near to God, we shall appreciate it more every day, but the work is done.

I get then, beloved friends, this blessed truth -- that coming to God by Him I find that work which is a proof of the love of God to me when I was a sinner, and I find it done and accepted when I was a sinner. Of course my heart is changed too, or I should not care about it in that way.

He is waiting till His enemies are made His footstool, having brought me to God by that work. And God is anxious in His love to put it before us in every shape in which it can meet our need.

You say you are guilty; but God has justified you: defiled by sin; yes, but God says, I have cleansed you with the precious blood of my Son: but you say, oh! I have offended God dreadfully -- so you have, but, I have forgiven you. Then the Holy Ghost came down at Pentecost, and is given to every one who believes.

In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

If any man confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.

Oh! that those words rested in our hearts and consciences, beloved friends! There is the place we are brought into, but we shall not get fully into the glory till the Lord Jesus Christ comes again,

I will come again and receive you unto myself.

When he shall appear we shall be like him.
The glory thou hast given me, I have given them.

The purpose of God is (I am speaking to you as believers) to bring us into the same glory as His Son.

I earnestly desire for your hearts, that you should get clear hold of that -- how all is cleared of the first Adam, that we might have all the blessing the second Adam gets. He became a man that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren; the dignity of His Person is always maintained, but He will never be satisfied until He sees you there in the same glory, with Himself and as Himself for ever.

If I pay a man’s debts, and leave him without a farthing, he is a ruined man still; but Christ has paid our debts, and has, so to speak, given us an immense fortune besides, and, “as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” The scripture teems with passages which show the way in which we are associated with Himself. As soon as Christ was gone up into heaven, the witness of divine righteousness, the Holy Ghost, came down, that we might know it, “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.” How can I say Father, if I do not know I am a child? It would be hypocrisy. If the conscience is purged by the blood of Christ, relationship is known by His Person, and then I must walk as a child; but I must know that I am a child first. I cannot expect people to walk as Christians if they are not Christians; something else has to come first: they have to confess their sins, and be saved.

Now if you believe in the Lord Jesus, beloved friends, can you say, I know I am in Christ?

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

I have to manifest the life of Jesus in my mortal body, but I must have it first; how can I manifest it if I have not got it?

Supposing I have listened to that word, “My Father and your Father,” He has brought me into the same place as Himself, and I am waiting for God’s Son to take me there in person; death has lost its sting, and if I die, it is to be with the Lord. “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” The full result will not be till He comes again, and the marriage of the Lamb takes place; we are not in the glory yet, we know.

We might think that Christ having gone up into glory, all His service was over; but it is not so; love never gives up itself, and never gives up the happiness of those it loves. If a child goes wrong, the Father’s heart yearns over him; he may have to punish, but the heart goes after him. Christ’s love is perfect, and it never gives up its service if it can make the loved one happy, and this we get here. The supper over -- He came from God and was going back to God in all the blessed perfectness in which He came, and what
does He do? He says, I am among you as one that serveth. Is there an end of His service now? No; He rises from supper, testifies He cannot stay with them here, but tells them He must have them with Him there. He could not stay as Messiah, I am going away as your Forerunner, I go to prepare a place for you.

We get this in two ways: first, He is as priest, serving, “He ever liveth [think of that!] to make intercession for us.” That is not exactly for sin, but that we may not sin: I a poor sinner upon the earth, and He always at God’s right hand occupied with me.

But in this chapter I get another thing. Supposing I do sin, how are my feet to be washed? (This alludes no doubt to the custom of the priest’s consecration; his body was washed when he was consecrated, but whenever he went to do anything at the altar, he washed his hands and feet -- it was as much as to say, there must be holiness). He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet; he cannot be regenerate over again. The word used for washing the body and washing the feet is not the same in this chapter in the original.

We are cleansed by water and by blood; but then there is always this danger: here I am, walking through this world always ready to defile me, there is the danger of picking up dirt upon my feet, and when the Lord goes into heaven He takes what heaven is as a measure of our walk. He does not pray that we should be taken out of the world, but kept from the evil. Looking up to the Lord in glory we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” I see Christ in glory, I know I am going to be like Him, and I say, I want to be as like Him now as ever I can. That is what Paul meant, “that I may win him.” He sees Christ in glory, knows he is going to be like Him, and now tries in every possible way to be like Him here.

But supposing we fail -- there is no excuse for doing so, it is our own carelessness and neglect -- but He says, I am going up on high and I shall wash your feet. I have washed you here, “ye are clean through the word that I have spoken to you.” Peter was ashamed of seeing the Lord there like a servant to wash his feet, but when he hears he must be washed he says, “not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.” No; He says, that is enough. “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father . . . and he is the propitiation for our sins” {1 John 2:1, 2}. The propitiation is unchanged, but another service comes in. If I have sinned, I do not say, I am not under the blood of sprinkling, but, can the Father have fellowship with an unholy thing? No! It says, “if any man sin,” not, “if any man repent.” The advocacy brings us to repentance to be sure.

If only I have let an evil thought come in, do you think God has
communion with that? It were blasphemy to say so. I have found my pleasure, if only for a moment, in what made Christ’s agony on the cross, horrible to say so, but if it made His agony, it cannot be imputed to me. I am convicted, humbled, like poor Peter led to repentance. It was not because he repented that Christ prayed for him, but Peter repented because Christ prayed.

What I get in the present work of the Lord Jesus is this: if by anything I defile my feet, He takes away the taint, because I belong to this place. He does not raise the question whether I do belong to it, He acts because I do belong to it. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” Holiness is maintained because I am in this relationship. God says, I cannot have defiled people in my house; He chastens that we may be partakers of His holiness. He brings the word of God, which reveals what I am, to bear upon my conscience. He restores my soul and leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.

The Christian is standing between the first coming of Christ, which accomplished redemption, and His second coming which takes him to glory, and meanwhile the Holy Ghost is given to every one that believes; He makes me cry, Abba Father, the witness that I am a child, and is the earnest of the inheritance. He gives me the certainty of the efficacy of Christ’s work when He first came, and leads my heart on to the glory.

But I must have holiness, and I get grace still working and giving me the measure of what I am. It tells me I am going to be like Christ, and he who has this hope purifies himself -- and I get the measure of my walk -- “even as he is pure.” Not that I have attained, I never shall until I am with Christ, but I ought to be always going on, never to soil my feet, never to do anything inconsistent. There are three things: we are to walk

- worthy of God, who has called us to His kingdom and glory;
- worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;
- worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

It is put before us in these three shapes.

We get the perfect settled consciousness of the relationship into which we are brought, and then the conduct which suits those who are in this place.

Do your souls know, beloved friends, supposing you profess it, that your consciences have got hold of the efficacy of His work? “Peace I leave with you”; can you say you have got it? Do you fear the judgment seat? There is no place in which a Christian may be so bold, because, raised in glory, as He is, so are we. Do you believe that your sins will be no more remembered? Many a one sees it in scripture and says it is true, but can you stand in thought before the judgment seat, in the consciousness that it is so?
-- that you are divine righteousness before God?

One more question. If you can thus stand, are you seeking to be in everything the epistles of Christ? whatever you do, to do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus? (We shall need carefulness, searching of the word, &c., exercises which make good soldiers. The motive is the great thing. If I love my father, and he wishes this book to be laid this way instead of that, I put it so, because I love my father.

The Lord give us to have His will as the one object of our lives, the motive of all we do, to remember that we are not our own but bought with a price. May He give us to have our eyes upon Him, that we may know His love and seek His will!
THE STANDING AND STATE OF THE BELIEVER

1

In Eph. 1 we have our standing in Christ; this must not be weakened. There must be no turning aside from our place before God in Him. There I get to know that all I was as the old man is for faith gone; I see that I am dead, and that my life is hid with Christ in God. In the flesh there is no good thing; nothing but sin, will, lusts, which lead me away from God. But I believe the testimony of God, and see that Christ died, and that, by death for sins and to sin, the entire evil thing for faith is put an end to. The next step is, that, an end being put to me as the old man, Christ becomes in me the new man, and I am put in the presence of God as in Christ Himself, entitled to consider the old as done away. This is my place and standing before God. It is not only that sin is put away, but my position before Him is in consequence of this.

Nor is this the only thing; for I know that not only am I in Christ, but Christ is in me. These two things cannot be separated, but they are quite different. The one expresses my standing, the other my state. The Lord Himself said, before He left the world,

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

He has brought me into the standing; and this we have in Eph. 1, 2. Christ is looked at as having lain in death, but now raised; and we are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him. There we are; and such is our position as connected with the “God of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:17, &c.). But in Eph. 3:14 it is, “The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Again, in ch. 1, it is written, “That we should be to the praise of His glory” (v. 16). In the first chapter God is called the Father of glory. Here the standing is taken as a settled thing; but we have something further, “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.” Here it is state, not standing. We do not ask God to raise us up; that is an accomplished fact, and is my standing. But here the apostle prays that something may be accomplished; that, “according to the riches of His glory,” we may be “strengthened with might by His Spirit.” The condition of the soul must answer to the place into which it has been brought, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know
the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all
the fulness of God.”

I know that Christ is in me, and I in Him; but I ought not to be satisfied
without the consciousness of enjoying Him. “That Christ may dwell in your
hearts” is a prayer as to state, not a declaration of standing. What we have
to watch is, not to unsettle the truth of the standing, but to apply the
blessedness of the standing to the judgment of the state.

Thus, if you say you have fellowship with the Father and the Son, I say,
Come, let us see. I saw you laughing just now at foolishness in the street. Is
not that having fellowship with a fool? Thus it is one applies the standing to
judge the state. And here it is that the advocacy of Christ comes in, and
connects the perfectness of the standing with the state. Can I have a better
place and standing than in Christ? I am righteous as He is righteous. My sins
are all gone. And what now? I have been brought into the light as God is in
the light. But you sinned? Alas! yes. Is this the light? No. But are you going
to put me back under law? No! I am going to make you own that you need
and have an advocate with the Father -- Jesus Christ the righteous. The
condition of the soul does not depend on standing, but on present grace.

If a person says, I am in Christ, and I am satisfied, it is to be feared,
and very likely, that he is not in Christ. As to doctrine he may be clear
enough; but if he really were in Him he could not be satisfied without
communion. “Knowledge puffeth up”; but the effect of being in the light is
to make us value not the place only, but fellowship with the Father and the
Son (with one another too, of course; but this comes in by the way). The
way it works is this: the very essence of the condition of a soul in a right
state is conscious dependence. Now one may use the fact of completeness in
Christ to make one independent.

Two things are implied in dependence: first, the sense that we cannot
do without God in a single instance; and, secondly, that He is “for us.” In
other words, there is confidence in His love and power on our behalf, as
well as the consciousness that without Him we can do nothing.

That is the reason why you will find constant reference to mercy when
Scripture speaks of, or to, the individual. When the Church is addressed,
“grace and peace” only are mentioned. Only in Jude we have, “Mercy unto
you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.” And then, in Jude 21, “Looking
for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life,” where the
departure of Christendom is contemplated, and when things were rapidly
going on to judgment. We find therefore the saints exhorted to keep
themselves “in the love of God.” This is state again, and it shows that when
the Christian profession had slipped, and was slipping, more personal
dependence comes in urgently. The moment I let this in, I let all the light in,
and gradually my eyes get to see clearly. Christ is that light, and when we have to do with Him the subtlety of evil is seen; but, besides the light, grace and present dependence are needed.

Let us delight in dependence -- that a Person above us should minister to us, and care for us.

What should we think of a child with its father and mother, who yet said, “I do not like to have anything to do with them”? Should we not say, “These are not the feelings of a child. You may think yourself a fine man in being independent, but you are not like a father’s child”?

Again, in Eph. 3, it is not our being glorified with Him, but that God may be glorified. Thus, in Eph. 3:21, “Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus.” But this state is produced by Christ’s dwelling in us by faith. It is not a question of the standing we have in Christ. This carries full, practical blessedness with it, as it is said, “That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Whereas in Eph. 1:22 the point is, that God hath put all things under his [Christ’s] feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Hence also in Eph. 1 it is the exceeding greatness of his [God’s] power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead,” &c.; whereas in Eph. 3 it is, Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, not the power that has wrought for us in Christ’s resurrection, raising us up with Him.

When the heart gets this, according to Eph. 3, it is safer, very jealous of itself, and in a lowly condition; in a word, it is with God, instead of without Him. I am perfect, I want nothing -- that is my standing in Christ; but if I look for fellowship, I want God every day and every moment. But if I think of standing; suppose you have paid my debts, and given me a capital besides, I have got the thing, and want you no more for it. So I do not want God to give the place He has put me in before Himself in Christ, but I do want Him for communion; and if I find an evil thought, I go to Him for grace to get rid of it. Do you want to be perfect in Christ before God, and not have a bit of communion? The work is done. If all your sins are not put away, they never can be; for Christ cannot die again. Not only a sin-offering has been made, but sin has been put away. This is what I call my standing, in part at least, and it is as perfect as God can make it. That by which God has been glorified is my place before God. The best robe is on
me. With me it is all grace, with Him it is His own glory. But are you to be a stock? Is there to be no fellowship? Not only there ought to be fellowship, but your joy should be full.

Come now, and answer like an honest man, Is your joy full? No. Well, but that is what it ought to be, and it is what we find in the end of Eph. 3 -- Christ dwelling in the heart by faith; not Christ our life, though this last is a blessed truth, but that we may be able to comprehend all the effects produced by the reality of Christ’s blessed presence -- His being in us thus.

What an unlimited extent of blessing this supposes! (Eph. 3:18, 19). When the standing is known, it is but the beginning of Christian life. If I am saved, I am inside the door; but inside I want to know something of what is within. First, let the soul be grounded in that which is the substance of the whole truth, then if a person is not kept in a state corresponding to the standing, he may do worse even than the unbeliever. The devil may make him for a time cast off everything.

2

The possession of eternal life in Christ Jesus risen and glorified, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, are blessings which characterize Christianity, and it is consequently of the utmost importance for the child of God to apprehend these truths. The two are intimately connected, as we shall see.

As to what we are by nature there is no room for doubt: “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Nor will improvement or reformation gain acceptance with God, for “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” Even the knowledge of forgiveness of sins does not touch the root of the evil in us. Supposing the fruit of a tree is offensive, to strip off the fruit may remove the offence for the time being, but will not prevent a fresh crop appearing. Just so; many a soul truly trusting in the blood of Christ, but knowing only the forgiveness of sins, fails to enjoy settled peace. Fresh sins and daily failure trouble the soul, and there is a constant recurrence to the blood to get relief for the conscience. What, then, is needed, is not only forgiveness for our sins, but the judgment of our state, and a new nature given -- a new life capable of enjoying God, and of bringing forth fruit pleasing to God. All this we have in Christ. He has not only borne “our sins in His own body on the tree,” but God has condemned sin in Him on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 8:3), so that faith can say, “I am crucified with Christ”: adding also, “nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20). This, and nothing less, is our place in virtue of the work of Christ. “Even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have” -- not merely forgiveness of sins, or even the new birth -- but “eternal life.”
What is it to have eternal life? It is to have Christ. “He that hath the Son hath life.” “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” Observe, it is the gift of God, and it is “in His Son.” It is not in our keeping, but is secured for us in Christ (1 John 5:12). So we read, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear” (Col. 3:4). Faith believes the record of God, receives Christ, and passes from death unto life; as Jesus says,

He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment, it should be], but is passed from death unto life (John 5:24).

How simple! May it be yours, dear reader, if not sure of your portion in Christ, to receive what God gives in the simplicity of faith. He has given His word for the purpose of removing every difficulty.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life (1 John 5:13).

It is important to observe, that eternal life is in a risen Christ. It could be said of Him in incarnation, “In Him was life”; but man could not be brought into association or union with Him except on the ground of redemption. As He walked here below He was ever the holy One -- “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” How could any link be formed between Him as such and those who were “dead in trespasses and sins”? Obviously it could not be. There must be the entire setting aside in judgment of all that pertained to the first man ere there could be living association with “the second Man, the Lord from heaven.” So Jesus says,

Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit (John 12:24).

In marvelous grace He took our place, and died in our stead. But that is not all. He rose again, and we are brought into His place before God -- that comes out in John 20:17. Immediately that He has risen from the dead He can say,

Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, thus placing them in the same position as Himself with reference to God. How sweet to hear Him thus, at the earliest possible moment, associating His loved ones with Himself! Can we doubt that He looked forward with joy to that moment? We hear Him saying, “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” This was now over: the pressure of that hour was removed; sin was gone from before God; redemption was accomplished; and now the love of God could flow out with unhindered force. What is the result? In the first place peace -- “Peace be unto you.” Blessed result! And then
He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost {John 20:22}.

This remarkable scene reminds us at once of the manner in which Adam received life. The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. We know how soon the life was forfeited, and how, as fallen, Adam became the head of a fallen race.

Jesus, then, as the risen One, Head of the new creation, communicates resurrection-life to His disciples -- a life, too, that was to be in the power of the Holy Ghost. This is more than being merely quickened or born again. The new birth was always essential before a soul could have any knowledge of God. The disciples were already quickened souls, yet Jesus says,

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

The life more abundantly is now being realized -- but it is in resurrection. It was something quite new in character and quality. It would not now be divine life struggling with difficulties, producing desires after God, and groaning with the pressure of evil surroundings, but life in the power of resurrection, where nothing can enter to disturb the peace or destroy the relationship which He who is the life has brought the objects of His love into. Yet, in the present day, is there not many a soul truly quickened that does not know the peace which John 20 unfolds? Although born of God, it sees no further than the cross as meeting its guilt, and consequently is troubled with all sorts of difficulties and fears. This surely is not the Christian state; for life in resurrection, consequent upon the complete judgment of the old man, is unknown. Such a soul has really never entered upon Christian ground. It is a stranger alike to the privileges and the experiences of that state.

But while the scene of John 20 resembles in some respects that of Gen. 2, it is also its contrast. Adam’s life was held under conditions, and rightly so. This life is one that has already been fully tested; and not only so, but is made good for the believer on the other side of death and judgment -- therefore, beyond the reach of either. This is what we get in Rom. 8, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Why? Because judgment has already been executed on the cross. Sin has been condemned in the flesh, and the One who bore its judgment is alive again. The believer, therefore, who is “in Christ” is “not in the flesh” (Rom. 8:9); that is, is not in the condition or state to which sin and judgment attached. He has died with Christ, and with Him is out of it. He is now under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which has made him free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). Practically, he must learn to “walk in newness of life,” reckoning himself to be dead unto sin (Rom. 6:11). The flesh is in the believer, and will be so long as he is here; but faith is never occupied
with it, save as judging it, but always with Christ. This gives power for
walk, and in so far as the flesh is practically kept in the place of death, the
lovely fruits of the new life will appear. But as to the standing, faith gives
to me to see what I am in a risen Christ, and judges self, or the old I,
according to the measure of its utter condemnation in the cross. Christ on the
cross is the answer to my old state, and Christ in the presence of God is the
expression of my present standing and condition (Col. 3:1; Eph. 2:6).

Let us look now at the connection between such a condition and the
presence or indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

In John 14:16, 17, Jesus, speaking of going away, declares that the
Comforter, the Holy Ghost, would come to them to abide with them and to
be in them. Thus, not only must resurrection be accomplished as a matter of
fact, but He must go away ere the Comforter could come (John 7:38, 39).
So really were the two things connected, that in John 16 He adds --

If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I
depart, I will send Him unto you.

What would be the result?

At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and
I in you (John 14:20).

“We know” is what the Holy Ghost enables us to say;

and hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He
hath given us (1 John 3:24).

Founded on death and resurrection, the believer is in Christ, and Chris t is
in the believer, and the Holy Ghost is sent down to make us know it; hence,
“at that day ye shall know.”

Turning, now, to the Epistle to the Romans, where the whole question
of our condition is taken up in detail, we find that the Spirit is not once
mentioned until the fifth chapter, fifth verse, when peace being known,
consequent upon death and resurrection,

the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,
which is given unto us;

and not again until Rom. 8, which opens with the believer “in Christ.” Then,
however, the complete standing of the believer in Christ having been
established, the Spirit of God is introduced again and again, and shown to be
the energizing power of this new order of things. It was not always so; but
the scripture does not recognize anything short of this now; for we read,

Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of
God dwell in you (Rom. 8:9);

and it is added,

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His
that is, he is not stamped with that which distinguishes a Christian. If “in Christ,” then the Spirit of God dwells in you; and if not, you have still to learn practically this distinctive characteristic of Christianity.

Into the various aspects of the truth of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the individual believer, and in believers as the body of Christ, we do not now enter. Suffice it to say, that the whole energies and desires of the new life are carried out in the power of the Holy Ghost. He is the living power of the new state into which the believer is introduced, and in which the flesh has no place. As the believer cannot lose eternal life, because his life is hid with Christ in God, so the Spirit does not cease to dwell in the believer as the seal, until {for} the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). Hence the exhortation, ever applicable, not to grieve the Spirit, by the allowance of that which is dishonoring to Christ. Further, the Spirit always exalts Christ, and delights to engage our hearts with a risen and glorified Christ, whereby we become transformed into His image -- “changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Finally, the Lord Jesus was

that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us (1 John 1:2, 3).

If, therefore, we want to see the practical exhibition of eternal life, we find the perfect manifestation of it in Him, who was the obedient and dependent One, Thus, He is not only our object as the exalted One, but as the lowly One He is our pattern, and if the Spirit engages our hearts with Him in glory, it is that “the life also of Jesus might be made manifest” in us down here (2 Cor. 4:10, 11).

3

When we speak of a “Christian,” we speak of what a Christian is in Scripture, and Scripture always speaks of him -- of a believer in any state -- as to his standing. It is very necessary to see this.

We must not confound the exercises of a Christian with the standing of a Christian. The ground of his standing is God’s work. In his exercises there comes in himself -- his flesh, his ignorance, and many other things, alas! may be working. But it is entirely according to God’s thoughts, and not according to my thoughts, that my standing is to be judged of. Moreover, the exercises of my own soul are never the same as God’s judgment about them.

When I am thinking of these, it is my actual state that occupies me; but were God to take notice of my actual state, He must condemn me. What He has regard to is the work of Christ for me, and my union with Him, not in
this respect my actual state at all. It is always important to recollect that, because my own judgment of myself ought to be as to my actual state.

Whatever his exercises, however these may vary, the Christian, in one sense, is just the same, because He is in God’s sight as Christ (1 John 4:17). Christ being the perfectly accepted man at God’s right hand, the Christian is looked at by God in the same position (Eph. 2:6, 1:6), sitting in heavenly places “in Christ.” In that sense there cannot be any difference, and the ground of our acceptance cannot ever be imperfect. I repeat, we must not confound the movements of life with the ground of our acceptance. We can never have this too simple or clear. It does not make one despise the first actings of life, its first movings and breathings, however feeble and imperfect. I do not despise my child because he is not a man.

In the Ephesians (where what a Christian is is fully brought out) men are viewed as the “children of wrath” in their very nature (necessarily heirs of wrath, because God is what He is, and man is what he is). Every other distinction is lost sight of, because, in his character of a sinner, man is brought fully into the light of God. But having thus told us what man is, the apostle does not stop with man. He turns round, and begins at the other end. He now tells us what God is -- that He is “rich in mercy,” and (as the effect of this) that He has set us in heavenly places in Christ.
WHAT CHARACTERIZES THE CHRISTIAN AND SECURES HIS BLESSING

Romans 8

It cannot but be remarked how that, in this chapter, the whole condition of a Christian is identified with the Holy Ghost. What constitutes him a Christian is the sealing of the Holy Ghost -- and this really characterizes him as such. The first part of the chapter gives us the Spirit in life-giving power; then, secondly, God in us; and in the close we find the security of the blessing, “God for us.” What gives us our character is, *God in us*; what secures us is *God for us*. It is entirely individual, for here we have not the church formed by the presence of the Holy Ghost. The first four verses form a summary of the earlier part of the epistle.

In Rom. 5 we are shown how God in grace had made peace for us, justified and brought us forgiveness of sins; and then the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. There alone He had been spoken of previous to ch. 8. This answers to v. 1

In the subsequent part (Rom. 6, 7) we have the way in which we find deliverance from our *state* as children of Adam, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” {Rom. 8:2}. Then (Rom. 8:3) “sin in the flesh” is “condemned” in the cross. Forgiveness and justification are thus founded on Christ having been delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification; thus as regards deliverance from a sinful nature, by its being condemned in the cross: “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” As regards power, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Then the practical result, in virtue of not being under the law, is, “that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us” by walking “after the Spirit.” There is a great deal more in this than in walking right according to the law. We have Christ as our righteousness, “Who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness,” in contrast to law, which would be our own righteousness. Then we have walk manifesting the life of Christ, the Spirit of God as power for this, in contrast to the law. The law did not give the righteousness it required, and gave no power over sin. In contrast with the righteousness of the law, I have Christ as my righteousness; and consequently, in contrast with sin dwelling in me, I get the power of the life of Christ by the Holy Ghost dwelling in me, and now am to walk “not after the flesh.”

The law condemned what was evil, but left me walking in it. But now
I walk after something else, "the Spirit." And what is of the last importance to us is, that we have an object for our hearts. The law gives no life, no strength, no object. It tells me I must love God. What is He? Perfect silence! It tells me nothing of the God I am to love. It is His perfect, just claim of obedience. That is all it can tell me of God -- that He claims obedience. It was an obliged obedience, and a curse in case of failure. It judges me if I do not obey, but gives me no object. The heart must have some object -- either a good object or a bad one. Now I get the Spirit’s object -- Christ. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto me.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him {1 Cor. 2:9}.

There people generally stop. It is a reference to Isa. 64, and what the apostle is stating is that it is not true now

but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.

That is just the opposite; for

we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God {1 Cor. 2:12}.

I have not only got life, as born of God, but I have got one who (through this blessed word as the means) reveals things suited to this life. It is the Holy Ghost who takes these things and gives them to me as the objects for the new nature to live and feed upon. God has revealed them to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things.

Of course, life must be there first. It supposes this, but is more. Suppose I am born of God, that does not reveal anything to me. But every nature feeds on that which belongs to it, and is suited to it: as animal nature, for example. Here I find, not a law to me as man in the flesh, but a new nature and new life, the life of Christ in us, which has certain desires, affections, and hopes. But where are the things that answer to them?

Then the Holy Ghost is given as the revealer of the things that belong to the new nature. Whatever a father has, belongs, in a certain sense, to his child; the child talks naturally of "our" house, "our" carriage, and the like, yet he has nothing of his own. This is all quite right.

Thus we have been brought as children to the Father, and have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, that we may enjoy the things which belong to the relationship.

This is a wonderful thing to say, and is a different thing from being born of God; it is more than the possession of life. Each has its place, and a different way in which it works. The Spirit is the spring and source of life, and then dwells in us. I get the truth itself from scripture: we are all the sons
of God, as born of God, by faith in Christ Jesus {Gal. 3:26}: then, having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit” {Eph. 1:13}. We become sons by believing, and then after believing are sealed. God cannot seal an unbeliever. Seal sin and wickedness! It cannot be. He seals a believer.

He that believeth on me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given], because that Jesus was not yet glorified {John 7:38, 39}. We find the secret here of how and why we get the Holy Ghost, and why He gives liberty and joy too. “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” The coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost is a distinct and definite thing, and must not be confounded with His working in a divine way previously. The Son created the world, but did not come into the world till incarnation. The Holy Ghost wrought, but did not come to take a place in the world until Pentecost. This depended on the Lord going away and being glorified. What was His being glorified? An immense thing! It was God taking man, the being that deserved being cast out of the presence of God, into the glory of God, in Christ Himself, and those that believe on Him. After the accomplishment of the perfect work of redemption, then He can send the Holy Ghost down as a witness that the thing is done. The moment Christ has gone up and taken His place, in righteousness, in the presence of the Father, the Holy Ghost comes down here as the consequence of Man being in the glory of God {see Acts 2:32, 33}. Why is He there? Because the work of putting away sin was perfectly accomplished, and He sat down, having Himself purged our sins. Now the Holy Ghost can come down to make us sure of it. The place where He leads to is evidently the glory, because Christ is there. Christ and the saints get their portion in the same way, one after another. He whom the world rejected, God has set there; and He says, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.” “Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” and “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” {Gal. 4}.

In the Old Testament type the man was first washed with water, then sprinkled with blood, and then anointed with oil. This is the way in which we get the Spirit of God. The Comforter comes down when the whole thing is accomplished; Christ having gone up on high, when He had purged our sins. Of this the Spirit is the seal, being in us the revealer and earnest of all that Christ has gone into. When I have found the work of Christ as an effectual work of deliverance, being made white as snow, I am sealed by the Holy Ghost, who has borne witness to me of the blood of Christ, and is then the power of life in Christ dwelling in me, for liberty and joy.
Then the Spirit is the power of life, because of righteousness. You get this unfolded till we come to v. 11 of this chapter, where He is also the power of our final deliverance -- the body: being renewed for the glory. You have the Spirit first as giving the objects of this life. The law tells me what is right, as far as it goes, but the Holy Ghost gives me objects to satisfy and fill the new man. He produces righteousness, for "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," &c. He does it by taking of the things of Christ and showing them to me, thus giving me a divine object, so that I live by the faith of the Son of God, "who loved me, and gave himself for me." "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth" {John 17:19}. All the things that are true I get in the person that I love; and I am attached to them. There are qualities that I may admire. When I find them in my father or my mother, do I coldly estimate them? No, I delight in them, because they are in my father or my mother. So with the things of Christ. I find the qualities in the person that I love. The Spirit takes of them and shows them to me, and I am changed into the same image, growing up into Him in all things, whom the Spirit keeps before me. So the apostle was laboring to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus -- taking of what is in Christ and planting it in my heart, that Christ may be formed in me -- to make me grow up to Him in everything.

What are "the things of the Spirit"? Could the Holy Ghost take the things of the world and make them objects for you? It would be blasphemy to say so. "To be carnally minded" is not a state of mind, but the nature. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." There is joy and delight in these things of the Spirit; the conscience has nothing to say against them, and the heart delights in them; and the character of the Christian is formed by them. All these traits in Christ become objects on which the heart lives, and thus become characteristic of the Christian.

This is what James calls the law of liberty. Supposing my child wanted to run into the town, and I tell him to stay and do his lessons instead. He obeys; but this is not the law of liberty that would be to tell him to go into the town. The law says, Do your God lessons, instead of what you like. Grace says, Go to heaven, and give me power to go! The heart and the commandment go the same road. This is the Christian in his path. As far as he is governed and ruled by the Spirit of Christ, he has this perfect law of liberty to walk in: his desires are not according to the flesh.

There are three ways in which the Spirit is presented in connection with the Christian. Though born of God, until I know the completeness of redemption I have the thought of meeting requirements, and looking at what my state will be. This is not liberty, but bondage. But I have been redeemed by Christ out of that condition, and through grace have got into this place of liberty. I have learned that I am not in the flesh at all, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in me. I am in Christ, and in the Spirit, and there is no
condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. You are in what is perfectly contrary to the flesh in your position before God -- in the Spirit, not in the flesh at all. What is of God is in contrast with the flesh; hence “the Spirit of God.”

The second way in which He is spoken of is as the Spirit of Christ:

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his {Rom. 8:9}.

This is not purpose or election, but character. We are brought into Christ. You cannot say a man is a Christian until Christ dwells in him. Till the prodigal came to the father he had not the robe -- did not belong to the house, but was on the road to it. So in Egypt; when the blood was on the door-post they were sure to get out, but they were not out, and were frightened out of their lives! They had not salvation till they were clean out of Egypt. They were afraid of death and judgment, the very things that brought them out. But when they had passed the Red Sea into a new condition, delivered by God, they sing of the “salvation” of Jehovah. This is complete deliverance, and I have found this new place; I am in Christ, or rather “of” Christ. And if Christ be in me, the body is not allowed to live. I say to the flesh, I have nothing to say to you; the body is dead. If it moves, it is sin. What life is there then? The “Spirit is life,” as that which will produce righteousness -- the formative power of it.

Then, thirdly, as

the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead {Rom. 8:11}.

It is the same Spirit always, but with different results. Here my resurrection is a consequence of the Holy Ghost dwelling in me: the actual body is delivered. We have had, first, the nature of God in contrast with the flesh. Secondly, as forming Christ in me. Thirdly, for final deliverance -- not short of the body being glorified. The cry, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” is all answered; delivered in spiritual power; then we are given objects belonging and suited to it; and, lastly, completely and finally in a body of glory.

Now comes another thing, the second part of the chapter. It is my personal condition; but in that condition personal relationship that is treated of now; still founded on the Spirit.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God; for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father {Rom. 8:14, 15}.

It is not that you are to see whether you are sons by the Spirit; but “we are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” The Old Testament saints had not this, though as faithful as we are.
The heir as long as he is a child differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, till the time appointed of the father; but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons {Gal. 4:1-5}.

So here we are sons of God, as many as are led by the Spirit of God; and if sons, then heirs. Of whom? of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. We have not received the spirit of bondage to fear -- like the Old Testament saints dreading death. We are sons, and know our place as such, according to the word of the Lord, “my Father and your Father, my God and your God” -- and the Holy Ghost now becomes the earnest of the inheritance.

What is the consequence of this? “We suffer with him.” We cannot have the Spirit of Christ without suffering. I must in my measure have the thoughts and feelings of Christ. He could not be in the world and see sin and misery, and not suffer. We cannot but suffer. It is not suffering for Christ, that is a privilege given us; for “unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” It is with him. We cannot but sorrow, if there is any heart, as the consequence of the consciousness of sonship. Yet we reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed to us. This is the time of the “earnest expectation of the creature,” not yet the “manifestation of the sons of God.”

Just see now what the consequences are. First, relationship with God is settled; secondly; I am an heir in whom the glory is to be revealed; I am a son, I am an heir, I am going to have all that Christ has; not only the Father’s house, but the kingdom; the inheritance in heaven of all things. They are revealed to my heart now, and they are His: there is the great and blessed thing.

Take the Mount of Transfiguration, the New Jerusalem, the Father’s house; all these things tell me what I have got, and my heart is bounding onward in the power of the Holy Ghost, rejoicing in the Lord always. The Spirit of adoption {sonship} shows me all the blessed things Christ brings me into: they are not manifested yet. I belong to heaven, and am yet in a body that belongs to earth, so that I must and ought to feel things here. What brought the creature into the bondage of corruption? How did it get in? Through us. And how will it get out? Through us, when the glory comes! It is a beautiful thought! The effect of the glory of the new creation is to make me feel what the old creation is. We brought them into it, and shall bring them out of it {Rom. 8:20-22}. We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the liberty of the glory of the children of God. It cannot get into the liberty of grace -- the body cannot; I have to keep it down. But when the deliverance of glory comes, this is all
over. We get the glory, but creation gets deliverance. This body connects me with all the sorrows of this world (Rom. 8:23);

Ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body.

We are not wishing for the soul to be saved, but for the body to be delivered.

Meanwhile, what does the Spirit do? He helps our infirmities. We groan within ourselves. It is not selfishness: it is the Holy Ghost puts us into it. It is the Spirit of love, of God, that feels the evil in the way of love. Is it merely selfishness to feel what it is to be in a world like this? Not a bit. Christ sorrowed in love. In virtue of the very joy and glory as the first-fruits of the Spirit, I groan. What is that groan? It is the Spirit of God. Our hearts become the voice of a groaning creation going up to God. And He that searches the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit. What a word is this! What does He find? Does He find sin in it? No; but the mind of God: that is like Christ. He comes and searches my heart, and there He finds the mind of God -- what is “according to God”? It is the Spirit of God in me feeling in divine love as in Christ, and He carries up the groan to God. Where does it come from? From the Spirit of God: While I am waiting for the redemption, I have got the relative condition of son and heir, which makes me the vessel of the sympathies of God, having a link to connect me with it all. The very consciousness and knowledge of all this blessedness make me conscious of the state of the groaning creation till the power of God delivers it. I do not know what to ask for, or how to ask, but I do know this, that God makes all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to His purpose. I cannot pierce through the trammels of evil in the world, but God holds the thread. I have got the Master of the whole scene, although I have a heart that cannot enter into all, and He makes everything work for good.

Now God is for me: This is not a work in me, but for me: not God in me, but God for me. What shall we say to these things? When Paul has considered the whole case, felt the joy and felt the evil, well, he says, I know through the Holy Ghost that He has given His Son for me when a sinner; and the conclusion is, God is for me. There may be plenty of adversaries, but what of that? God is for me.

One word for the closing part, to point out that what we get in it is good for us, and nothing of the work in us. It is the gift of the blessed Son of God. “How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” In the gift of His Son God gave the very best thing in heaven already, and of course He will give me everything else that is good for me. Do I want a proof that He loves me in something less? He freely gives me all things. That is all very well; but what about sin? Here God is not giving, but it is God that justifies; who shall
condemn? Thus I have learnt it all. There is an end to that question. All is well. But death is in the way, and life is awfully dangerous. Death? Christ died; O then death is the very best thing for me. Life? He is my life. Height? Christ is on the right hand of God, the very place where I learn all the blessing. Depth? He has descended into it for me. What shall separate me from the love of Christ? “Of Christ,” because He is a man. The moment I say Christ, I take it from the throne of God to the depths of earth, and from the earth up again to the throne, and I find nothing but Christ!

Further, nothing can separate me from the love of God {Rom. 9:35}. All else is a creature, and God is necessarily stronger than that which He has created. It is divine love. Though Christ as man was in all my circumstances passing through the power of evil -- all I might think would separate me from His love. He has come into and triumphed over everything that might be against me.

Thus we have had the Spirit as the power of life to walk in righteousness; then taking part with me in all the sorrows of the path here; and, finally, we have been brought to God for “us.” What I especially desire is that our hearts should apprehend what it is to have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, because we are washed by the blood of Christ. Are you going to use your body for sin, if it is the temple of the Holy Ghost? There are a thousand things flowing from it. Even the resurrection of the body is because of His dwelling in me {Rom. 8:11}. This is what characterizes Christianity. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” May we abide in the consciousness of this, knowing that Christ dwells in us, and we in Him.

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9, 10).
“HIS PRAISE SHALL BE CONTINUALLY IN MY MOUTH”

Philippians 4

In the third chapter of Philippians we find the spiritual energy which carries the saint onward in the race to Christ in glory. This chapter treats more of the power which gives him complete superiority over all the circumstances through which he has to pass, not as making him insensible to their sorrow, but able to “rejoice in the Lord always.”

Nothing is more instructive, or humbling in this way, than the life of Paul. Cut off from the ministry which he loved, shut up in prison at Rome, where he had labored “more abundantly than they all”; finding, at the end of such glorious effects as his ministry produced, the result was “all they which are in Asia be turned away from me”; and “all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s”; yet he can say, “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.” You will find plenty of trouble, plenty of conflict, for Satan is not bound yet. The more we go on, the more we shall know the opposition -- sorrow in the Church -- saints individually going wrong; all these ought to press upon our hearts; but we ought to have the power which lifts the heart totally above it; the communion and faith which links up the heart to Christ, and walks with Him -- the power, too, to serve others, come what will.

Christ -- the “Man of Sorrows,” was the example of this: who so ready to serve as He? “I have meat to eat that ye know not of” were His words. Even Martha, whom He loved, tried to get Mary away from listening to His words. The disciples sought to turn Him aside when He told them of His death; all showed a misapprehension of what He had come for -- to “give His life a ransom for many”; yet in the midst of it all, He can ask that His disciples may have His joy fulfilled in them!

If we really have this joy of Christ, we can “endure all things for the elect’s sake,” because we are in spirit with Him, and He with us in it all; and He did endure all things for the joy that was set before Him -- even the cross. It is not the mere buoyancy of a heart ignorant of the power of evil, or of the opposition of Satan. There is a great deal of this superficial joy, this floating over the surface of things, with many. But it is the real power, where the depth of evil and opposition is apprehended, and the power of the Lord is known and trusted in as above it all!

What is working now is, “the power of good (of God Himself), in the midst of evil”; and it is paramount to the evil in the midst of which it works. True, the evil is flowing in like a mighty stream which, if not stemmed, will
flow on to the ocean to judgment, unless the Lord interfere, as He does in goodness and in mercy, or in judgment, or a scourge. But the character of the world until Satan is bound is this, that he is its god and its prince; and, in the midst of a world where Satan is prince, the power of Christ has come in above it all.

If my soul is living in the immediate center of this power, it will feel the pressure of the evil, but will not be depressed -- “In nothing terrified by your adversaries.” The practical daily supplies of strength depend upon the heart’s being with Him who has overcome it all; who has all power in heaven and on earth. Then we know the sure and certain resting-place in Himself, which nothing can touch. True, we have to labor on; as it says, “Labor to enter into His rest”; but if the heart is with Him who is in that rest, it has a power which nothing can reach; and the first mark of this power, when the tide of evil is present, is patience. That which “endures to the end” is better than miracle! Thus we learn the graciousness and power, that keeps the heart free to think of what Christ has wrought in others; free to be occupied with the whole Church; and yet which can think of every state, even of a slave with his master (Philemon). Paul’s affections were fresh for each “true yoke-fellow,” as though all had not “forsaken” him; and though all sought their own, it did not hinder the going out of his heart.

Are our hearts living enough with Christ to think of a brother thus? Paul’s heart was so with Christ, in the consciousness of what it is to be His, that when he thinks of a brother, it is as one whose name is in the book of life! In another place, he says, “I stand in doubt of you,” but in the next chapter, “I have confidence in you through the Lord.”

“Blessed is the man in whose heart are thy ways.” The secret of all was, he made wells of the sorrows. Going through the valley of Baca, it was turned into a well -- the blessing from on high, where Christ was, fills the pools.

The history of the apostle is very important in connection with this. In prison, chained between two soldiers, cast, of course, more than ever on the Lord -- the Lord was very gracious to him -- but he learned, come what will, to “rejoice,” not in the prosperity of his work, or in the prosperity of the Church, or of the saints; but to “rejoice in the Lord always”!

What holier, deeper, truer, Christ-like feeling is had in these trials! As the Psalmist says (Psa. 34),

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

How did it come about? “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him.” The Lord was his shepherd, therefore he can say, “I shall not want”; not, “I have gotten green pastures,” “I shall not want,” but because the Lord was
his shepherd. “He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” He spreadeth “a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” He anointeth “my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever” (Psa. 23).

Paul, standing before King Agripa says, “I would to God that not only thou, but all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am except these bonds.” He does not say I would you were all Christians,” but “such as I am”! There is a happy man. So conscious of the blessedness he had in Christ; so full of the love of Christ, that he could wish you were as he was! The heart’s complete, internal happiness is Christ, so that the trials -- trials even in the Church, which are much more deep and real -- only carried him to Christ!

Are we so conscious of this blessedness in Christ, that we can say to others, “would you were as I am “? Do you say “Only an apostle could say this”? No, it is what every Christian, old and young, is called to! The only difference is, that a young Christian rejoices more in himself and his blessings; he has a blessed comfort in himself. The fathers more simply in Christ, they have got to know Christ, they have a personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in intimacy with Him. The young rejoice in the first blush of feeling. It is good and true, what God has given; but in the “pull,” going through the world, we find that there is nothing positively to rejoice in but Christ.

The power for this consists in that, the nearness to Christ, that when the evil springs up -- the power of Satan present -- the heart has to do with Him in resurrection, who has destroyed him who had the power of death; with Him whose mighty, holy arm hath gotten Him the victory; He says, “Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.” He starts us with this testimony, having gone Himself into a place where evil cannot reach; and we have got Him there, the immovable source of blessing, and rejoice in Him there. He has not taken us out of a world governed by Satan’s power, but He keeps us from evil, because we are not of the world. as He is not of the world.

The saints too, when running the race are to look away unto Jesus, who has begun and ended this whole course of faith; who has met the power of Satan in the beginning, and in the end; tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He overcame him who had the power of death (that is, the devil), and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high -- the victory won. We are to enjoy Him now, high up above, and independent of the things we are passing through. Do not let any present circumstances occupy you. Do not look away from Him to them -- but rejoice! Not in yourself in any way, but in Christ always!
You must be with Him in spirit for this because He alone is out of the evil, and is the center and fountain of good; and what should be seen in you down here is your “moderation,” your yieldingness. Suppose I am happy in Christ, am I looking for my rights in this world? Christ had none! Oh! no, my treasure is elsewhere; I am going out of this world; I can wait for my rights till Christ has His. Let our hearts be weaned from things here, let us pass through the world as weaned children. Christ passed through it, leaving all to go its own way. In the presence of unrighteousness, the spirit is apt to rise; but let us cultivate the subduedness that yields. The Samaritans would not receive Him, and He turns aside into another village. Oh! what a lesson that is! Because He had steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem! The half-hearted would not receive Him, because He was doing the very thing that marked His devotedness to His Father. And so it will be with you; the religiously half-hearted will not want you, if you set your face steadfastly to go right!

“The Lord is at hand!” {Phil. 4:5}. He has taught us to wait for Him -- to be always “like men that wait for their Lord.”

“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” {Phil. 4:6}. His peace is better than cares. We have cares and sorrows, true, and we should have more, if we were living more as servants among the sorrows of this world. Not indifferent -- Christ was never that. But there is a getting away from Christ in my own heart -- a tendency to make one anxious even in caring for others. But I must go and tell God, and this carries me so above the cares that I can rejoice in Him.

What does God give to the heart that has given all its cares to Him? An answer? No (though we know He does answer): but His peace! Is God’s heart taken up with circumstances? troubled by them? Is His throne shaken by the folly and the wickedness of the world; or even the failure of the saints? Never! Put your cares, then, on God, and He will put His peace into your heart -- the ineffable peace of God! He who knows the end from the beginning -- the peace He is in, shall keep your heart and mind through Jesus Christ. There is no indifference, carelessness, or coldness, but supplication, earnest entreaty, and all with thanksgiving.

A man whose heart is filled with thanksgiving, reckoning on God, goes to Him with prayer and supplication, and the soul, having left all on God, feels His hand under the trouble, and can say, “It is His affair; not mine.” He is a happy man. He goes through this world in this blessed fellowship with Christ; in the power of the Spirit of God for inward joy, and for outward circumstances; his affections free to go out to his brethren.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are
honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” {Phil. 4:8}. Hearts free to find the good in people. Jesus could find the least bit of grace in a poor soul; His heart was ever ready to enjoy it; “I have meat to eat that ye know not of”; “Mary hath chosen that good part”; “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.” There is always this perception when the heart is kept free to enjoy the fruit of the Spirit in others, as being occupied with what is good!

You cannot touch pitch without being defiled, and there is a great deal of pitch in these days. Thinking with the world, talking like the world, then the heart gets into the color of it. It is not Christ!

The heart set free, lives in the thing that Christ’s heart delights in. Oh! it makes such a difference; living in the atmosphere where Christ’s heart dwells, instead of being dragged after ten thousand other things.

“Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall he with you.” Not only His peace, as in v. 7, but Himself.

What blessedness in that name God constantly gives Himself! He is never called the God of joy. Joy is an up and down thing that may be disturbed; there may be cause for joy, yet trouble may hinder the heart enjoying it. Peace is what nothing can disturb; it is calm as the throne of God!

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen (Rom. 15).

The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly (Rom. 16).

The God of peace shall be with you (Phil. 4:9).

The very God of peace sanctify you wholly (1 Thess. 5:23).

The God of peace . . . make you perfect (Heb. 13:20).

Peace is the effect of a full and perfect work. He has “made peace through the blood of His cross.” Why? Because He has gone through everything that was contrary to God -- has borne the wrath (the very opposite of the peace) of God; and the instant He is risen, He comes into their midst and says, “Peace”! And now to us God takes this wondrously blessed name of “the God of peace.”

Do your hearts possess that peace? If God rises up with every attribute that He has, can anything disturb it? I can say before God, I am in the light, even as God is in the light, because the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses me from all sin. I may have conflict with self, with the world, or with Satan; but He sets me in that peace which nothing can disturb. Your
peace should flow as a river.

Faith is needed to be able to rejoice always in the Lord, the feet going where God would have them go, not avoiding evil merely, but walking where He would lead us in every detail of life -- in our habits, dress, conversation, intercourse. Nothing tests the condition of soul more than every-day habits.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” It is a different thing to say, “Christ strengthens me,” and to say, “I can do all things.” Paul had learned it. Blessed thing to find that Christ was sufficient for him; he had learned how to be abased, and how to abound (more difficult, for abundance has the tendency to draw the heart away from the Lord -- He had kept him from that twice). If he had want, He had Christ; if abundance, it was Christ. This was not joy in circumstances, but moral power rising above circumstances, but he had learned it; looking at Christ all through; finding it out all the way along. It was true when he began his course, but Paul did not know it then as he did at the end, when he could speak of it to others as that which he had learned. Just as He says, “My God” -- blessed word! well known in all sorts of circumstances.

In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, he could say, “My God shall supply all your need!” I know Him, and, if you ask me what is the measure, it is “according to His riches in glory by Jesus Christ!” I guarantee to you all that. Paul found that all sought their own, but it only enabled him to say more completely, “My God.”

What reality there is in the life of faith -- walking in secret with God. Poor hands we are at it; but it is that which no world can touch, no Satan can rob of, and the trials that come out in that path only prove us superior to every circumstance through the power of His grace! God grant that we may know it and Him in it. Amen.

THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL DESCEND

{1 Thessalonians}

The coming of the Lord, beloved brethren, is the subject of which I wish to speak to you a little.
Till the Lord came into the world there was very little about heaven in the Scripture. But when He came to earth, immediately there was a testimony from heaven to the shepherds, that now there was glory to God in heaven, and on earth good-will to men. And the first word of testimony to Him was from heaven -- God’s voice saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Then we find Him in the 17th of John conversing with His Father in heaven about His heavenly people, and pouring out His heart about them; and afterwards, when He had gone up again into heaven to sit at the right hand of His Father, the glory could shine down out of heaven, because God wanted the glory of His beloved Son to be seen. This glory it was which came out literally when Stephen was martyred: he saw the Son of Man occupied with himself, and got into conversation with Him. And in the epistle to the Hebrews we get wonderful things, because this Man is in heaven. All the different things in that epistle are put out by the Holy Ghost to feed our souls with heavenly things. If my citizenship is in heaven, what would you expect? That there would be more of the things of this earth in my mind -- more of the things of this earth in my heart; or more of the things of heaven in my mind -- more of the things of heaven in my heart? Oh! surely more of the things of heaven in my mind, and more of the things of heaven in my heart!

And I have, so to say, the best of my portion now. You and I have not come to the Father’s house yet, but we have got the Father’s heart. And which is best for us to have -- the Father’s house or the Father’s heart? Surely the Father’s heart! It will eventuate in our getting into the Father’s house, and then we shall surely know the Father’s heart better; but it will be the same subject, the same song, then as now.

But now as to this coming of the Lord. I would take the epistle to the Thessalonians which shows out this truth. There is there, so to say, a lamp shining down, putting all circumstances in the light of it -- throwing its light on all things down here.

There are two verses I would refer to in 1 Thess. 1, and on entering on it, I would just say that the first epistle is the coming of the Lord for His own people; the second is His coming to the world.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father {1 Thess. 1:3}.

Those three words -- faith, love, and hope, and those other words intensified by what is with them, work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope, tell us pretty plainly where these Thessalonians were, and what characterizes the place where you and I ought to be.
It is the “work of faith.” Knowing “the substance” that there is before God, our faith can work down here. When we get home it will be rest, but down here it must be work.

Then again it is “labor of love.” Here in these Thessalonians there was labor connected with their love. They had much to go through. Times were hard. But then, again, there was hope connected with it, and “patience of hope” too. It could not be worn out. It had to endure, and it did endure.

But there is another thing that you and I will do well to take notice of, and that is that all this was “in the sight of God and our Father.” I have not only faith and hope and love, but I am wearing them before God. He looks down not only to see what is shining from me, but looks to see that these three things are shining out in His presence. The poor Ephesians lost their first love (Rev. 2). There was plenty of labor, but when God looked in upon their hearts there was no love in them. This work of faith and labor of love, and patience of hope must be all in the sight of God and our Father.

And then he says --

We need not to speak anything, for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come {1 Thess. 1:8-10}.

Their faith bore witness to what Paul’s work among them had been, and thus bearing witness, they were waiting for God’s Son from heaven. If the heart does not get the assurance that He who is coming is the Deliverer from the wrath to come, that coming could not be borne. But you know we are “kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time and, being thus kept by God for a certain salvation, we can patiently await it, and not only await it, but await a certain Person, even “Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

And that, beloved brethren, is the brightness of the hope to me. As to myself, I may not have everything as right as I could wish in my desires; I may not have everything set to right in my house. Ay, but there is another set of thoughts altogether! He says, “Surely I come quickly!” And he must come! He is the One, whose coming is the plan of God. The purpose of God is that He should come down, and that, so coming, He should put all God’s enemies under His feet, and bring in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and He will be true to His God and Father. He will accomplish all that God has given Him to do.

No wonder, if we look at our walk in the light of His coming, that we should judge it unworthy of Him, and I would not wish it otherwise. But I wish the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, rising up from the Father’s right
hand, were always before our minds. I believe it would soon make our walk consistent. I believe it would set both affections, heart, and thoughts in order.

But is it not a bright hope? He will come forth; and in his coming forth He will claim the Church, as He says in the 14th of John --

In my Father’s house are many mansions {abodes}: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also {John 14:2, 3}. He has not fulfilled this promise to Peter yet. Peter is with the Lord, but he has not yet been taken to the Father’s house, and will not be until we all go to be with Him there. Now is there nothing lovely in that? Nothing in this thought of going to be in that Father’s house? Nothing wonderful about the heart of that Son, who, though He has been sitting 1800 years at the right hand of God, is still thinking of coming for His people here? Is there nothing emphatically lovely in it?

He will come upon the cloud of glory. He will come to take his people home. There is Himself to see. We have never seen Him yet. We cannot do without Him, and He will not do without us! We shall see Him for ourselves! We shall hear Him for ourselves! In all things we shall be like Him in the glory.

In the first chapter it was a difficult night they were passing through. Ay, but, says Paul, when you get out of the wood then you will see it all. And now, in the second chapter {1 Thess. 2}, he takes up the difficulties through which he had to pass, and whilst he looks at them he does not see any of them apart from the Lord Himself.

He says -- I have suffered torture in trying to get to you, and you have suffered dreadful things in my absence from you, but when we are once at home in the glory, there will be no difficulty in my getting at you then All these difficulties, which have been permitted to keep me away from you, will no more, and in that day you will be my glory and joy -- the Lord’s too. This is a truth, and a blessed truth; but we shall have it with Him. Not one portion of the glory or the grace but will have flowed through Him; and I shall say -- Oh! I know the One who has done it all, the Effectuator of all this glory. One labors in one direction, and another in another; but, whatever the results, all that is really subordinate. It is Jehovah’s Fellow who has done it. He is the worker of it all. And what a joy it will be to Him to see the little circles around each laborer. Here in one corner, Paul surrounded with his dear Thessalonians, his joy and crown; and there, in another, some other laborer with his around him; and in them Christ will see all that His own grace had wrought.
I do not believe we think enough of that communion in the glory, which will be the counterpart of our communion here in the wilderness. All the details and difficulties of the wilderness journey will have their blessed counterpart in the glory. Our crown of rejoicing is Christ. Ay, but, says Paul, are not even you this to me? In the day when all these difficulties will be done away, my glory and joy will be what God has wrought in you by me!

What a heart has Christ! No heart so unselfish as His! He loves to give away all He can give away. He might have converted every one Himself, just as He called Saul of Tarsus from the glory, but He would not. He loves to work by others.

And is there no work to do? Are there no eyes to be wiped? Are there no broken hearts to be bound up among the saints? Is there nothing of this sort to be done among His people? Well then, go in for it! Bring out this patience of Christ, for in that day that will be a blessed counterpart of all labor amongst the saints.

In the next chapter {1 Thess. 3} he brings out another thing. The Lord is here bringing all His people out from heaven with Him.

To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints {1 Thess. 3:13}.

"With all his saints." It is what we call the Epiphany -- the manifestation of Christ. It is after the fourth of 2nd Corinthians—after the bēma of Christ {2 Cor. 5:10}. We have met Him, gone with him to the Father’s house, and now He brings us out again. He comes forth with all His saints.

I do not suppose that the apostle could have let out his heart more simply than he does in these words. Christ has His retired place to take the Church into -- the Father’s house; but Divine love will bring us forth with Him in manifested glory; and the desire of the apostle is that there may not be a single thing in us now that may in any way mar the time when He will bring us out with Himself. Is there nothing peculiar in the expression, “He shall come to be admired in all them that believe” {2 Thess. 1:10}? He will be admired in His saints! Is there then no separation -- no separation between Christ and his saints! None! There is none as to His blood-shedding. He gave His life a ransom for them, and there will be none in His place in heaven. When He goes into His Father’s house He comes to seek His people first. No separation between Him and the Church. He comes with all His saints! He comes with all His saints! Oh, what a heart Christ has!

And what a mind God has! He has chosen One around whom He can safely wind all His plans. If you want to wind anything round a thing, you must consider the weight of what you want to wind before you can decide
whether you may safely do it. You would not wind a coil of rope round a feeble twig. And thus God could not, so to say, have any center but His Son. All His saints are wound round Him, and He will bring them out with Him in the glory!

And what if I am suffering down here? Surely there is power in this part of the hope to encourage the heart now. What if I am borne down now by difficulties? I shall come forth with Him, and shall be displayed as the one who is, with Him, to teach the world to rejoice, and who will keep evil in check. I shall come forth with Him.

Now, in the fourth chapter {1 Thess. 4}, there are some things that are very remarkable, brought up in connection with His coming.

The first thing is *covetousness*, or, as he calls it here, “the lust of concupiscence.” It is the heart that is not satisfied with God and His portion -- that is snatching at things round about it down here. It is just the power of the wicked spirit upon the heart that is separated to Christ, and that yet tries to satisfy itself with things down here; and that finds, like the young man in the parable, who tried to feed as the swine did, that he cannot satisfy himself in any way with the husks. He will only just find himself in the pitiable plight of trying what swine’s food will do for him. He will find the husks are only fit for a swine’s belly. and are no food for his.

And then he introduces *mourning*. What will be a satisfying portion? I have none down here. I have to wait, not only for happy association, but for the Person whose innate power will show itself forth in the midst of the difficulties in which He will find His Church when He comes. Paul says to them -- God will bring with Him those very friends and relations of yours, you Thessalonians, who you think have lost their chance of being with Him in the glory. And these words tell upon every heart since, that is in like circumstances.

I have this thought, beloved friends, and I think it rather deepens upon me. It is, that that which shines forth from Christ is what gives the power of looking upward.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
Wherefore comfort one another with these words {1 Thess. 4:13-18}.

There is everything to rouse the attention in the way that the subject is introduced: *Himself*, the Lord, shall descend from heaven. When? Does it say? No! It is not made known when. But oh! to think of that One without whom nothing that has been created was made -- that One into whose hands everything has been committed by God -- to think of *that* Man about to descend again from heaven!

It is a wonderful thing the stupidity of the mind of man! To think of people trying to make out that the death of saints is the coming of the Lord! If I die tonight I go to the Lord; the Lord does not descend from heaven. When Stephen was dying he looked up and saw the Lord waiting for him in heaven; he did not see the Lord descending from heaven.

But the Lord will descend. He will come off that throne at the appointed time. He will come down out of that glory upon the cloud. He will descend out of heaven.

There is everything to arrest the soul in the way it is put, and to cause it to inquire; and then, besides, it is so guardedly put -- "the Lord *Himself.*" There is only *one* Lord.

And then see the glory! Aye, and the grace too! It is with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.

I never read those clauses without certain thoughts waking up in my mind in one way or another. His voice was heard on earth before this. He was heard to pray by His disciples. In that hour when He asked them to watch with Him, His voice went up in prayer to His Father, and He was heard in that He feared. But He did not take upon Him then the regulating of anything. He let His Father do everything in His own way. What do you take your sword and smite the servant’s ear off in that way for, Peter? He laid His hand on it at once and healed it. He would not be delivered, because He had to give His life for the sheep. Of course on the other hand, He did regulate, in a *hidden* way, as when He let Saul of Tarsus be at the death of Stephen, and when He spoke to Saul out of the glory. In a quiet way He spoke and regulated them, but He will speak in quite a different way in the day that is coming. The “shout” spoken of here is a regulating sound, such as call to men to present arms; and its tones will be heard as announcing that the time is come. Yes, and the tones of that voice will be *gladsome* too! *Himself* will leave the throne! *Himself* will call His people! *He* is the One who regulates it all! He is the perfect servant. He does not leave the Father’s throne a moment too soon; but when He does, it will be with a regulating shout.

And then there is “the voice of the archangel.” The Lord takes it up. The time is come; and what angel in heaven would not gladly render up his
place to the Lord.

And then there is “the trump of God.” God takes it up. From the throne of His Father He is coming forth, the regulating introduction of blessing.

Then, besides this (no new thing to us here), there are two things that He brings in. He says, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Now we are already associated with Him in resurrection-life in the heavenly places. He has given us to know that, but He is going to give us another exhibition of it.

Do you ever think how Christ is keeping the bodies of the dead! Do you never say -- Oh! what a heart He has! How tenderly He is caring for them! How He knows that the dust of Stephen is there and the dust of Paul here, and how He is ready to bring it all forth when the moment comes. It is Himself that does it. It does not say -- I will let any mighty power put the finishing stroke to it. No, it is Himself. He says -- The dead in Christ shall rise first.

Oh! what a part of the hope is this to one who has had to battle with death -- one who has had to part with loved one and to lay them in the grave. It is “absent from the body, present with the Lord.” Oh, death! I will be thy plagues, He says! He is coming to avenge the controversy, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. He is coming to make the display his own glory as the resurrection. The Lord coming, and the dust giving up the dead that belong to Christ everywhere. Ah, yes! it is that which He is putting forward here!

Would you like to see the resurrection accomplished -- every corner of this earth opening up to let out the dust that is sleeping in it? There is love supreme to the weakest and feeblest whose bodies are sleeping in the dust.

And then there is “the life”! There are you and I. If He appeared this very evening, He would so let the stream of life flow into us that there would be nothing but immortality left in us.

One often hears that text in Hebrews wrongly quoted. People say, “It is appointed unto all men once to die.” It is “men,” not “all men.” If the Lord were to come tonight we should not have to lay aside the body at all.

And then he shows what a comfort too it is. What is? The resurrection and the life? No! but the Lord who will be that!

Now, in the last chapter (1 Thess. 5), he enters a little into the state of the world when Christ will do this. They have no idea of the Lord’s coming. They are of the night; we are not of the night. His people are waiting for Him, but He shows us that the people of the world are not of that class.

And then He gives this as the desire of His own spirit and the desire of the Holy Ghost also.

The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ {1 Thess. 5:23}.

Here it is a very strong word, and a very simple word, and a very blessed word. The thoughts of the Spirit of God and the thoughts of the apostle were not that I should be brought to know the things of heaven, of God, and of Christ, and then mar my walk by intercourse with the things of Sodom and Gomorrah. But this was His thought --

May your spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; and faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it {1 Thess. 5:23, 24}.

He does not speak of taking the law of sin and death out of my members. He does not say that He sets me in a place where I shall have no more conflict. He does not speak of taking me out of the wilderness. But He does speak of this grace which shall preserve me blameless. He does talk of God finding us blameless in that day.

As to his own walk he was fully persuaded that Christ would be magnified in his body whether by life or by death. And when he thus said that he was positive that Christ would be magnified he did not get the idea of being blameworthy in his own particular walk. No! This word is to strengthen the hearts of the children of God. It is He who has called them, and He will do it.

Is God going to keep you blameless? Then mind, you are invincible! Mind, you are to overcome! Mind, you are not to flag! You will overcome because He will keep you blameless. I see God putting Himself forward saying, I am the Person who will keep you blameless unto that day.

GOD MANIFESTED AND GLORIFIED

John 17

The more we search into the words of Jesus, the more we see how entirely it is a new thing that He is setting up, on the ground of the redemption He had accomplished.

“I have glorified thee upon the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now O Father glorify thou me.” We see how, while the divine nature of the Lord Jesus shines out upon every page of this Gospel -- not only doctrinally, but in a thousand things when the eye is opened to see it -- yet He never goes out of His place as Man, the place He had taken in order to fulfil the Father’s will. It was the very thing Satan would have wanted Him to do: he tried in the wilderness to make Him leave it when he said: “Command that these stones he made bread” -- act from
your own will, don’t stay in the place of a servant. He would not listen for a moment and says: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” He had taken the place of a servant, and being in that place He never went out and never will go out of it; therefore He does not say, “Now I will glorify myself,” but, “glorify thou me”; yet it was “with the glory I had with thee before the world was” {John 17:5}. Thus, while we see His title to the divine place, at the same time He never goes out of this place of lowliness and humiliation. He could speak of “the Son of man which is in heaven,” and yet walk about the earth as one that served; He came down to death, but He “gave up” His spirit. We see God shining through the humanity of Jesus, and it is the joy and blessedness of the saint who has eyes to see (for He came in a shape in which I can see it), that He was down here a man amongst men, but it is God whom I see there!

We see God’s power manifested in creation, but we see nothing of His heart there: but when God is manifest in the flesh, we get all His perfect grace and goodness.

I find both sides, and if I lose either, I lose everything. If He is only a man -- well, I see blessed grace and beauty in Him, but I have only a Man who is so much better than myself that He could have nothing to say to me. If He is only God, a little bit of His glory terrifies me: but we have divine love serving, and the more we contemplate it the more blessed we shall be.

There is another thing. We cannot eat of the bread of God, the true Manna come down from heaven, unless we first eat His flesh and drink His blood -- unless we come by His death. We may be attracted by His grace, the Spirit showing it and drawing the heart, as with the poor woman who was a sinner: the grace that was in Him attracted her heart, and she goes into the house. She had seen divine goodness and love so completely above all the evil in love and holiness, that He could bend down to all the evil (not allowing it of course).

We get a revelation of God in the Lord Jesus. He comes down to us where we are in our sins, but that would be nothing if it were not He who comes down: for I should say, “I have seen blessedness and holiness, but I cannot stand before it.” We must remember that love never gave up holiness, but there was this blessed testimony to a love which never gave them up, and could bend down to sinners and come to them, “for God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” He never says, “Come unto me” until He had come in perfect grace and holiness to them; but the moment He had thus come, He presents a blessed Object to attract the heart: the blessed Son of God come down to the place of sinners and of sin, and there is nothing like that and never will be!
It is the one thing in which everything centers; all the purposes and counsels of God made good in that. “I have glorified thee upon the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” {John 17:4}. The Son of God is exalted in consequence of what He has done: He has finished the work and glorified God as He never could have been glorified except for sin. This may sound strange: but what was in the heart of God never could have been shown out in any other way, as it has been shown at the cross. He displayed His power in creation, but when I come to the case of sinners, all that God is in goodness, grace, and patience comes out as it could not have done with an innocent man.

All that is most blessed is unfolded when good and evil comes out, and that to a meeting-point. Satan’s and man’s hatred found its complete utterance, it was shown in a full complete way in the rejection of the blessed Son of God come in love. Every possible detail in which evil could be shown -- treachery, base abandonment where love had been, injustice in the judge who should have defended the innocent, the priests who should have pleaded for weakness, pleading against Him -- everything man ought not to be was shown out then, man’s enmity definitely proved when God was there in love, and in the blessed, perfect manifestation of what man ought to be in obedience.

All that God was in love met all that man was in sin, when Christ was made sin for us.

Creation could not glorify God. What has creation to do with sin except that it has been spoiled by it?

Sin having come in, God was dishonored in the creature of His delight, and the blessed Lord who had God’s glory perfectly at heart puts Himself forward, is made sin for us, and the righteousness of God goes out against sin.

God was there manifesting such unspeakable love as could not have been manifested except for sin, and at the same time fully establishing His righteousness and glory. The cross was the pivot on which turned all that went on in the counsels of God before, and that will be in the new heavens and new earth hereafter.

We cannot sit and contemplate the blessedness of the life of Christ unless we first come in by the death of Christ. Am I not a sinner? And do I sit down and say I am competent to estimate all that beauty and blessedness? What! with my stupid debased mind? No, if I come in truth I must come as a sinner, and then I find the grace that suits a sinner. I must meet Him in the grace that meets my need, or I must meet Him in His glory when He comes to take vengeance on them that know not God.

But when I have gone into the holiest of all through the rent veil, then
I can turn on God’s side of the cross, and look back at all that it was to Him, and all that His life was in leading up to it, and thus I can eat the manna after I have eaten the flesh and drunk the blood. It is impossible that a sinner can come with a divine mind, and meditate upon all His perfect divine life upon earth unless he first comes through the cross. There is no truth else. How can I talk about contemplating God till I know His mercy?! But when I go in through the veil and am at peace, perfectly reconciled to God, not a question about me left, not with the spirit of bondage, but with the Spirit of adoption, -- when I know that He has said, “I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” -- then being at perfect peace, sitting in the heavenlies in the counsels of divine love, I can turn back and look at what that offering was, by which I have come, and see its intrinsic value. It is of infinite value! He could say, “Therefore doth my Father love me.” All our thoughts are poverty itself, but there is that aspect to the soul, and I can sit down and adore and worship.

This is a far higher thing than eating the flesh and blood. When I come as a sinner to the cross, as I must, what is the ground on which I come? My sins.

A young Christian has got forgiveness and he is full of his happiness: he is thinking about himself. No one can come in any other way -- I would most strongly insist upon that; the first thing is to get washed. But we may see the character of what I mean in a very simple way -- that coming about his own sins he measures the grace and goodness and the comfort and blessing, by the fact that Christ has met all those sins, but when I have come and am in perfect rest, then I can sit down and eat Him, eat that Bread come down from heaven, what I shall eat for ever and ever! It is blessed to see in the sacrifices how this is always kept in view. In the peace offering the fat was burned, it was the Lord’s part. The priests (all Christians) eat the flesh of the sacrifice, and the people who were invited eat it; that is, they entered into the blessedness that it was to God.

We get in these sacrifices the difference brought out. In the sin-offering, something wrong had been done, and they had to bring their offering, but it was not a sweet savor. The blood was carried within the veil, but the beast was burned without the camp.

Note here, the sin and trespass offerings are directly in connection with our responsibility. He has borne the sins, which we have committed, but then there is another thing -- not only what we have done, but that our hearts should also feel where we were. Not only, “What hast thou done?” but as God said to Adam, “Where art thou?” Where was he? Away from God and getting away from Him if he could! This is the dreadful thing.

He had sinned, but it was far more to be away from God, without God
in the world: “there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

That is where man is.

We are not in Paradise and where are we? The first grand wickedness of Cain was that he did not know he was away from God. He was so utterly far from God that he never found it out! He had not the sense that he was totally away from God; he thought he could go and worship Him and offer the fruit of his toil as if nothing had happened, but he did not enter one atom into the thoughts of God.

It is a picture not of the open rejection of God, in an outward way, but of the utter dreadful insensibility of the human heart as to where we are. Abel recognized that he was outside, and that another must make atonement, he owned where he was: -- one coming as if there was nothing the matter, nothing gone wrong, the other recognizing that he must have an atonement or he could not come at all.

The condition of man was definitely brought out at the cross of Christ: “If one died for all then were all dead”: -- dead in trespasses and sins, and if so there must be a new creation. “The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.”

The first man is cast out of Paradise and he is insensible, but we get Christ, the second Man brought in to a far better Paradise, and we are brought in with Him, “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” The second Man is brought into it, and we are made heirs with Christ -- members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

When looking at the wondrous glory of the church of God, if we would have these blessed truths really and solidly in our hearts, we must get thoroughly hold of the foundations. If I can look up and say it is all mine, joint-heirs with Christ, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones -- that I am given to enter into the joy of my Lord, that when He shall appear I shall be like Him -- to enable us to hold the thought of these blessings, not only as scriptural statements, but in health in the soul, we must enter into the truth of Christ having gone in grace where we were, and then we see it could not have been otherwise.

When I see the blessed Son of God going down as man into death, then I see that glory is the natural consequence. I don’t get this till I see Him bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, and this makes it not a mere matter of head knowledge, but one which calls forth the adoration of our hearts.

The burnt-offering was not for sin, and yet it would not have been there except on account of sin: Christ offered Himself without spot to God, and by the grace of God He tasted death for every man.
I get Him made sin: He gives Himself for it, and then I find another dreadful thing; He drank the cup of wrath due to me. I find Him going down into the place where there was no patience! God has patience towards us: He is long-suffering towards us, but there, there was no long-suffering, no patience.

He was made sin: no hiding or covering up of sin there, He brought it right into the very presence of God who was dealing with sin, and His cry upon the cross was, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

In Psa. 22 He speaks of all the external troubles, but then He says, “Be not thou far from me” -- the very thing He was!

We find Him taking this place, bearing our sins -- but now look at the other side. “Now is the Son of man glorified.” It was in man that all the glory of God was made good, not merely the putting away of sin that we should not be judged, but the ground laid according to the glory of God, for man to be in the glory of God -- a totally new thing!

It does not follow in itself that I must be in the glory because I am forgiven: but here I find the blessed Son of God takes this place before God as man, tasting death, offering Himself without spot; the One who knew no sin presents Himself, the spotless Lamb of God, not only to bear my sins, but to put away sin, and thus to glorify God. How wonderful that in man this should be done!

Everything that God is was in question, and He does not say, “I have borne the sins of my disciples,” but “I have glorified thee.”

How could God have glory where sin was, where everything was corrupt, and Satan had got the upper hand? Well, He puts Himself there and takes all the sin and all its consequences, and then He glorifies God, and now all the counsels of God can be accomplished, and Christ takes the glory as the fruit of His work. “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now O Father, glorify thou me” {John 17:4-5}.

We see His perfect life through the testing of God in the meat-offering, and nothing but a sweet savor comes forth, but when I come to the burnt-offering, death is there. Christ comes in and glorifies God in the place of sin and death, and then we see death destroyed, the power of Satan broken, judgment gone, and, as the result of this, Man takes His place with God!

The first man, once innocent, brought in sin, was conquered by Satan, failed in every way, and dishonored God: but before judgment comes, the second Man brings the triumph of Satan to a close. He comes here, and in that very place was made sin, and all that was in God was perfectly glorified in that place of sin and death and judgment, and now all the counsels of God come out, which could not have been before.
God had been dealing with man on the ground of his responsibility. The
more we look, the more we see God setting man up in goodness and
righteousness, and man always failing. Adam ate the forbidden fruit: Noah,
brought out unto the new earth, got drunk: Israel worshiped the golden calf:
the priests offered strange fire on the first day of their office: Solomon loved
strange women: Nebuchadnezzar, when government was committed to him,
exalts himself and casts the three children into the fiery furnace: the first
thing which man does with that which God gives him is always to spoil it.
It was the same thing with the church also: “all seek their own, not the
things which are Jesus Christ’s.” That is what we find man is! But One Man
comes, and in the very place where all this was true and ripened out to its
full extent of evil, He is made sin who knew no sin: He stands before God
in that character: all is dealt with, and a foundation laid which nothing can
shake!

It is a precious thing to have some little sense of what Christ was doing.
Fathom it of course we never can. Not only are my sins put away, but Christ
had God’s glory perfectly at heart, and now that is fully established, it comes
out that what God had at heart before the foundation of the world, was to
have man with Himself in glory. His delight was with the sons of men, and
what does He do! He puts them in the same place as His own Son: they are
sons, and they have the glory with Him. He has finished the work and gone
into the glory, and that gives the Christian’s place He will come again in
glory, and we have complete association with Him -- “We rejoice in hope
of the glory of God.”

“If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and
shall straightway glorify him.” It is the next thing. He will not wait till the
kingdom is set up. The disciples saw His glory in the Mount, but they did
not see inside the cloud from whence came the Father’s voice.

The union of the church with Christ was never revealed until the
foundation was laid, and then God says, “I am able to do this in virtue of
what Christ has done, and I will have you perfectly with Myself.”

Christ was not merely the sin-offering, but a whole burnt-offering, in
order that God might be perfectly glorified; the Man who has done this is in
the glory, and that is the way I get in!

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me.” The
whole of this chapter speaks of the Father’s name: it is not the Almighty,
Jehovah, Most High, as He will be known in the millennium, “most high
over heaven and earth,” but it is the Father, putting us in the place of sons.

People very little realize this when they talk of “our Father,” and say,
“Thy kingdom come.” What is the Father’s kingdom? People don’t notice
words: it is astonishing how our wretched hearts glide over scripture as if it
were ice!

He is Almighty, but that name does not save; He is Jehovah, but that name does not save; but if the Father sent the Son, it is that I might live through Him; that He might make propitiation for sin that the world through Him might be saved: that is salvation, that is eternal life, and the Holy Ghost is given in virtue of the precious blood of Christ, giving us association with Himself, making us sons as Christ is a Son: we are “heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.”

He says, “I have manifested thy name.” We find He had been doing this throughout this gospel -- “The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him”; but they as yet, dull and ignorant, not having the Holy Ghost, could not recognize it: they had not the spirit of adoption whereby they could recognize it.

See John 16:29, 30. He had been telling them that the Father had sent Him, but they do not understand a word of it, and only say, “by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.” And we often see the same thing now in those who have not the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father -- the name of Father is not known.

I do desire that while our hearts get peace through seeing Him made sin for us, we might also see what He was for God in the place of sin.

We are not only forgiven and cleansed, but we stand in the whole value of that work of which Christ could say “Therefore doth my Father love me.” The act itself so infinitely glorified God that He could give it as a motive for the Father’s love to Him.

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name them that thou hast given me.” He puts them in the place of sons, and looks to the Father to keep them according to that Name.

The world had no part in that: they must have life to be sons, and must be born of God.

He puts us into the present consciousness of the place into which His sacrifice has brought us, that is His own place in all its blessedness. The veil rent, the heavens opened to us, sealed and anointed by the Father, owned by Him as His sons. When He was here as Man, at His baptism the heavens were opened, He was sealed and anointed, and the Father owned Him as His Son (and this is the first time that the Trinity was fully revealed), and then He goes to be tempted. He takes the blessedness of the place with God, and stood in that place as a man, and then goes into the conflict like us.

Look at Phil. 2:14, 16. Take this sentence, and word by word it is a statement of what Christ was. We are in a wicked generation -- exactly what Christ was; sons -- what He was; light in the world -- He was the Light of
the world; holding forth the word of life -- He was the Word; take it word by word, and we are in it all! He puts us into His place before the Father, and gives us His place of testimony before the world.

“That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” How does He bring that about? You get this Man upon earth, the Son of man—the Father talking with Him in all the delight He had in Him, and He says, “Whatsoever I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Are our hearts taking this place? Where was His spring of delight and joy and blessing? His Father.

And have you anything of the joy of Christ fulfilled in your hearts?

You may tell me your thoughts are weak and poor. I am sure they are; our hearts answer miserably to all this love -- but that is where He has brought me, placed me; that is what is in His heart if I cannot trust my own! But while we see all the glory before us -- going to be in the glory of God -- our souls should go and look about the foundation it is all built upon; and if you have forgiveness, the Lord give you to see what you are as belonging to the Father’s world.

If we see how completely He has glorified God, so that glory for Himself, and for us too with Him, is the natural and necessary result; it must surely humble us, but it brings in adoration. I can’t look at the Lord Jesus going down in grace into such a place, without adoring, forgetting self in the presence of such wondrous grace. And it keeps the heart subdued.

The Lord give us to have Him before our hearts and eyes, that we may be occupied with Him and satisfied with Him, and that in some measure we may walk like Him through the words which He has given us.

A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOR

Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no God else besides me; a just God and a Savior; there is none besides me (Isa. 45:21).

There is in all persons a certain knowledge of good and evil; such and such things they say are good, and such and such things are evil. But perhaps no two persons fix exactly the same standard either of good or evil. What people do is to fix such a standard of good as they can come up to themselves, and such a standard of evil as shall just exclude themselves, and include others. For instance, the drunkard thinks there is no great harm in drinking, but would consider it a great sin to steal. The covetous man, who is every day perhaps practicing some cheating or deception “in the way of trade,” satisfies himself by thinking “it is necessary and customary to do so
in business, and at all events I do not get drunk or curse and swear as others do.” The profligate person prides himself upon being generous and kind-hearted to others, or, as he says, “he does nobody any harm but himself.” The upright moral man, and the domestic amiable man, satisfies himself with doing what he calls his duty, and looks round and pities the open sinners that he sees; but he never considers how many an evil thought, how many a sinful desire, he may have cherished, unknown to others, in his bosom: and that God judges the heart, though man looks only at the outward conduct. Thus each congratulates himself upon his not having done some evil, and compares himself with some one else who has committed the sin, which he thinks he has managed to avoid.

Now all this proves that men do not judge themselves by one regular fixed standard of right and wrong, but just take that which suits themselves and condemns others. But there is a standard, with which all will be compared, and according to which all will be judged, a standard of righteousness, all who fall short of which will be eternally condemned; and that is no less than the righteousness of God. When a person begins to find that it is not by comparing himself with others that he is to judge, but by comparing himself with God, when his conscience begins to be awakened to think of sin as before God, then indeed he finds himself guilty and ruined; he will not then attempt to justify himself by trying to find out some one that is worse than himself, but he will be anxious to know whether it is possible that God, before whom he knows himself condemned, can pardon or forgive him.

Now the scribes and Pharisees, mentioned in the eighth chapter of John, were very moral and religious people, and were greatly shocked when they found this wretched woman taken in such open sin, and very indignant against her. Justice and the law of Moses, thought they, demand that she should be made an example of -- it is not fit that such a sinner should live. It comforts and quiet the depraved heart of man, if he can only find a person worse than himself: he thinks the greater sin of another excuses himself; and whilst accusing and vehemently blaming another but forgets his own evil. He thus rejoices in iniquity.

But this is not all; for not only do men thus glory and exult in the fall and ruin of another, but they cannot bear to see, or think of, God exhibiting grace. Grace -- which means the full and free forgiveness of every sin, of every evil, without God demanding or expecting any thing from the one so forgiven -- is a principle so opposed to all man’s thoughts and ways, so far above man, that he dislikes it; his own heart often secretly calls it injustice. He does not himself deal in this way, and does not like to think of God doing so. It is very humbling to be obliged to own that we are dependent upon grace entirely for salvation; and that nothing we have done, and nothing we
can in future do, has made us, or will make us, fit subjects even for grace; but that our misery and sin and ruin are the only claim we have upon grace. The scribes and Pharisees could not understand this; and not liking to own that they were themselves sinners, they wished to perplex Jesus; and if He acquitted the woman, then say He was unjust; or if He condemned her, then say He was not merciful. “Such should be stoned,” say they; “but what sayest thou?”

True the sentence was just, the proof of the woman’s guilt was undoubted, and the law was clear; but who was to execute the law? Man may easily condemn, but who has a right to execute? “He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her.” Who could say “Without sin?” and if not one of them could say, “I am without sin”; there was not one of them but was under the same sentence as the woman -- that is, death, for “the wages of sin is death.” Here, then, was a strange situation, -- the accused and her accusers alike involved in the same ruin -- criminals all. Not now “such should be stoned,” but all should be stoned. From the eldest to the last, all convicted sinners.

And have you thought of that? that you and all the world are guilty before God? It is not what your amount of sin, as respects others, is; but can you say you are “without sin” before God? If not, death, then, is your sentence. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” And in this sad condition what have you done? Perhaps the same as the scribes and Pharisees did, when they were convicted by their own conscience -- left the presence of the only One who can pronounce the forgiveness. Adam in the garden had done the same before; he went and hid himself from God when he knew himself guilty; he turned away from his only friend just when he most needed His help. And so it is still. Man is afraid of the only One who is ready to pardon. You may be able to persuade yourself that you are not so bad; you may find others manifestly worse; but are you a sinner at all? What is God’s thought concerning you? Does not even your own conscience say, “I am not quite without sin.” Well, then, death is the sentence. God cannot lie, it is His sentence. And if we only heard that God was just, there could be no hope. But He is “a just God and a Savior.” He has condemned, and He has also the power to execute; the only question that remains is, Can He pardon?

“And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.” She was standing before One who could say, “Without sin,” and who therefore could cast the stone. She was alone with One whom she owned as Lord; and what would be His sentence? The law had already condemned her; would He execute it? What a moment of intense anxiety must it have been for her! How all surrounding objects must have been as nothing in her fright! She was alone with One who had the power of life and death. Everything rested on His word. What would He say? Man had not dared to cast the stone; now
what would God do? “Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.”

Such is still the gracious message to the ruined sinner, pronounced by the very Judge Himself. But it is only to the ruined sinner, standing consciously convicted before the Judge, that it is spoken. The righteous Pharisees heard it not. They were indeed convicted; but they liked not to confess their sin, and they sought to get rid of their convictions, to bury them in some good works of their own; and they would not put themselves in the same condemnation with the wretched woman, who got this blessed word of peace. And so it is still. If you desire to have God’s full and free pardon, it must be your place to stand first as the guilty sinner. To be alone with Jesus, consciously self-condemned. To have no one else to trust to, no one else to compare yourself with. Not to make resolutions of amendment, not to try to get better first, before you come to Him; but to be brought to Him by your very sins, to stand in the very place of condemnation, and before the very Person who has the power to condemn. To make your very guilt the reason of being alone with Him.

And the Lord gave her no conditional pardon. He did not say, “Neither will I condemn you, if you will not sin any more.” No, He gives her full and complete forgiveness first, and that He knew would enable her to avoid the sin in future. If you desire to have power over your sins, you must first know them all pardoned by God through Christ. But if you try to master your evil before you know the forgiveness of God, you will obtain neither the one nor the other. Through faith in Jesus you must be justified freely from all things, before you will ever be better as before God. Now, some who really believe on Jesus do not clearly see this, and they are seeking to have peace by holiness of life, or the fruits of the Spirit, instead of first acknowledging themselves as ruined sinners fully and freely pardoned, and then letting their life and conduct be guided by the knowledge of that pardon, and the love to God which the knowledge of His mercy must necessarily create. Begin with, “Neither do I condemn thee.” Let your peace come from faith in the blood of His cross, by which He has made peace. God’s knowledge and estimate of your sin is much deeper than your own, but He has provided the blood of His Son. He says that blood cleanses from all sin. The more I see and know my own sin, the more I shall value that precious blood by which it is put away; and the more anxious shall I be not to grieve the heart of Him who, in His own love, has provided such a wonderful sacrifice on account of my sins. Hence, the deeper I know my own guilt, the more secure will be my peace; for the greater will be my value for the blood, through which peace has been made.

May you know the peace and joy of having all your sins forgiven through faith in the blood of Jesus, and the consequent victory over the power of those very sins by which you have been led captive.
HOW THE LOST SHEEP WAS FOUND

After upwards of an hour’s toilsome walking (for the roads which in some places led over steep hills were in others scarcely passable on account of the heavy marshes), on entering the little cottage I looked round me and at first found no sign of any inhabitant, except an old woman who sat crouching over the embers of a peat fire. She rose as I entered, and with the natural courtesy of the Irish poor offered me the low chair or rather stool on which she had been seated.

I thanked her, and passing on to the object of my visit discovered in one corner of the hut a heap of straw on which lay the poor sufferer. Some scanty covering, probably his own wearing apparel, had been thrown over him, but as to bed or bed clothes there was none discernible in this humble dwelling.

I approached, and saw a young lad about seventeen or eighteen years of age evidently in a state of extreme suffering and exhaustion, and it was to be feared in the last stage of consumption. His eyes were closed, but he opened them on my approach and stared at me with a kind of wild wonder, like a frightened animal.

I told him as quietly as possible who I was, and for what purpose I had come, and put a few of the simplest questions to him respecting his hope of salvation. He answered nothing, he appeared totally unconscious of my meaning.

On pressing him further, and speaking to him kindly and affectionately, he looked up, and I ascertained from the few words he uttered that he had heard something of a God and future judgment, but he had never been taught to read. The Holy Scriptures were a sealed book to him, and he was consequently altogether ignorant of the way of salvation as revealed to us in the gospel. His mind on this subject was truly an utter blank.

I was struck with dismay and almost with despair. Here was a fellow creature whose immortal soul, apparently on the verge of eternity, must be saved or lost for ever; and he lay before me now, the hand of death close upon him; not a moment was to be lost and what was I to do? What way was I to take to begin to teach him, as it were at the eleventh hour, the first rudiments of Christianity?

I had scarcely ever before felt such a sinking within me. I could do nothing, that I knew full well, but on the other hand God could do all; I therefore raised up my heart and besought my heavenly Father for Christ’s sake to direct me in this most difficult and trying position, and to open to me

2. Mr Darby’s account of his visit to see a poor boy who was dying in a lonely district in Ireland.
by His Spirit of wisdom a way to set forth the glad tidings of salvation so as to be understood by this poor benighted wanderer.

I was silent for a few moments whilst engaged in inward prayer and gazing with deep anxiety on the melancholy object before me. It struck me that I ought to try to discover how far his intelligence in other things extended, and whether there might not be reasonable hope of his understanding me when I should commence to open to him (as I was bound to do) the gospel message of salvation. I looked down upon him with an eye of pity, which I most sincerely felt, and I thought he observed that compassionate look, for he softened towards me as I said: “My poor boy, you are very ill, I fear you suffer a great deal!”

“Yes, I have a bad cold; the cough takes away my breath and hurts me greatly.”

“Have you had this cough long?” I asked.

“Oh, yes, a long time; near a year now.”

“And how did you catch it? A Kerry boy, I should have thought, would have been reared hardily and accustomed to this sharp air!”

“Oh,” he answered, “and so I was until that terrible night -- it was about this time last year when one of the sheep went astray. My father keeps a few sheep upon the mountains and this is the way we live. When he reckoned them that night there was one wanting, and he sent me to look for it.”

“No doubt,” I replied, “you felt the change from the warmth of the peat fire in this close little hut, to the cold mountain blast.”

“Oh! that I did; there was snow upon the ground, and the wind pierced me through; but I did not mind it much, as I was so anxious to find father’s sheep.”

“And did you find it?” I asked, with increased interest.

“Oh, yes, I had a long, weary way to go, but I never stopped until I found it.”

“And how did you get it home? You had trouble enough with that too, I daresay. Was it willing to follow back?”

“Well, I did not like to trust it, and besides, it was dead beat and tired, so I laid it on my shoulders and carried it home that way.”

“And were they not all at home rejoiced to see you when you returned with the sheep?”

“Sure enough, and that they were,” he replied. “Father and mother, and the people round that heard of our loss, all came in the next morning to ask about the sheep, for the neighbors in these matters are mighty kind to each other. Sorry they were, too, to hear that I was kept out the whole dark night; it was morning before I got home, and the end of it was I caught this cold.
Mother says I will never be better now, God knows best; anyways, I did my best to save the sheep."

Wonderful! I thought, here is the whole gospel history. The sheep is lost, the father sends his son to seek for and recover it. The son goes willingly, suffers all without complaining, and in the end sacrifices his life to find the sheep, and when recovered he carries it home on his shoulders to the flock, and rejoices with his friends and neighbors over the sheep which was lost, but is found again. My prayer was answered, my way was made plain, and by the grace of God I availed myself of this happy opening.

I explained to this poor dying boy the plan of salvation, making use of his own simple and affecting story. I read to him the few verses in Luke 15, where the care of the shepherd for the strayed sheep is so beautifully expressed, and he at once perceived the likeness, and followed me with deep interest while I explained to him the full meaning of the parable.

The Lord mercifully opened not only his understanding, but his heart also, to receive the things spoken. He himself was the lost sheep, Jesus Christ the good Shepherd, who was sent by the Father to seek for him, and who left all the joys of that Father’s heavenly glory to come down to earth and search for him and other lost ones like himself; and as the poor boy had borne without murmuring the freezing snowstorm and the piercing wind, so has the blessed Savior endured the fierce contradiction of sinners against Himself, and the bitter scorn and insults heaped upon Him, without opening His mouth to utter one word of complaint, and at last laid down His precious life, that we might be rescued from destruction and brought safe to our everlasting home. Neither will He trust His beloved ones, when rescued, to tread the perilous path alone, but bears them on His shoulders rejoicing to the heavenly fold.

My poor sick lad seemed to drink it all in. He received it all; he understood it all. I never saw a clearer proof of the power of the divine Spirit to apply the word of God.

He survived our first meeting but a few days. I had no time to read or expound to him any other portion of the Scripture. At times we could hear nothing but a stifling, rending cough; at times he slumbered heavily for a little, but whenever he was able to think and listen, these verses in Luke 15 satisfied and cheered him. He accepted Christ as his Savior; he earnestly prayed to be carried home like the lost sheep in the heavenly Shepherd’s arms. He died humbly, peacefully, almost exulting, with the name of Jesus, my Savior and my Shepherd, the last upon his lips.

J. N. Darby

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10 14).

And he (Jesus) spake this parable unto them, saying,

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them,
doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?
And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.
And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.
I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15:3-7).

{THE ETERNAL SONSHIP}

1 JOHN 5:7

{In 1950 I met brother Henry Sibthorpe of Redruth, Cornwall while he was in Woodbridge, N.J. He told me that his family had a Bible that had been Mr. Darby’s and there was a hand written article in it “I hold it vital to hold the Sonship before the worlds, it is the truth.” This is now published in pamphlet form. The ____ heard about this Bible and sent some representatives to prove that it was not Mr. Darby’s writing (as though someone else would write in his Bible!). However, these doubters were turned back by a letter JND had written to CHM and which letter the Sibthorpes also had. The handwriting was identical.

This paper by JND is photo-offset from the C.A. Hammond edition, to which the Addendum has been added.

A. Roach
Dec. 28, 1979.}

Though I have ever held this verse, to say the least, to be very doubtful from the course of the meaning, it is not to discuss this at present I write, but another point of importance -- the use of the term Son.

There are those who, objecting to the term Son as applied to the divinity of our Lord, stand on the verge, if not slipping into, confusion of the Persons.

It is the name of the Person, not the nature; and the Person is personally known to us, fully in the revelation of God in Jesus.

But while no man knowing the Son but the Father, the manifestation of God in the Son -- in Jesus -- makes the language of man scarce preservable from error, if we wish to affirm things separately, of the natures when affirmed about the Son, yet is that which is revealed very distinct, but it is spoken about the Person into which the man was brought, and therefore is
rightly spoken of Jesus, and the connecting point of faith, not to know there is a Son, but that Jesus is the Son of God.

Nevertheless the works of God as such are directly attributed to the Son before the incarnation of, or rather in, Jesus, and therefore we are justified (much more than justified) in speaking of the Son as we do in the Trinity.

Thus Heb. 1 has “spoken to us by the Son, . . . by Whom also He made the worlds.” We are therefore justified in speaking of the Son as before the worlds.

Again in Col. 1 where His whole personal glory is brought out -- “In Whom we have redemption” (His dear Son) “the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created which are in heaven and upon earth . . . all things were created by Him” (i.e., the Son) “and for Him; and He is before all things,” (the present state) “and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body” (His official glory), “the church, . . . the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased” -- not the Father, this much misleads, but -- “the Godhead that in Him” (the Son) “should all fulness dwell” (to wit, in Jesus) -- for in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

The Father dwelt in Him, and the Holy Ghost was upon, in all its fulness of indwelling presence.

Could there, I need scarce say, be separation? But He was not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, but the Son.

Though He did His works by the Spirit, and the Father that dwelt in Him did the works, all fulness dwelt in Him.

He was the Son, and by Him all things reconciled, His actual efficient work.

In a word, God was in Christ, but there again we have the warrant for the speaking the name of His Person as revealed to us of the Son as before the worlds, “In Whom . . .”

Again that our Lord was addressed as the Son in His Godhead is further manifest as it is said and written, “. . . unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.”

They therefore seem to err who do not give the title of Son to our Lord as connected with His Godhead, if they say this name is known to us only through His manifestation in the flesh.

I believe so surely, both of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost alike unknown to us before we knew them by the indwelling and revelation of Jesus, God manifest (in the flesh), illustrating His character and opening out
the fulness more revealingly.

I feel it would be opening a gap for evil to acquiesce any further in this, for the Scripture does not acquiesce in it, though as stated below it is not only sound but blessed and glorious truth, but it is better to acquiesce in nothing but Scripture, for one does not know where it would carry one.

The Word was personally known to us as the Son revealing the Father by the Spirit, and we beheld that the glory of the Word was the glory even in Jesus of the only begotten with a Father, His nature, inheritance and dignity the same, though while humbled He gave the glory all to Him in all that is revealed in this.

I fear using the fountain of blessing and glory in men’s cavils, distortion, and pride.

But I say we are scripturally justified, and bound to silence these cavils, in speaking of the Son as acting in His creative capacity in the Godhead before the worlds, although we know that Person, or any Person, by His incarnation in which centered the unfolding of the mystery.

But we are bound to hold to this most important and essential (strictly speaking essential) truth as connected with the revelation of anything and subjection to any truth at all, for all blessing flows from believing and receiving from the Father, by the Son and through the Holy Ghost -- thus the revealed, known and worshiped source of all blessing, the sum of the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.

Nor is it less important that we should understand Son to be the name of the Person, not of the nature, for as we see that by Him He made the worlds, God over all blessed for evermore, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and for ever,” competent to sit in the glory of His Father’s throne, and sitting there in the glory which He had with Him before the world was.

So also we know that “God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,” than which indeed as magnifying the law nothing can be more wonderful; and “then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that did put all things under Him.”

If we ask how can this be, we have the evidence of that in the fact of His having been so before; and thus the Lord secures and settles our faith, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit bringing us into blessing by giving us the facts of faith realized when they might be difficult of intelligence as to their internal possibility from our narrow nature and might be said to be contrary to natural possibility.

So it is written, “the Father sent the Son to be the Savior.”

If we say He were not the Son till the incarnation, then do I utterly lose
the link of connection of His being sent from above, for then were it only after He was a Man in the world that He was sent about as a Man, but no, He was sent into the world -- not to multiply passages, which are innumerable, for our connection with God hangs upon it.

If therefore the name Word be applied to our Lord previously so as to deny the relationship of Son instead of, as I have said, further illustrating what He is, Whom none knoweth but the Father, then I say that is using the testimony of “the brightness of His glory” to destroy a distinct glory and the first glory and blessing of Christianity, i.e. in relation to us.

Moreover the full glory of our Lord’s headship hangs upon the recognition of this truth, for as Firstborn of every creature it is by Him all things were created. So that the headship of creation in the Son rests upon this “for by Him . . .”

Hence we strike at the sphere of our Lord’s glory if we strike at the creative Sonship.

It is most important therefore as regards our relationship to God -- that first link in the chain that brings us to God, gives us fellowship with the Father, and is the spring therefore of all this very point:

The Father sent the Son . . . it is what each were, the Sender and the Sent. I know nothing previous to this.

It is the Son that is the “brightness,” only I did not know this nor Him till the incarnation, nor did a Gentile till the resurrection, nor indeed any till it pleased God to reveal it in Him, though there are full glimpses of it and statements in the Old Testament.

Nor did I know the Father a bit more, nor the Holy Spirit in His indwelling, though holy men spoke by Him.

No more than I know the Son till taught of Him (though He made the worlds), nor the Father till the Son reveal Him.

But the office of Christianity is to reveal the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to make known this relationship in the Godhead (in our enjoyment of the results) into which creature is brought in blessing in the intelligent, Spirit-taught and quickened church the personal fulness of Him Who being such filleth all in all because the fulness dwelt in Him.

Most important as regards His glory because the creative power is thus associated with redemptive power -- is associated with, as the basis of the headship glory.

That 30th of Prov. vv. 1-6 is a most important passage, humbling us to profit, and yet opening to faith what man cannot enter into -- a very important passage.
I have made this memorandum not to prove (it is known by communion in my own soul, i.e., to myself, communion with the Father by Him), but to show its importance because of the destructiveness of breaking the blessed link. The Word is our most important revelation of what He the Lord is -- most important.

The Son is another most important revelation of what He, Jesus, is—the revelation, the name, the truth of His relationship in person in God, or in the Godhead.

If we do not see Him in this with the Father, we lose all the value of it in Him as incarnate.

It is another revelation about Him . . .

No one can give me the partakings of the divine nature. No one can call me into this relationship in integral blessing unless he be in it vitally, unless he be in it in His union with the Father.

Therefore the holy thing born of the virgin is called the Son of God, and in Him the fulness is manifested ever of God, and yet we are adopted into it further.

Officially the Word, might I not say, constitutes the apostleship, the Son the priesthood of Christ, both exercised as a Man, but in both competent for it from their respective characters. In a word, He is the Son.

As to any question arising from the term “begotten,” it is only weakness itself, for if we argue from the Word, He was a Son before He was begotten, for the resurrection was the day He was begotten, yet was He not a Son while walking on the earth?

When He made the worlds He was a Son. I know Him as a Son in all that He is, and His acts, through some of them here. “Though He were a Son” -- I see it as clearly as God’s own truth, and it is in this I have to be receptive of truth by God in grace, not judging by my poor incapable intellect.

The love of the truth is a great matter in subjection of spirit, not to lay down the imaginations of man, but to be thankful for the communion of God, and not to depart, or bear departure from the Scriptures.

When we have to speak, God’s Spirit will teach us what to say. As for me, I feel I may err in every word. I resist utterly when the truth of God is set aside, yea I trust ever will, by His grace.

As for me myself, I am but as the beasts that perish incapable of these things to know them. As revealed they are all my blessing, for God is revealed (reveals Himself) in them to me. So that one is taught of God’s Spirit. I could not depart from them. I hold them fast with life. They are between me and my God in thought. I defend them and I do not discuss them
with men as questions. I speak of matters of faith which have been made known by faith to me, as God gives me utterance, and I recur to His word to guard as it teaches them where His Spirit is. I hold it vital to hold the Sonship before the worlds. It is the truth. J.N.D.

ADDENDUM

Note though what is called “The eternal Sonship” be a vital truth, or we lose the Father sending the Son, and the Son creating, and we have no Father if we have no Son, so that it lies at the basis of all truth, yet in the historical presentation of Christianity the Son is always presented as down here in servant and manhood estate, as all through John, though in heaven and One with the Father. “This” -- this Person -- “is my beloved Son” -- He who was as Man there, yet there. In Matt. 3 the whole Trinity is revealed, and we may say for the first time fully. Wonderful grace it is! Hence “No! not the Son,” has no difficulty (Mark 13:32). (J. N. Darby, “The Son of Man,” in Notes and Comments, vol. 2, p.423, (James Carter; London, 1922; p. 300, Stow Hill ed.)
MAN’S HEART AND CHRIST’S HEART


God has not left us in darkness as to our state, nor as to His ways in grace toward us in that state. The blessed truth of His coming in love to this world before He comes in judgment, is a testimony to our state, but also to the love of God toward us in that state; and if we neglect this testimony, we have to come before Him in judgment. “Every knee shall bow,” but there is all the difference between bowing to Him as a Savior, and as a Judge. If we come to Him in grace as a Savior, we find our sins dealt with in another way than judgment. If my creditor comes to claim a debt, and I have nothing to pay, it is all over with me, but if he comes to pay it, I am clear. And we must have to do with God in one way or another. If, as having our sins dealt with on the cross, that is putting them away; if in judgment, that is imputing them to us.

The gospel is the testimony of what God has done before the day of judgment, that man might not have to answer for his sins.

God cannot approve of iniquity; that is impossible. But it is very different to insist upon the payment of a debt, and to come and pay it. The gospel is the testimony of what Christ did as Savior before He comes as Judge, and this testimony is for us to believe.

We get the work of the Spirit of God, which gives us a sense of our sins, the work done outside us, by which they are put away, and the testimony of the Holy Ghost to give us the knowledge of that work, for if unknown, I should be as uncomfortable as I was before.

We see in this scene what the human heart is when fully brought out (for it does not always show itself). We see, too, a work in a man, and a work for a man, and then the consciousness of it wrought in his soul. God makes us know forgiveness; He has not given His Son that we should be ignorant of it. I cannot talk of walking with God, if I do not know whether He is going to condemn me or not; you never heard of a criminal walking with his judge!

In looking at this scene, you will see how all were against the Lord Jesus. And why? He had healed their sick, cast out devils, raised the dead, so that Pilate could say, “Why, what evil hath He done?” I cannot call myself a Christian without saying that the world has crucified the Son of God. And the terrible thing is, all His works showed who was there. God had said, I will send My beloved Son; it may be they will reverence Him when they see Him. But this revelation of what God was, only brought out the enmity, and now God has to say to the world, What have you done with
My Son? What has He done to you? Nothing but good.

Then why spit in His face, and crucify Him? If anyone had done so yesterday to my mother, could I go and be “hail fellow, well met” with him today? Man has done this, and when the light comes in, he confesses he had done it, and that he cannot answer one charge in a thousand.

The world is under judgment; we all know the world will come to an end; we all know it, and yet we go on with it!

The law comes to tell man what he ought to be: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart”; “Thou shalt not covet.” But I know I have not loved God, and I have lusted. I have broken the law in every particular. If I offend in one point, I am guilty of all. It is very simple; if I tell my child not to do three things, he does not care one bit to do two of them; but he does the third, which he does care about. A man must be a monster of iniquity to have committed all the sins in the world!

If you apply the law, “There is none righteous, no, not one.” God does not say this in the day of judgment, but in the day of grace He warns us. He tells us beforehand, in mercy, what His judgment as to us is; if He were sitting on the great white throne, could it be any plainer than we get it in Rom. 3? Can a man stand up after that, and say, I am righteous? Is that the way to meet God? Is He a liar?

People talk about mercy, which means they hope God will think as little about their sins as they do. A man has committed, say, ten sins — he hopes to go to heaven. If he has committed eleven, he thinks that is not too much; if a hundred, he hopes still -- he has no thought of holiness. One sin shuts out from God, but the door is not shut to any, if they own their sins. If I am set to wash this table, it is not a question whether there are five spots or fifty, but can I wash it well?

Man only mocks the blessed Son of God; every detail of this scene gives us a picture of what man’s heart is. Man is never ashamed of a false religion. A Mohammedan {Muslim} will say his prayers in the market, and if you are making a bargain with him, you may wait till he has done. A Hindu is not ashamed of the worship of his gods, but a Christian is ashamed of Christ. And so the Lord says, “Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8).

The chief priests, who were set to intercede for weakness, cry out for His blood. Pilate, who was to judge the guilty and protect the innocent, washes his hands of the innocent. His own disciples flee from Him.

If two men are hung together, when did you ever hear of one insulting the other, unless he had brought him into the trouble? But when it comes to Christ, you get it. The human heart is enmity against God. The moment they
get the opportunity, they all trample upon Him. Thank God, He was there in grace, but it shows what our hearts are. We all know some are criminal and vicious, and some are not. But the prodigal son was as much a sinner when he crossed his father’s threshold, as when he was eating the husks, and that is where we all are.

Do you not like doing your own will? Do you not see it in your children? You find it out in them. And this is what sin is. The law condemns it, but it condemns me, too. Do not fancy that it only condemns the sins; it says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them” (Gal. 3:10).

The law only shows what we ought to be, but does not tell us what we are. If I apply a right rule to a person who has cheated me, what does it do? Condemn him. The law does not give life, gives no help, but only a measure of what a child of Adam ought to be. God tells us what we are, and He tells us before the day of judgment comes, that we may lay it to heart and find the remedy. When Christ came, He put His sanction upon all that, for it was His own law, but He came in quite the opposite way. The law claimed the debt; Christ paid it, and that is grace! “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (2 Cor. 5:19). God came into the world because we were sinners; He did not stay in heaven and say, You behave well, and it will be well, but He came down because we were all wrong.

Who put it into God’s heart to give His Son? Did you? Did the world? Why, it was in God’s own heart to do it. He so loved the world, that He gave His Son. I can trust God’s heart more than I can trust my own; there is no inconsistency in His heart; He is not double-minded, and I know His thoughts concerning me.

But more than that -- Christ died for us. Why should I go to pull a person out of a ditch, if he is not in it? Why did He taste death? Because we were under death. Why take the cup of wrath? Because we were under judgment. What was all that sorrow about? My sin. Oh! I say, what unutterable love! and what a sinner I must be! It gives honesty of heart, not excusing ourselves, like Adam -- hiding our sins if we can, and if not, excusing them.

If a man comes to pay my debts, I take care to bring up every farthing I owe. The effect of God’s love is to give honesty of heart. I believe His love; I am glad to tell Him everything, or rather to know that He knows, and that I need not tell Him. He has come to clear us completely, and this produces honesty instead of concealment.

God is light and love, and He must be both wherever He comes. He comes in light and shows me where I am, and He comes in love to forgive.
Look at that poor woman who was a sinner. There was one heart in the world she could trust, and that was God’s heart. Did she hide her sins? No; she came weeping and confounded about them, but she trusted Him -- she trusted the love that brought the light to her. Take Peter in the ship. He goes up to Christ, and says, Depart from me! What did he go to Him for, then? He was drawn to Him by the sense of what He was, and when there, felt he was not fit to be there. The great man said, This Man is not a prophet. He was so dark, he had got God in his house, and could not find it out; the poor woman did.

Let us look at the poor thief in Luke 23. There was the work in him, and the work for him. What does he say? The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; it is the sense of what God is. He says, “Dost thou not fear God?” Then he confesses his sins; he owns he is suffering justly. The light had got into his soul.

We have been saying the world is wicked; so it is, but when the light comes, I say, I am wicked. An honest conscience owns its sins — “we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds.” Then, “This man hath done nothing amiss.” How did he know that? He had never been with Christ. He was taught of God; he could guarantee that Christ never did a wrong thing. Do your hearts pass their word for it that He never could? Has He been sufficiently revealed to your hearts for this?

Then he says, “Lord!” Here is a strange thing. The chief priests and heads of the people were all mocking Him -- His disciples had run away. What sign of Lordship was there? To a malefactor, apparently like himself, he says, “Lord.” The only comforter the Lord had upon the cross was this poor thief.

“Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” He was dying the death of the criminal. The sign that God had come into the world was a babe lying in a manger, and He ended on a cross, and all the way through had not where to lay His head. What faith in this poor thief! No matter if all the world was against Him, He was a King all the same, and the thief says, You will come in Your kingdom.

What was he thinking of? He was in an agony of pain on the cross, but he does not say, “Save Thyself and us.” He owned Jesus was the Lord, but does not ask Him to spare him one bit of pain -- only, “Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”

How could he have such confidence in Him? Why, he was a thief. But what the light always does is to give confidence. What! remember a thief who had just owned he was suffering justly? Can you trust Him like that, honestly confessing your sins, but trusting in God’s heart when you own them? Do you trust Christ’s heart? If you do not, you do not know Him, for
He is trustworthy.

God gives us striking examples that they may strike us. All are not thieves, but it is really the same thing for us all. Have your hearts had Christ so revealed to them that, honest in your conscience before God, you trust God, *when you know what you are?* See that poor woman trusting Christ with all her sins before her; that is not always so easy, for if our sins are before us, we reason, and wonder how God will receive us. Are you wondering how God will receive you? Then you have not met Him yet, or you would know how. When the prodigal came to his father, he did not say, Make me as one of thy hired servants. And why not? Because his father was on his neck, kissing, treating him as a son.

The thief owns his sins, but trusts Him. And then we get the Lord’s answer: “Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” Now is the Son of man glorified, for today shalt thou be with Me.

The poor thief was bearing the punishment of his sins from man, but who was bearing it from God? The One who hung beside him, “Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). When I have confidence in Christ, I say, I must go to God, and I find Christ on the way, and what is He doing there? Judging me? No; bearing all my sins. There is that blessed One whom I have been despising all my days, and I see He has taken my sins and borne my burden -- he has taken them all, and I shall not bear them. Trust Him, no matter how bad you are. If you cannot trust any man, trust Him.

If He has won my heart to this confidence, I find that He who is going to be Judge has died for my sins, and how can He impute them to me? Supposing, of course, that I have owned and confessed my sins, and am coming to Him about them, I find the wonderful truth that Christ has been bearing them, and that God has dealt with them, and laid them upon Christ. I come beforehand to the day of judgment, and I see in the Judge the Man who bore all my sins. How, then, can I fear Him? I find that God, because of my sins, has given His Son to bear them all into a waste land, not inhabited.

The work for me is totally finished, but it is not finished in me. I ought to grow more like Him every day, but the work for me, as regards my guilt, is finished, and if it is not perfectly finished, when is it to be? He cannot die again, cannot suffer again, cannot drink that dreadful cup again. That cup made Him sweat great drops of blood in only thinking about what it was to be made a curse for us, and He cannot be made that over again. He is set down because the work is done. How little they thought they were sending the poor thief straight to paradise, when they sent to break his legs!

And now about knowing it, for that is the important point; the Lord told
him he was to be with Him that day. And was he to believe it?

It happened to him, but it was written for us. If I come to Him, I know He has finished the work, and has put my sins away. The work was done once for all, and, through the grace of God, brought to me. Knowing no other name under heaven whereby I can be saved, I find He has put my sins away, and I know it! He has gone back into the glory, because He has finished the work. The Holy Ghost brings it home to our hearts, and I say He has finished the work. In Rom. 4, it says “Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” His resurrection is the proof that God has accepted the work. If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins, but if raised, He has borne them, and I am not in them.

What part had we in the cross -- I mean in bringing it about? Nothing but our sins, and the hatred that killed Christ -- that is all! And that is what humbles us, and brings us, dependent on the grace of God, to say, My sins brought Him there, but God, instead of putting me away, put them away.

Why is the gospel preached? Is it that we should know it, or that we should not? He has made peace, and how careful God is to show us this, that we may be happy! Defiled, I am cleansed; guilty, I am justified. You say, But I have offended God dreadfully. So you have, but there is forgiveness. God has not a thing against you; Christ has borne it all. He has got the fruit of my sins, and I have got the fruit of His work. If we come thus to God, the very Christ who put our sins away is the very Judge before whom we shall appear. How do believers come before the judgment seat? “It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory” (1 Cor. 15:43). He comes and receives me to Himself, and that is the way I get to the judgment seat. How can the believer fear, if, when he sees his Judge, he is like Him?

What opened the poor woman’s heart in John 4? Not speaking about the living water, but, “Go, call thy husband, and come hither.” Her heart was opened by her conscience being reached; “If thou knewest the gift of God.” Giving, not imputing -- If you knew who it was who had come so low as to be dependent on a woman like you for a drink of water, you would have confidence in Him. And so would you, if you knew the Son of God come down to a manger and a cross -- you would have confidence in Him.

And that is what He is doing in Christ -- winning back the confidence of man’s heart, when he cannot trust Him because of his sins. The love of God came into the world when men were in their sins; there was love enough in Him to give Himself.

Do you believe that love? If so, there is the plain statement, “By Him all that believe are justified from all things” (Acts 13:39). He did not bear half, and leave me to perish by the other half.

When I come to Him, I find that, instead of meeting me in the day of
judgment, He has met me in the day of grace.
I wish to speak a little tonight on the Lord’s Second Coming, to look at some of the Scriptures that bring it before us, not as prophecy, but the hope of Christ’s coming for His saints as He has promised.

I wish to take it up in a practical way, as it bears on us as Christians, in the walk of Christianity. Christ at His first coming settled the question of sin for us as Christians; and the work He did then is the foundation of our every blessing, whether heavenly or earthly -- the new covenant, the coming glory, and even the new heavens and the new earth, all depend on what He did on the Cross. At His first coming the wrath of God was manifested against sin. On the cross God’s hatred to sin was seen, and His love to the sinner shown out. God’s righteous wrath was displayed there on the One who had taken the sinner’s place, and man’s enmity came out to the full. By man’s wicked hands the Son of God was crucified; the very determined act of man’s wickedness to make sure that Christ was dead, was God’s remedy for sin. One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and out flowed blood and water; this was the climax of man’s wickedness and of God’s love for the sinner. If you can believe the wonders of the cross, there is no glory that flows from it, that can surprise you; there is nothing so wonderful as that the Son of God, the One who had been with the Father from all eternity, should come to this world and become man, and again, humble Himself that He should be capable of dying; we can never fully understand the wonders of that work nor the glories of the Person, neither in time nor in eternity, for none knoweth the Son but the Father. There are two great subjects brought before us in the Scriptures when salvation is settled -- the government of this world, and the grace that takes a poor sinner up and puts him in the same place as Christ. This is not prophecy, it is God’s purpose concerning them that believe in His word. Christ will come and take those that are His to be with Him, where He is. Prophecy tells us that this world is going on to judgment. 2 Pet. 1:19 says it is a light shining in a dark place, till the day dawn. The other thing is, God has taken me, a poor sinner, and put me up there in the same glory as His Son, and at His appearing all shall know that we are sons, for we shall be inwardly and outwardly like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. I know I am going to be like Him, and that I am strengthened practically -- going on as we have it, from glory to glory, showing out the life of Christianity.

In the First Epistle of Thessalonians, at the end of each chapter, we have the Lord’s coming brought before us. These Thessalonians were but newly
converted (1:9, 10) but it was to wait for God’s Son from heaven, that was a part of their Christianity, their calling as Saints, to expect the Son from heaven, “whom God raised from the dead, even Jesus,” etc. This was the foundation as we have said of every blessing and every hope. If it was fruit of his ministry (1 Thess. 2:19, 20) it was Paul’s joy to look for the crown of rejoicing they would have in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming. When it is a question of walk in these Thessalonians it was in reference to the coming of the Lord (1 Thess. 3:13) that their hearts may be established in holiness before God our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus. If the veil was drawn aside for a moment and we could just see this coming Son of Man in glory and our place in Him -- how softly we should walk -- how holy our ways would be in this world!

The hope of His coming always leads to holiness of walk. He that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself. The Thessalonians had gone astray as to their friends who had died (1 Thess. 4:3, etc.) and they feared they would be out of the way of all this blessing when the Lord would come; but the apostle tells them it would not be so, “I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him. We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep,” etc., etc. They would have the advantage, they shall rise first. If it is comfort in the hour of sorrow -- or support under trial -- or energy for service -- it is all the same thing; “comfort ye one another with these words.” “The very God of peace,” etc. (5:23).

This is the character of the morning star. Expecting the Lord produces holiness of walk. When the Lord was about to leave this world, it looked as though He was about to desert His disciples, but it was quite the contrary (John 14:2, 3, 16). In the end of Luke it is the manifestation that is referred to, but in the 14th of John it is His coming for His people, but He will not come again until every one of His heirs have been gathered in. In Phil. 3, Paul shows us that our conversation, that is our living associations are in heaven, that is before His coming our risen life is there, “from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change, etc.” In the end of the Revelations the morning star is presented to us as our hope. “I, Jesus have sent mine angel,” etc. The morning star is only mentioned three times in Scripture, always in reference to His coming for the Church -- this is not for the world nor yet the millennial earth; when the Sun of Righteousness rises on this world, it will be for judgment. The Morning Star is seen by those that are waiting, those that are looking for the day during the darkness of the night. The Spirit and the Bride say come -- the Spirit -- the Christian -- the Church -- say come. I have the Spirit and I have
the water of life, but not the Morning Star; but the Bride does say, Come. The first chapter of Revelations passes over the whole time between the Lord’s first coming and His coming again, “Unto him that loveth us,” etc. To reign with Him is not the highest glory. Suppose if this King is my husband, shall I be thinking about His being King? No, the Christian is His bride. No promise of reigning will have the effect on my heart as the consciousness of being His bride. No promise of reigning with Him would be equal to the knowledge that it is my husband that reigns. “I come quickly,” that is the promise that cheers the Christian’s heart. “He that overcometh and keepeth My works,” etc. (Rev. 2:26). This is not the morning star, the morning star is Himself, for myself. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy” (2 Pet. 1:19), and prophecy is a light that shines in this dark world but when you have the personal knowledge of His coming, you get the desire of your heart. Your one proper place as a Christian is to be waiting for God’s Son from heaven; it is no question of atonement. These Thessalonians were converted to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from Heaven. (See Matt. 25.)

The Lord never speaks of His coming {as being} beyond the life of the persons He is speaking of: they were the same who went out to meet the Bridegroom, that went in with Him to the marriage. The Lord shows Peter that he shall put off this tabernacle: the exception, as we say, proves the rule. We should be waiting for Him, that is the rule for us: death is the exception for the Christian. What would people think of us now if we were to go and say to them, you shall put off this tabernacle -- in other words, you shall die? They would say, that is what I am looking for when the day comes. That is not the Christian’s hope; the Christian’s hope is to meet the Lord in the air. If we die, it will be absent from the body, present with the Lord; and when He appears, we shall appear with Him: we shall see the Lord face to face; we shall be like Him; that is the Christian’s joy. He is coming a second time, without suffering. He has suffered, and we cannot fathom what those sufferings were, none knoweth them but the Father; eternity will not unfold their depths. Well! I shall see Him. If I love a person, I shall want to see him. Suppose all the people in Edinburgh were waiting for the Lord from heaven, what a change it would make in the place! It is not the same thing as dying; men expect to die; they are accustomed to people dying round them constantly; but looking for the Lord to come would alter the whole course of things in this world. If we are going on with the world, the thought of His coming will put a stop to all our plans; but to the Christian, who knows he shall never be completely conformed to the image of God’s Son till He comes, it is what he longs for. A Christian is a person between the first and second coming of Christ. He is associated with Him now, serving Him, waiting and watching for His coming. If we die, we shall be with Him.
“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Luke 12:34). There is a warning in this Scripture, and yet a positive promise. Your object is not the world, but your responsibility is to present Christ before it. “Let your loins be girt about, and your lights shining,” etc. Get that which is heavenly in your souls, and that will judge all that is contrary. We have to work of course, provide things honest: we need food and raiment. The Lord worked; He was not only a carpenter’s son, but He was called a carpenter (Mark 6:3). It was not His object; His heart was not in it. We hear very little of His history during those thirty years, but from the little gleanings we get, when He was twelve years old, we know that His object was God’s will: “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business.” He was always the obedient One, ever waiting for the Father’s word. I must have “my loins girt about with truth, and my lights burning,” and be as men waiting for their Lord, getting through this world as those whose associations are in heaven. My ways must be like a man that is waiting for his Lord; that is the character God looks for in the Christian, and his position is expecting His Son from heaven. The evil servant did not say his Lord would not come, but that He delayeth His coming, and so he beats the men-servants and the maid-servants, he pleases himself. The character of a Christian is a man waiting for his Lord, not knowing the time: and blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He comes shall find watching. That is where the heart ought to be, that is what He looks for from me. If I have my heart filled with Christ, I shall be looking for Him. It is one’s joy to think of His coming to take us to be with Himself, when not one single saint will be there that is not inwardly and outwardly like Himself. Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils -- and the thief that was crucified on the cross -- with Him, and like Him, conformed to His image.

“Having predestinated us, after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:11). God will have us far above all heavens in the glory with His Son. Christ has made Himself a servant for ever (Ex. 21). He did love us unto death, the death of the cross; and He says, when I get to heaven I will still serve. Now you must have your loins girded and your lights burning, that is not rest; but when I get my way -- when I am master of my own house -- you shall sit down with me and I shall serve still. He would not have twelve legions of angels, no -- it was His glory to serve; love delights to serve (John 13). His ministry never ends; when He has me in heaven, His delight will be to serve. I will make them sit down to meat, and I will serve them. I can marvel at nothing, when I find that the Son of God came down from heaven, became a man to die for me, I can expect anything. He will make us ungird and sit down and He will serve. It is intrinsic blessedness to be with Him -- to sit down and have Him to serve. There is no difficulty in believing He will do anything for us, when we know He left the glory, and became a man to serve me; and the secret of
God’s heart is to have me conformed to the image of His Son -- this is what He has predestinated me to, and Christ will never see of the travail of His soul till He has every member of His body in the same glory as Himself and perfectly like Him. We shall reign with Him, but that is not the highest thing -- there is a far higher joy to the true wife -- the better thing is being with her husband; she knows if He reigns, she shall reign with Him too; but her joy is -- He that reigns is my husband. Well, I shall reign with Him, but that is but the second thing—the Father’s house is above all the glory of the kingdom, “I go to prepare a place for you” etc. {John 14:1-3}. Christ could not keep Himself distant from us. He has not given us this world, but He gives us what the Father has given Him. The glory He has taken as Son of Man, that is the glory He gives to us. Do you believe that God loves you as He loves His Son? We do not give God credit for the love He has for us. We do not believe the love that is in God’s heart to us. If He has not spared His Son, what will He not give us with Him! God always reasons down from Himself; we always begin with ourselves and reckon upwards; the better way is to take God’s plan. If I am looking for the Lord -- expecting Him -- I shall have my loins girt and my lamp burning. I believe He will soon come; I do not say He will -- I may be wrong; but that is my thought. If I am longing for the Lord’s return, I shall be looking and watching, and “BLESSED IS THAT SERVANT, WHOM HIS LORD WHEN HE COMETH SHALL FIND SO DOING.”
The disappointments of life are in reality only the decrees of love. I have a message for thee today, My child. I will whisper it softly in thine ear, in order that the storm-clouds which appear may be gilt with glory, and that the thorns on which thou mayest have to walk may be blunted. The message is but short -- a tiny sentence -- but allow it to sink into the depths of thine heart, and be to thee as a cushion on which to rest thy weary head: “This thing is from Me.”

Hast thou never thought that all which concerns thee, concerns Me also? He that toucheth thee toucheth the apple of Mine eye (Zech. 2:8). Thou hast been precious in Mine eyes, that is why I take a special interest in thine upbringing. When temptation assails thee, and the “enemy comes in like a flood” I would wish thee to know that “This thing is from Me.” I am the God of circumstances. Thou hast not been placed where thou art by chance, but because it is the place I have chosen for thee. Didst thou not ask to become humble? Behold, I have placed thee in the very place where this lesson is to be learned. It is by thy surroundings and thy companions that the working of My will is to come about.

Hast thou money difficulties? Is it hard to keep within thine income? “This thing is from Me.” For I am He that possesseth all things. I wish thee to draw everything from Me, and that thou depend entirely upon Me. My riches are illimitable (Phil. 4:19). Put My promise to the proof, so that it may not be said of thee, “Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord thy God.”

Art thou passing through a night of affliction? “This thing is from Me.” I am the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3). I have left thee without human support that in turning to Me thou mightest obtain eternal consolation (2 Thess. 2:16-17).

Has some friend disappointed thee? One to whom thou hadst opened thine heart? “This thing is from Me.” I have allowed this disappointment that thou mightest learn that the best Friend is Jesus. He preserves us from falling, fights for us in our combats; yea, the best friend is Jesus. I long to be thy confidant.
Has someone said false things of thee? Leave that, and come closer to Me, under My wings, away from the place of wordy dispute, for I will bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday (Psa.37:6). Have thy plans been all upset? Art thou crushed and weary? “This thing is from Me.” Hast thou made plans and then coming, asked Me to bless them? I wish to make thy plans for thee. I will take the responsibility, for it is too heavy for thee, thou couldst not perform it alone (Ex. 18:18). Thou art but an instrument and not an agent.

Hast thou desired fervently to do some great work for Me? Instead of that thou hast been laid on one side, on a bed of sickness and suffering. “This thing is from Me.” I was unable to attract thine attention whilst thou wast so active. I wish to teach thee some of My deep lessons. It is only those who have learned to wait patiently who can serve Me. My greatest workers are sometimes those who are laid aside from active service in order that they may learn to wield the weapon of prayer.

Art thou suddenly called to occupy a difficult position full of responsibilities? Go forward, counting on Me. I am giving thee the position full of difficulties for the reason that Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thy works, and in all the business of thy hands (Deut. 15:18). This day I place in thy hand a pot of holy oil. Draw from it freely, My child, that all the circumstances arising along the pathway, each word that gives thee pain, each interruption trying to thy patience, each manifestation of thy feebleness, may be anointed with this oil. Remember that interruptions are divine instructions. The sting will go in the measure in which thou seest Me in all things. Therefore set your heart unto all the works that I testify among you this day. For it is your life (Deut. 32:46-47).

**TRUE GREATNESS**

Learn to grapple with souls. Aim at the conscience. Exalt Christ. Use a sharp knife on yourself. Say little, serve all, pass on.

**THIS IS TRUE GREATNESS,**
**TO SERVE UNNOTICED**
**AND WORK UNSEEN**

Oh, the joy of having nothing, seeing nothing but a Living Christ in Glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here.
“SOME BETTER THING”

“GOD HAVING PROVIDED FOR US,”

CHRISTIANS

The Church is a Body, called out during the time the Lord Jesus is rejected upon earth; we belong to a rejected Christ, our lot is cast in with God’s Son, whom the world has cast out. This characterizes the “better things” referred to by the Apostle when, speaking of the Old Testament saints, he says, “God having provided some better thing for us” (Heb. 11:40). The special company to which Christians belong is the better thing. There will be the display of the Church in eternity: “that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7). Whatever place Christ has in heaven or on earth, the Church has and will have with Him; if He is rejected, as now, she has the place of rejection, too; when He shall reign, she shall reign also. A wonderful thing is the better thing as to our standing and state in the glory, but all we can say to it is, that it is of God’s sovereign grace!

Now, in order to the existence of the Body of Christ, according to God’s ways, Christ as Messiah must first have been rejected by His people the Jews, be received up into heaven, and the Holy Ghost be sent down to form the Body; nor would it have been possible save only in the counsels of God (Eph. 1:4), for the Body to have existed before Christ, as the Messiah, was rejected.

In the Epistles you have clear statements of what the Body is and how it is organized. The Body of Christ is declared to be one.

For we are members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

The Body is One, and hath many members, and all the members of that One Body, being many, are One Body; so also is Christ.

So we, being many, are One Body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

But the members should have the same care one for another.

We are members one of another.

And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you (1 Cor. 12).

It is not sufficient for you to be interested with Christ alone, to the exclusion of the Church. He is the Head of His Body, and you cannot separate the head from the body; it would be death. God is interested in the Body of Christ, and the Scriptures tell you what the Body of Christ is and how it is governed. In the present age there is the Body upon this earth, forming for the Lord’s glory to be His companion in the glory; and this One
Body is the Church of God, that even as the first Adam had his Eve, so the last Adam has His.

This is the great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:32).

The bride, the Lamb’s wife (Rev. 21:9).

In the epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle is instructing the Ephesians that they belong to a new family, a family they had never heard of before, a family whose design had been “hid in God.” God had created all things; but here He tells them is something which for manifest reasons had been “hid.” The Spirit of God in this Epistle, as also in other Epistles, brings out the wonderful calling of the Church, the wonders of God’s resources; “the manifold wisdom of God.” It is, therefore, now no longer a mystery, and Christians should not be ignorant of the special place and blessing with which God had blessed them.

These, then, are the Christian’s guides; not the Glory in the Cloud, or in the Tabernacle, or in the Temple, as was presented to God’s people in the last age; but the Savior in the Glory, and the Written Word, and the Holy Ghost down here. The real point of the Christian’s position, is that he professes to see the truth of the Church of God, that God is visiting the Jews and Gentiles, and gathering out a people to His name -- that God is preparing a bride for His Son. The Bride, the One Body, characterizes the present age, nor is there any excuse for the Christian not to own this truth.
ADDRESS AT THE FUNERAL OF
AUGUSTUS JAMES CLARKE, 13 YEARS OLD

(May 22, 1831 - May 2, 1845)

Our brother Mr J. N. D -- then read 1 Thess. 2, and spoke with an unction and a power which lifted our hearts above the circumstances of sorrow which surrounded us, and carried us onward to the day when “God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.” The point on which he specially dwelt was,

“That while sin and death had entered into this world, and must sever every natural tie, however blessed originally, however true and proper in its place, grace had formed new ties, new affections, new relationships, which death could not touch; because they had their source in that new life which God has given to us in Christ, and flowed from Him who is beyond death.

“Paul had come to Thessalonica a perfect stranger to those whom he now addresses; he had not ‘known them after the flesh.’ He preached the gospel to them; they received his testimony, and were born of God. New affections at once existed between them, -- new ties which death could not sever. How beautifully we see the exercise of them developed here! Before their conversion, ‘he was willing to have imparted unto them not only the gospel, but also his own soul, because they were dear to him’ ({1 Thess. 1} v. 8). When they were in the weakness of newborn babes, he was ‘gentle among them, as a nurse cherisheth her children’ ({1 Thess. 2} v. 7); after that he had ‘exhorted them, and charged every one of them, as a father doth his children (for he had begotten them in the gospel), to walk worthy of God, who had called them to His kingdom and glory’ ({1 Thess. 2 vv. 11, 12}).

“Circumstances, such as bodily separation, the power of Satan, death itself, may hinder the full enjoyment of these divine affections, but they cannot destroy them. Such was the case here; Paul was taken from them in presence, but not in heart; ‘he had endeavored to see them once and again, but Satan hindered him’; but these very circumstances only caused him to look beyond this scene to that day when these new affections will have all their full blessedness. ‘What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming? For ye are our glory and our joy’ (vv. 19, 20).

“It was thus with our beloved young brother. All that was merely natural in relationship between him and us was gone; death was the end of all that.
But death could not touch one spiritual tie or affection. So far from that, it only removed the hindrances to the fullest enjoyment of them; for it destroyed the energy of the flesh and natural will, which is wholly opposed to the life of God. Another step was gained; a painful and an humbling one, it was true, but a needful one. Death had removed the flesh with all its workings. There was nothing on his part to hinder now.

"More even than that. The very body lying here was one step nearer to glory. That very body would become, by and by, the more efficient servant of those new affections, which it had hitherto been able so feebly to express. These new, divine feelings and affections were now ripening in their native clime above; and this body was preparing to give them, in their maturity, an unhindered development, 'in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming.'

"The coming of that day is the spring and power of our hope; for it will be the consummation of everything which even these renewed affections can desire, whether it be, as in this case, the Father in Christ's affection for His children, or the brotherly affection which unites all the members of the family of God.

"In the mean time, there is 'the patience of hope.' It is an unworthy object for which we cannot bear to wait. What is that love worth which cannot bear a trial? The present ability to bear separation, 'taken from you in presence, not in heart,' proves its reality and power. How blessed, then, amidst all these circumstances of sin and sorrow, to have these new joys and affections, which death itself cannot touch; the full maturity of which will be known, 'in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming'"

We then sang the following hymn, which had been a great favorite of dear Augustus's, and we rejoiced that it was only "a little while," and Jesus would return, and we should be with him for ever.

"'A little while,' our Lord shall come,
And we shall wander here no more . . ."

Mr D -- gave thanks to the Lord for His grace to our young departed brother, and we moved to the grave.

After we had stood round it for some minutes in solemn silence, a brother in the Lord read 1 Cor. 15:35, to the end; and our beloved friend O'B -- bore testimony to the value of the blood of Jesus, and declared the joy he had felt when he last saw Augustus, in witnessing the heavenly smile which the mention of that precious blood produced. He then, with the deepest fervor, prayed for his beloved parents, the children, and ourselves; and gave thanksgiving and praise for him who had fallen asleep in Jesus.

The body was then lowered into its quiet resting place, to wait for the
morning of the resurrection. I read the following hymn, and we sang the last two verses:—

“Great Captain of Salvation,
We bless Thy glorious name . . .

A slight shower fell while we were singing, but the clouds soon dispersed, and the sun again burst forth, and shone brightly upon us. It reminded us of the day when “the Sun of Righteousness” shall come; when “He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass, springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain” (2 Sam. 23:3, 4), when those “that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Mr R -- concluded the service with thanksgiving and prayer. We gathered close round the grave, to take a last, lingering look of him we loved, and then returned home. Several brethren accompanied us; we dined together, and then dispersed. The love of Christ had brought us for a little season together, round the grave of one whom Jesus loved; and then we separated “in presence, not in heart,” desiring to occupy “the little while,” till He come again in works of faith and labors of love . . .

And now, dear Reader, what are the lessons we learn at this early grave? Does it not cry “all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass?”

Are you a Parent -- a believing Parent? For what are you bringing up your children? For this world, or for eternity? Oh, remember that all which is naturally lovely and intelligent in our children must soon wither in the grasp of the hand of death.

Have you brought your children to Jesus? Have they faith in His precious blood? Are they safe in the ark from the coming wrath?

If not, let me beseech you to read them the dying experience of this youth, cut off as a flower of the field before he was fourteen years old! Tell them what he thought of this poor delusive world on his dying-bed; and what he found Jesus to be to his soul. “Jesus was all his peace.” Tell them of all his desire for all around him, that “they might come to Jesus, and follow Him.”

Would not the Israelite, whose child was bitten by a fiery serpent, have been its murderer, if he had not hastened with it to the brazen serpent, lifted up upon the pole, and bid it look and live?

And are not your children sinners? They may appear outwardly fair and lovely in your eyes; but the deadly poison of sin infects their bodies and their souls: and will you not be the soul-murderer of your children, and guilty of their blood, if you do not warn them of the wrath to come, and set before them Jesus crucified? Oh, then, tell them of the Cross; of the love of God in giving His Son to die for sinners; and tell them of the Savior’s love -- His
willingness and power to save. What but His blood can deliver them from hell, or fit them for the joy, the glory, and the holiness of heaven?

Above all, cry to Jesus for your children. Cry, as she cried for her daughter, to whom He said, “O woman, great is thy faith!” (Matt. 15). Such a cry is louder in the ears of Jesus than all the songs of heaven. He will say to thee, “Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt.”

What rich encouragement has Jesus given us to bring our little ones to Him! We hear Him say, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not”; and we see Him take them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and bless them. Mark, their coming was not of themselves; they were brought to Jesus. “He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.” He did not cast out those little ones; He will not cast out ours, if we bring them to Him. The birth of each dear child would indeed be agony to a parent’s heart, who was alive to its state by nature, and the evils and temptations of this sinful world, if he could not see Jesus thus presented to us, with His arms wide opened to receive them, His hands stretched out to bless them, and hear His voice of tender, gracious love, saying, “Suffer them to come unto Me.” And oh, what a hiding-place, what a refuge, what an ark of safety for our children, in His arms, near His heart, and under His blessing! There let us take our little ones; and if our faith be weak, still let us come as the father of the poor child that was possessed with the devil, “Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

But if, by the grace of God, you believe that your children are saved, let me, though conscious of my own personal failure, ask you, what are you seeking for them? Is it that they may really follow Jesus? Are you outside the camp yourself? and are you bringing up your children there? Are not converted children often early taken away because even converted parents so little seek for themselves and for their offspring, “First, the kingdom of God and His righteousness?” It was not, I judge, because Lot himself loved Sodom (for his righteous soul was daily vexed there), that he gave up his stranger, pilgrim walk of faith, to dwell in its polluted walls. Did he not go there from misjudged, carnal, natural affection for his children? There they were brought up, there they married, and, though he himself was saved, there they perished. Oh, if that word, “Remember Lot’s wife,” is a warning to professors: Remember Lot’s children, should be a warning to parents! May the Lord give us grace to tread in the steps of Abraham, of whom God could testify, “I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord” (Gen. 18:19).

Surely it is no light responsibility to have the training of a child bought with the blood of Jesus. Well may believing parents ask of the Lord, as Manoah did, “How shall we order the child, and what shall we do for him?” (Judg. 13:12).
Should any unconverted person, young or old, read this memoir, let me affectionately beseech him to remember, “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.” And how can you meet death or judgment, if you are in your sins, out of Christ, and a neglecter of this great salvation? Oh, believe the gospel of the grace of God! The God you have sinned against has given His Son to die for sinners, and He beseeches you to be reconciled to Himself. Your sins, which made you fit for hell, make you also fit for Jesus crucified; believe in His precious blood, and that blood will make you fit for the presence and glory of God in heaven.
Papers from Collectanea

Being Some of the Subjects Considered at Leamington,
on 3rd June and Four Following Days
in the Year 1839

Edinburgh:
J. S. Roberts, 52 Cockburn Street
1882

Publisher’s Note

It may be necessary to say that the Papers making up this Book having fallen into the Publisher’s hands some little time since, it was thought well to put them into print, both because they contain truth, and also because of the interest that attaches to them from the date (1839) at which the meetings were held.

Being put into print at this date (1882), it is impossible for those who uttered the Words to revise the Notes. What is printed here is but part of the MSS; thus the name “COLLECTANIA” is perhaps the truest one for the Book, it being simply a Collection of some of the subjects considered.

EDINBURGH, December 1882

(Note: The collection contained addresses by J. N. Darby, J. G. Bellett, and G. V. Wigram. Only those by J. N. Darby are included here.)
THE HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY JERUSALEMS

When we find Christ spoken of as King, in connection with the bride, I believe it to refer to the earthly Jerusalem; while in the Revelation, I look upon the Lamb’s wife as the heavenly Jerusalem; and in these there are different characters of blessedness. There are two principles in the character of God, -- righteousness and grace; grace does not give up righteousness; but when the demands of righteousness have been provided for in Christ, it comes forth in the character of grace. Jerusalem was intended to have been the place of righteousness, therefore when iniquity was found in it, it was cast off. In Isa. 60, describing the state they had been in, the Lord says to them,

I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.
Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.

There was power, maintaining the seat of righteousness in Jerusalem. But the Lord sends the King of righteousness to them to establish their guilt, and having done this, brings in His grace. Addressing the Gentiles, Paul says,

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

They did not believe in the Gentiles’ mercy, and are therefore made the subjects of mercy. In Rev. 21 and 22, we see the Church set in a place exceedingly blessed. Grace is the character of the heavenly Jerusalem. There we see the Church associated with Christ in blessing, and it is in anticipation of this future blessedness that the Church should now witness to the grace of God. I know of nothing more instructive, than to take the description of the heavenly Jerusalem as that which should be the state of the Church now in the energy of the Holy Ghost. I see the saints then living in righteousness; there is no need of power to secure it.

The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

It is much better than paradise, there was no such thing there, as we find shall be here, -- the leaves of the tree of life for the healing of the nations. Instead of there being anything to defile our feet, and needing continual washing, the place where we are walking shall be righteousness. The street of the city was of pure gold, as it were transparent glass, representing purity, and the same as the laver in which the priests washed; we shall stand upon
righteousness, we shall walk in righteousness. The nations will discern in us the glory and the grace of Jesus. “There shall be no more curse,” nothing but blessing. It is a profitable thing, beloved friends, for us to bring the light and glory of the future dispensation into all the circumstances of our present condition. Thus it has been in all past dispensations. Those who had faith in them, did not rest on the things they had, but looked out, and brought in the energy of the future things. And thus it is now with us. Faith puts forth its energies, grasps the coming glory, and this gives us strength in the circumstances in which we are.

Psa. 145 seems to be a conversation, as it were, of Messiah’s with the Jewish remnant at that day. They had learned what God was in all their distress. They had learned themselves to utter the memory of His great goodness, and to sing of His righteousness, and therefore to give forth to others the character of God. And this is just what the Church should be doing now. The Church is Christ’s letter of recommendation to the world, even as the Church at Corinth was Paul’s epistle of recommendation. When sin came in, life was misery, and therefore God kept man from putting forth his hand, lest he should take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever. But now the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. The glory of the Church is the consequence of His grace. When a person is the object of another’s love, the desire is that that love should be manifested before others; and thus does our Lord display His grace and love to the Church, and thus we find Him saying,

The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Very blessed this. He exhibits His love to the Church in the Father’s love; a beautiful representation of this we have in the story of the prodigal. We are told, that when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. But when he brought him into his house, he brings forth the best robe and puts it on him, and puts a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; he adorns him, that he may display him to all as his son. The first thing that is made known to our hearts in our discovery of ourselves as sinners, is the love of Christ. It is then the love of Christ that we see; as the Shepherd, who came to seek and to save that which was lost; as the one through whom we have obtained redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. But when Christ comes forth to display the Church to the world, He does not speak of Himself, but it is the love of the Father. He makes the Church the witness of his Father’s love. The source of this love I do not speak of.

The Church was taken out of the second {last} Adam. Speaking of the
Church, we find the language of our Lord in Psa. 139,

   My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and  
   curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see  
   my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members  
   were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet  
   there was none of them.

Having washed and sanctified the Church with His blood, He presents it to  
Himself. He has divine delight in doing it. The Church is the Lamb’s wife,  
because He has suffered for it, and the force of love cannot be brought out  
without suffering. There is nothing but the knowledge of this union that  
raises us up above all other good into communion with God. It is in the  
Church that God is displaying all the glory and variousness of His wisdom  
and power. So we find in Eph. 3:20, 21,

   Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that  
   we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him  
   be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world  
   without end.

The Church is set up at the head of all dispensations and ages, because it is  
set up in Christ.

   Before we get the revelation of God as the Father, He revealed Himself  
   first as God Almighty, and next as Jehovah. To the Jews He was known as  
Jehovah; to the Church as Father, as in 2 Cor. 6:17, where He says,

   Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and I will receive  
   you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and  
daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

But we often find the saints miserably doubting their sonship. Now the  
character of God in this dispensation being that of Father, if we do not know  
Him thus, we know nothing. We find Abraham knowing God as the  
Almighty; and when we can enter into the power of the previous  
dispensation, we can depend upon Him too as the Jehovah; but in the  
dispensation yet future, we shall know Him as Lord God Almighty as well  
as Father. In Rev. 21, we see the saints in all the blessedness of familiar  
tercourse with God. In the first eight verses, there is nothing about the  
Lamb; it is all God. I quite agree with our brother as respects the nature of  
Messiah’s kingdom, though I differ from him as to its duration. There is a  
difference to my mind between a king reigning in righteousness, and an earth  
wherein dwelleth righteousness. Where there is the dwelling of  
righteousness, power cannot be needed to preserve it. Now in that day when  
God will be all in all, there will be no need of a mediatorial securer of  
blessing. I conceive the time of millennial power to be analogous to Noah  
power, and that when God will be all in all, Christ will be in the place of  
Adamic power. In Rev. 21, we have the tabernacle of God with man. Now
we have the angels saying at the incarnation of Jesus, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men”; but on His entry into Jerusalem, which showed forth His coming in His kingdom, the song then was, not peace on earth, but “peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.” As to the duration of Messiah’s kingdom, the passage in Heb. 10:12 is only meant to show forth the work of Christ as high priest. He sits down, because He has finished it; and not the high priest on earth getting up, and getting up continuously; and that is all that the expression for ever, I believe, refers to. The same is implied in Heb. 10:14, “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” We have in Rev. 22:5, the promise that the saints shall reign for ever and ever; and yet it is said in Rev. 20, they lived and reigned with Christ but a thousand years. Thus I think the particular character of Christ’s kingdom merges into the eternal perpetuity of it, and this is not giving it up. So I think, in a blessed sense, the Lord is King for ever and ever, though not as controlling and restraining evil, but reigning in righteousness. The passages to which our brother referred in Ezek. 37:24-28 and 1 Cor. 15, do not, I believe, relate to Messiah’s kingdom at all; {those passages} do not refer to Psa. 110, but to Psa. 8, in His character as Son of man, when He shall have dominion on earth as Man, as the second {last} Adam. The power of judgment also belongs to Him as Son of man.

The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.

The title to this power of judgment and dominion belongs to Him now, though he has not yet taken it; if He had, He would now execute judgment. The world does not acknowledge His title, but His Church does; and there is the difference. Psa. 110 is not actually as to the question of reigning, but refers to His right of supremacy. Now in 1 Cor. 15, it is not that the kingdom is put down, but He lays aside all rule, and authority, and power. There is a difference too between the Father’s putting the enemies under the Son’s feet, and the Son’s putting them under His own feet. It is clear, if He is using death to destroy His enemies, there must be enemies to be destroyed; and then He drops the general question of death, because the ungodly do not put on incorruption. I understand by 1 Cor. 15:28, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost will be all in all. The kingdom of Christ will not be taken away in the sense that the other kingdoms are taken away.

The Lord God will give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

At the period referred to in the beginning of Rev. 21, there will be the heavenly glory shining upon the earthly glory. But Messiah’s kingdom is a
distinct thing. The exaltation of man’s will above God’s was first set up by Satan in paradise, and it has been going on ripening ever since, and will bring in the apostasy, which will end in the judgment.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! for thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God {Isa. 14}.

Satan here is persuading the head of man’s will that he is still in heaven, though he has just been cast out of heaven. The first man exalted himself, the second man humbled himself. “Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” The character of the Lord’s coming in judgment, will be as the man from heaven to destroy this wilful king; but this is not the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom. There will be something at this time that will draw out the hearts of the Jews after Christ, and keep them from antichrist, and show them what a desperate thing they have done in crucifying Messiah. The Assyrian stirs up antichrist. When the Assyrian is destroyed, the indignation for a very little while shall cease. Then Christ associates Himself with Israel, and begins to secure His kingdom. Then comes the going forth of His gospel, which will be the fulfilment of the words in Matt. 24:14, &c. Then comes the scenes of Matt. 25; Christ having secured His kingdom by the judgment of His enemies, universal peace is established. Then the heathen shall know that the Lord does reign in Zion, and that He is sitting upon the throne of His holiness. While men are planning and forming schemes for themselves, God looks at the stock of nations from the beginning. We see the beginning of all the glory and schemes of the nations of the world set up in Babel; and that is what God looks at. Almost all the nations have been brought up under two heads. The children of Israel were planted in the midst of the family of Ham. It is remarkable, that all the nations mentioned in dependence on the Eastern power, are now getting into that state; and those mentioned as connected with antichrist, are connecting themselves with Western Europe. The king of the north, I judge to be Turkish Asia; the king of the south, Egypt. In the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom, I would refer you to Isa. 18. All the actions that were connected with Israel were placed on either side of these rivers of Ethiopia; there was no nation beyond these. These nations at this time will be standing up, not against the land, but against the Prince of princes.

The saints who are in the heavens, are not the instruments of vengeance; they are clothed with white robes, and not in real garments.

3. {Subsequent to 1839, it would be seen that Lucifer is the Beast of Rev. 13:1-11, the last holder of the power first committed to the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar; and that the second beast of Rev. 13 is the Antichrist. Lucifer is called the king of Babylon in Isa. 14:4.}
judge that the Jews will be the Lord’s associates in judgment, as we read, “Judah is his horn in the day of battle.” The ground on which a saint stands never can change, so long as God is the same; let it develop itself how it may, God is known in it. It is very important in every dispensation to have certain principles clear and distinct. The fellowship of the saints with God may vary in form, but it is the same in principle. The basis of this fellowship is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Therefore the standing of the saints cannot vary. This is the revelation that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. But when you come to the form of the standings of the saints on earth, we find them differing in character and essence. The millennium, as regards the saints on earth, will be judicial; now in grace. The Jewish economy was not of grace, but law. The Church cannot depart from its standing with God, and therefore cannot have to do with a judicial economy, which must have reference therefore to an earthly people. The word that formed the Church was, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.” The Church is the calling of those whom the Lord has called out. In the Lord’s dealing with the world, there is of necessity a manifestation of those who are saints and who are not. Now the Lord speaks of the Church as being light in the midst of darkness; and therefore, to speak of an invisible Church is at once asserting its apostasy. The Lord intended the Church to have been as a city set on an hill. God had a purpose about the Jews, but they failed too. A dispensation may be cast off, while those who have the principle of life in them cannot be. The Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself not for that nation only, but that He “might gather together in one, the children of God which were scattered abroad” {John 11:52}. Of this the Holy Ghost in the Church was to be the power of testimony, but the Church having failed in her responsibility, the world will not believe the grace of God that has appeared unto all men, which was the proper character of this dispensation; and God is now securing righteousness by the secret association of the saints with Christ, and by their testimony against the evil around them. During the millennium there will be no fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, and therefore the saints now have by far this advantage. The trial of their faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, and shall be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. This makes a most essential difference as to the standing of the saints now and during the millennium. Again, a man that is taught of God knows that all flesh is bad, he is made a partaker of the Divine nature, and this shows him what the other nature is. Now, the whole creation is made subject to vanity, but then it will not; it may be liable to vanity, but it will not be subject to it. There will not be the constant dominion of Satan over it. The fact is, that now in our fallen nature, we are holding the world under the power of Satan; but then, the more a saint is blessed, the more he will honor God. I believe there
will be an enjoyment of creation then, when it will not be subject to vanity, that we have no idea of. The trees that God gave Adam for blessing, he made use of to hide himself from God. When Christ takes the earth, the saints will be able to flow forth in all the fulness of joy, ministering to the good of everything, and entering into all the joy of that word, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” That will be a dispensation of righteousness. Now I have to watch, watch, watch; but then there will be no temptation to sin, there will be the full tide of unhindered blessing.

As to the fitting position of the saints, we find the Lord continually speaking to us according to the claims of the dispensation that we are in, and not according to our apprehension of it. But our power of speaking about it must be according to the measure of our own faith. The posture of the saints at this time, I believe, should be in heaven, should be in the knowledge of their redemption, and saying, “We shall reign with Christ.” How far the body may hinder us, is a distinct question. Inasmuch as I am not yet in the redeemed body, I should be waiting for glory. In proportion as I am like Christ, I shall have joy. The object of my hope will then be, “when I shall see him as he is, then I shall be like him.” Now, says Paul, I do not want to be unclothed, but to be swallowed up of life. Having the resurrection life in his soul, he reaches clean over everything that would come between; and this is the fitting posture of the saints. “We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.” The Apostle was not looking for death, but to he caught up. Paul and Peter required an especial revelation to know they were to die. I know the kingdom and glory to be mine. What is the difference then between dying and not dying? all that I see is, in waiting here or waiting there. It is better to wait with Christ there than here. Christ is waiting, and to be joined with Christ in waiting, is just the link of power. All the value of the knowledge the saints can get, is by applying the facts of the glory to the circumstances in which we live. The fact of the upsetting of all things here just makes me say to them, I am not a debtor to you. By the word of the Lord all things first had their existence, so all things are kept by the word of the Lord. I was brought out of the world by the same word. The present position of the saint is suffering, therefore he is looking for that which is to deliver him from suffering, and that is the coming of the Lord Jesus. Dear friends, I say when these things begin to come to pass, that we know will come on the earth, do not be frightened. “Look up,” says our Lord, do not look down, but “look up, for your redemption draweth nigh.” The Lord give us power to look up! But while I believe the saints should be looking up, I believe also that the position of the saints should be one of thorough deep humiliation. “Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many; and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool: and ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall,” &c. (Isa. 22:9-14). Yet, beloved,
though these things are so, though our house is pulled down, though our glory is gone, still what the Church has to do now, is to be looking for the Lord.

**REVELATION 22:7-17**

I believe that which greatly keeps us from the strength of our joy, is our ignorance of the utter ruin of man. Not merely should we be acquainted with the evil into which the ruin has brought us, but also with the ruin itself. The moment that this ruin came into the world, everything went wrong. Not only has man gone wrong, but all his activities have gone wrong also. Now Christ has provided for us a way wherein the activities of the new man have their exercise. This is our own proper and peculiar portion; to have the mind of Christ, and to be brought into fellowship with God. But for the enjoyment of this, it is essential that we should be introduced into a knowledge of the complete apostasy of our own natural will. The purpose of God for His children is, that they should be associated with Him in His own joy, and to this end we must know Him. Now, the main sorrow of Christ’s life was man’s ignorance of God. God was never understood; but the poor sinner understood Him much better than the self-righteous pharisee. Jesus came forth from the bosom of the Father, having the knowledge of His mind, knowing that God loved the poor sinner; not merely the sinner’s joy in being blest, but God’s joy in blessing him; and this is the joy in which God would have us to be associated with Himself. Another most blessed truth is, that we should be associated with Christ in His sufferings,

That the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:7).

There is a little verse in this chapter which shows the Church’s tendency to depart from a knowledge of its nearness to God. The first departure of the Church from God, is a departure from the knowledge of its fulness in God and nearness to Him, its conscious sonship with God. If I am one with Christ, I must be as He is. If I have anything at all, it must be what He has -- what He is. There is no medium between being nothing in ourselves and being everything in Christ. If I have no title of my own, if I am nothing but wretchedness in myself, and have no natural understanding of God’s goodwill to man, where is my claim? Therefore true humility is the knowing what I am in Christ. So the moment I say, I have not all the favor with God that Christ has, I come down to the flesh. The moment I say, I am not as Christ, I lose the knowledge of my glory in Him, and I stoop down to the flesh. This we see in John, when he fell down and worshiped the angel. Here was that voluntary humility and worshiping of angels which the Apostle
warns us against. Had John remembered the glory he had in Christ, he
would not have done this; for, “as he is, so are we in this world” (1 John
4:17). The Church’s portion is as the washed, and cleansed, and glorified
one in Him. Christ has presented us to the Father without spot or blemish,
and now He is the faithful witness in heaven, as He was on earth; making
known to us the Father. Through Him then I know perfectly what God is. I
know that His love does not wax cold because of our coldness. I know that
His heart is not hardened because of our sins. I know through the risen Jesus
what I am, -- sitting in heavenly places, that death has lost his power for
ever, and that the very life of God is mine. Jesus says, “I am the root and
offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” All the folly of David,
all the apostasy of his seed, could not alter this truth, -- God would be the
sustainer of the blessings that He had promised. The morning will come,
when that blessed light which was shut up in Christ will be unfolded, and the
saint now enters into the hope of that day. When this light breaks forth, then
will be the full display and understanding of this light, then will be the full
enjoyment of it. Now we say grace is a blessed thing, but it must bring
sorrow. “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it
not.” Then will be the full effulgence of light without sorrow. The Spirit and
the bride therefore say, Come. It is most blessed to see the Spirit taking up
His place with the Church in her sorrow, having sympathy with her in her
sighing, and making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be
uttered. Well, He who now enters into the Church’s sorrow, has fellowship
with her in her hope, takes up the word and says, Come. The Spirit and the
bride say, Come, because the desire of Jesus for the Church will then be
satisfied. Jesus must have joy in his own fulness now, but His satisfied joy
will be the expression of this fulness in the Church; and the time when this
will be expressed with unhindered blessing, is on the revelation of Him to
whom the Spirit and the bride say, Come. The moment the delight of God
in dealing with us is understood, then we have association with Him, and
say, Come. This is what we ought to be doing. But this is not all. If the
day-star is risen in our hearts, we shall say, “Let him that is athirst come.”
If we have discovered that this is a dry and thirsty land, where no water is,
we shall say, “Whosoever will, let him come, and take the water of life
freely.” The soul, entering into the fulness of the life of Christ, will go forth
with the cry, Whosoever will let him come. But there is always defect in the
invitation, if we have not entered into the power of Christ’s love, and into
His delight in bringing to the poor sinner the way of return to God. The
Church should be an helpmeet for Christ. But how can she be so, if she
cannot enter into His heart? and if we do this, we must do it in sorrow. He
is the master of the house, and we, the servants, must be as the Master. In
the Gospel of Luke we see Christ as the man, -- the anointed man. We see
Him in works, giving proofs that He was the sent one, doing the will of Him
that sent Him. But when the leper said to Him, “If thou will, thou canst make me clean”; this necessarily brought out the sovereignty of the Godhead, -- “I will, be thou clean.” God never comes in with comfort to the flesh, but He breaks down the flesh, and then there is comfort to the spirit. Thus it was with Hezekiah; thus it was with Paul, and he had the sentence of death in himself that he should not trust in himself but in God, who raiseth the dead. The flesh must utterly be crumbled down, that we may be drawn up to the confession that God is all and in all. The flesh has no part with the sympathy of God. Glory indeed is our portion; and Jesus says to the Father, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, as we are.” But with the flesh, its place is to be nothing. The purpose of Christ for His Church is, that she should be a conscious co-operator with God, -- the expression of His love and fulness. When we know anything of God, when we know the misery of the flesh, then we desire it should be nothing. It is said, “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Not he that is humbled, but he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. In this theater of Satan’s power and the world’s pride, to be the servant of all, I say this is the greatest proof of exaltation. We cannot do this in the flesh; but when we get a new nature, when we learn the glory of Christ, we can do it; then, and then only, can we humble ourselves.
THE WORD OF GOD, AND
THE KNOWLEDGE OF IT

We must bear in mind that all truth is the Spirit's teaching. I doubt if any can attain truth intellectually. There is a vast deal of truth taught now, which was hidden even from the greatest saints in the previous dispensation. As to the first question, -- It is a solemn thing, I feel, to talk of the value of that which God has given. We get the expression of God's love in everything that He has given; and it is a solemn thing to be questioning on the value of this and that. I believe the value of Scripture knowledge to be everything. I believe the understanding of Scripture to be a subject of vast importance. It is not that God's mind reveals merely a fact, but it is God's mind in that fact that we have to do with. I see the Apostles failing in this, with respect to the resurrection, in their going to the sepulcher after our Lord had risen; which proved, that though they had believed His words concerning the fact, they had not really entered into the mind of God in the matter. What is stated about the Church, is not only that there are things given, but that "ye may know the things that are freely given to us of God."

The resurrection happened before many eye-witnesses, but they had not the mind of God in the fact. The word to Abraham was, "Shall I hide," &c.; but the Church has it upon a larger ground than Abraham, it has "the mind of Christ," -- "an unction from the Holy One." The spiritual mind discerneth all things. A most extraordinary prerogative and place of blessing the Church is put into, it has the power of judging all things. I am not now speaking of the measure of attainment, but of the principle. The world can judge of evil, and so much the better, as they can keep a watch upon us; but they cannot judge anything about God. My knowledge must be essentially divine, that which belongs to God; for when I say I know all things, it must be from communion with God through the Word. The world may gather the elements of natural knowledge, but the Christian has the key to the whole, because he knows God. We must recollect, dear friends, that the Church is not merely a sacred body, but that it is left in the world to be a witness, and how should it be so without the Word? how could we know how to answer Satan, if we have not the weapon our Lord used against him? -- "It is written." The Lord Jesus had come into the world as a servant, and when Satan assaulted Him, He directly applied the Word to the circumstances in which He was placed, and so must we. It is not enough to know the Word, but we must bring that to bear on circumstances. These circumstances may be perfectly contrary to those of others. The circumstances of Isaiah with Hezekiah, and Jeremiah with Zedekiah, were directly opposite, but knowing the mind of God, they were enabled to act. This is what the Church of God
has to do, and we have the Word to guide us under the different circumstances in which we are placed. We have an instance, as our brother said, in the case of Nathan; and David ought to have known, by the revelation of God’s mind concerning him, that it was not at all in God’s heart that he should build the temple. It is a great mistake that good desires are a safe guide. It is well that we have them, but we should not carry them into effect till we have consulted the Lord. I believe the saints often think a thing is good to do, make up their minds to do it, and then ask God’s blessing upon it. The energy of faith sets men going. After a time faith gets cold, and that which is merely of man decays, and corruption comes in. The principle of subjection to the mind of God just leads us to this: What does God say about it? No truth is of any avail that does not come directly from God. I do not speak of instrumentality; God may use a child if He pleases, but then we shall know it to be from God. I believe it to be one of the happiest things, our dependence upon one another for blessing, God thus comforting the hearts of His saints by knitting their hearts to one another. But the flesh takes advantage of this, gets lazy, and we lose sight of individual responsibility. Individual search keeps the soul alive, and open, and healthy, to receive the influences of God’s love. God has made every individual responsible that He does not admit evil. How can I get responsibility but from God? I must either give myself implicitly to it, or, if I judge conscience at all, it must be by the testimony of God’s truth. There is no possibility of connecting tradition and conscience. The conscience is God’s link with man, and therefore Satan tries to get between the conscience and God. The Word tells us there is peace in the blood; Satan steps in between, and seeks to destroy the power of the blood. Again he steps in, trying to destroy the consciousness of sin. You have an instance of the conscience being a link in John 4. Jesus spoke important truths to the woman of Samaria, but the moment He touched her conscience, she said, “Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.” Scripture is God’s blessed weapon on the conscience. It is possible to have a blinded conscience, as in the case of the Pharisees. The tradition of washing the hands may be apparently trifling, and perhaps some would have said it was unnecessarily wounding them, when Jesus answered and said unto them, “Well did Esaias prophesy of you hypocrites,” &c. The tradition, our Lord knew, clothed man with respectability. A man’s hands might be washed, and his conscience remain untouched. It stepped in where God had the supreme right. “Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men.” Bring me a commandment of God; I get God’s authority. “Full well,” our Lord adds, “ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may hold your own tradition.” Take all classes of men, and what do they like? their own tradition. He sums it up, “making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition which ye have delivered.” The Word designates tradition as man’s, not God’s.
There is always sufficient in the Word to lay bare man’s tradition. The worst evil has a religious character. I ask any one, Can he say what temptation will come upon him tomorrow? and has he Scripture to answer Satan with? Our Lord placed Himself as a servant in the midst of the ruin of man. He answered Satan in a manner suited to His circumstances. Satan brought forward those Scriptures which related to our Lord in power. Jesus did not come for that, He did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and therefore said, “Man lives by the word; by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live.” Did the Word come when man was in a state of innocence? No, it came in grace, when he was ruined; when death had come in, the Word of God came, as a living Word, to meet all man’s ruined circumstances. Jesus repelled evil, but He touched it at every point. I say the saint cannot carry the life of God, without his having this body of light with him. There is nothing that can carry a saint rightly through the world, save this divine thing. “Man is become as one of us.”

The Lord says, “He would have you simple concerning evil, and wise concerning that which is good”; and, beloved friends, this is what Scripture knowledge brings us to.

A saint may pass safe through all the evil of the world, because his heart is full of God; and how is he to get that, but through the Word?

Beloved, we do not really believe that we are brought into the family of God. I say the Church of God are children. As the Son knows the Father, so are we brought into communion; and how can we have this but in the knowledge of His mind? There is no other knowledge or way of glorifying God, but through the knowledge of His mind.

When the Lord Jesus Christ becomes the object of my love, it is impossible but that I must like to know more of Jesus. When is it that a soul is lifted up? I say it is when he is beholding the glory of Jesus. It carries us into the fulness of the Father’s love in Christ. The moment that Jesus becomes the fulness of our hearts, I say, then Scripture becomes as honey to our mouths; every word comes with savor, because it testifies of Him.

Is it of value to know Jesus well? then that is the value of Scripture knowledge. It brings in a light that flows around the presence of God. I believe that the secret of not valuing the Scriptures, is that the person, the glories, the excellencies of Jesus are not prized.

The glory of Christ is what God has set up in competition with everything else in the world. Wherever we get the Spirit’s teaching, we look up, and take the lowest place. It is impossible for me to see a thing in God, without seeing self as nothingness. When intellect is at work, I am under the power of my mind, and not in subjection of soul to something above it; it is always in being lowly I get up. All real progress and attainment is, when we
feel something better and higher than our-selves. The sense of Divine love takes the place of self. “If any man thinks he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.” God will not say to us, Here is a soul equal to mine; we will talk about it together. But He must bring our mind into subjection to His, and then He can have communion with us.

REVELATION 1-20

It is most manifest, and should be among us a subject for praise, the progress that has been made in the understanding of this book (Revelation). The importance of giving heed to the prophetic word bears two characters, not only as regarding things to come, but we find also there is such a thing as the day-star arising *in your hearts* (2 Pet. 1:19). Now Peter had seen the glory, and this was not the result of statements of prophecy. The first thing that we must do, is to look at the day itself, to fix our eyes on the glory itself; this at once reaches all prophecy, and fixes it on the heart. Peter had beheld the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ in the glory, and that was the thing that occupied his heart. The power of prophecy is the laying bare the things that are carrying on according to the course of this world, and takes them into judgment. If I know the judgment is coming, and that the tares are to be burned, I shall not have anything to do with the tares. We find our Lord referring to Isaiah’s vision of the glory in John 12. When Isaiah had seen the glory, evil was brought out, and he exclaimed,

> Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ( Isa. 6:5).  

And when the unbelief and hardness of heart in the Jews is spoken of, we read in John 12:41, “These things said Esaias, *when he saw is his glory*, and spake of him.” Thus it is, dear friends, that the effect of beholding the glory, is to bring us to a consciousness of our position; and thus we should bring the glory of Christ to bear on our circumstances.

The grand moral importance of giving heed to the prophetic word, is in separating us from this present evil world. Prophecy is a light which God holds up to the saints, that they may not only see the things which are, but see them as God sees them. Prophecy teaches us, that God will judge the world in power; and it is for us now, knowing this, to judge morally what God will judge judicially.

Prophecy is also the expression of the object of hope to the Church.

> We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

The expression, “coming of the Lord,” is rather ambiguous, and involves two things. There is the coming of the Lord *for* His saints, and there is the
coming of the Lord with His saints; and these two facts we get in the Epistles to the Thessalonians. The testimony to the world of a fact, should never be confounded with the intelligence about that fact.

Now, as to the resurrection of the dead, all that I can say to the world about it is, there is a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. But when I speak about the Church, it is quite another thing; then I say, the Church is raised by the power of union to Christ. I would say to the saints,

If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you {Rom. 8:11}.

Thus the resurrection of the saints will be just a consummation of that already wrought in them. I see the same principle with reference to the Lord’s coming. The Thessalonians were turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven; and this is the true standing of the saints.

Now, while I admit the broad fact of the coming of the Lord, yet when I come to investigate this truth, I find a peculiar thing connected with it, and that is the gathering of the saints to Him. The catching up of the Church is the witness of the complete justification of the whole body, and the world has nothing to do with it. One thing is quite clear, when the Lord comes, His saints will come with Him.

The spirit in which we should come to the prophetic word, I should say, is in order to be better taught about the Lord Himself, than by speaking much about it. Judgment cannot be the subject for my affections to rest upon.

But there is one thing connected with the coming of Christ, and this present evil world, which may give me joy, and that is, the stream of love and mercy flowing in to stop the tide of misery and wretchedness that exists. I can love to see Christ, but I cannot love to see antichrist. So we find the Thessalonians were troubled; but Paul writes to them, “Why should you be troubled about the day of the Lord?” You will be caught up first; what have you to do with “the day?” The Church’s separation from the world puts it into the place of prophecy. When Isaiah saw the glory in the temple above, he was laying the basis of his prophecy. I see Peter, the apostle of the circumcision; I see Paul, the apostle of the uncircumcision; and I see John, in the isle of Patmos, -- all sustaining the Church in coming down from the glory to testify the hope of the Church in prophecy.

The book of Revelation has nothing to do with the Father and the children; it is not the Father guiding and teaching His children by the Spirit, but Christ sending the Revelation to His servant John by an angel.

The glory of the Lord Jesus is here presented to us as standing in the midst of the Church. John was to write the things that are, and the epistles
Papers from Collectanea 101

to the seven Churches were evidently of this character. In Rev. 4 and 5 we
get a mystical synopsis of the whole thing. The throne was seen, and the
whole result brought out. I do not acknowledge “the mystery of God” to be
the gathering of the saints; the mystery of Christ and the Church, as we find
in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but “the mystery of God,” I believe, to be
the gathering together in one all things in Christ, and put under His power,
as the Son of man.

In Rev. 4, we have the Spirits before the throne; in Rev. 5, we get the
Lamb taking the book; then we get the whole thing brought out, Rev. 6.
There is a clear difference between the Church of God caught up, and those
suffering on earth during the time of antichrist, and caught up too. In
Matt. 24, I do not see anything about the Church; it is entirely Jewish
testimony. The gospel of the kingdom, that shall be preached to all nations
for a witness, I see to be Jewish too. Their preaching was to be about that
which was future; it was the gospel of the kingdom that was coming in
power, that was to be established in righteousness. I believe the commission
in Matt. 28, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations,” was Jewish, and has
never yet had its accomplishment in its particular form; and Matthew
assumes the Jewish position in the kingdom as their right, and therefore
speaks of the going out to the Gentiles, and has never therefore yet been
accomplished. Instead of the twelve apostles accomplishing this commission,
that was expressly given to them, God raises up another apostle to go to the
Gentiles: but the literal command, in its primary character, will be
accomplished too.

In Rev. 6, we get the cry,

How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost not thou avenge our blood on
them that dwell on the earth?

Here we find the object of their hopes was not to be up there. Then, again,
we have in ch. 1,

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own
blood, and hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and they
shall reign over the earth \{Rev. 1:5, 6\}.

Here some had got the fulfilment of their expectation in being before the
throne; but there was still a “shall,” which was the object of other’s hopes.
In ch. 5, we have the grand announcement of the whole thing in full blessing.
But these saints in ch. 6 are taught to wait till another class of martyrs shall
be killed. What is the answer to this cry? The powers of heaven are shaken;
the sun became black; the moon became as blood; the stars fell unto the
earth; and the heavens departed as a scroll. A process of preparatory
judgment in God’s hand is going on, and just introduces the occasion for the
Lamb’s coming forth. What in the mean-time is the situation of the saints
above? All things are getting ready there, and all getting ready below, for the
marriage of the Lamb, and the descent of Christ and His Church.

In Rev. 7, we find the saints have got a step higher, they are not under the altar, but before the throne; they are interesting themselves in the concerns of the throne, and they have got their white robes. Before the closing of the whole scene, we find judgments coming down upon the earth in answer to prayers. Before the seventh trumpet begins to sound, we get the development of the final iniquity; they did not own God to be the God of the earth, but worshiped devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk. In the last half of Daniel’s week, the abomination of desolation is set up, but the saints are taken up first. The beast out of the bottomless pit kills the witnesses. This was to be no time of testimony, but a time of vengeance. Our Lord’s command was,

When ye see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains {Matt. 24:15}.

Your testimony is ended. This testimony ceased the last three and a half years. The coming of the Lord is for the destruction of antichrist. And then when the Lord associates Himself with the Jews, He begins the judgment on the earth. The announcement of the seventh woe brings in the close.

In Rev. 12, we get the woman, the man-child, and the great dragon. The man-child is taken out of the way; the woman is left to the consequences of weakness. It is perfectly clear that Christ, in the first place, is to rule, but the saints are to be caught up too. Christ cannot he manifested without His body, and therefore the saints are caught up. After they are caught up, Satan, having lost heaven for ever, rages on earth for three and a half years. The effect of this is, that the woman flees into the wilderness (Jesus told them to flee to get out of the way of Satan). In ch. 13, we get the thrones given to the beast. I do not believe that the beast is antichrist; for I do not believe antichrist will ever have his deadly wound healed, which the beast had; but I believe it to be the Roman empire in its last form, strengthened with the new power.

In Rev. 14, we get the Lord reaping the earth; but first we get the connection of earth and heaven. Mount Zion, I believe to be the place of royal grace on the earth: and we find Christ in association with a suffering people upon the earth. Then goes forth the gospel, for the day of His judgment is come. The next thing we get is the announcement of Babylon’s fall, and the judgment of all those who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. In verse 13, where it is said,

Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:
Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Here we have not the saints that are caught up, but those who die on the
In Rev. 15, we get another sign, -- all those that have suffered coming into holiness through judgment. Then we find the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony opened in heaven, but none could enter in. Now the time was come for the filling up of the wrath of God, and “the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God; and none could enter into it till the seven plagues were fulfilled,” which we have in Rev. 16.

Rev. 17:5, is, I believe, properly ecclesiastical. Here we find the woman, or great Babylon, riding the beast at her own will; but immediately after, we have the destruction of this Babylon, all her glory and splendor gone, and she become the habitation of devils, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird and beast. The ten horns hate the whore, and agree to give their power to the beast. Thus the corrupt system of the earth is turned into a diabolical one.

Then in Rev. 19, we get the Church married to the Lamb. When everything was prepared, and the earth was made ready, the Lamb comes forth and displays his wife. He comes forth as a warrior, at the head of the heavenly army.

In Rev. 20, we get the thrones of judgment. John saw here three classes of persons, -- all these three reigning with Christ a thousand years. The remaining chapters will come into the question for to-morrow, -- the glory of the Church, and the blessing flowing out of her. The Church is set in grace, -- grace is our grand characteristic; and even when joined with the Lord in glory, grace will still be the distinctive character of the Church.

2 SAMUEL 22, 23:1-7

David here retraces what specially marked out the path of the Lord Jesus Himself; also the judgment upon the condition of the failure of all on which man’s hopes stood. That which primarily struck me in this passage, was the remarkable contrast between the song of David after he had done with Saul, and the song of David after he had done with himself; and it is remarkable that the Spirit of God has so placed them in juxtaposition here. In the first, there is exultation, victory, thanksgiving; in the second, the result of all is just this -- “Although my house be not so with God.”

The path of the Spirit of grace is always the path that Jesus took here; getting nothing in the world, but going on nearer and nearer to God. It is
remarkable how in this Psalm the Lord Jesus is in Jewish circumstances, justice, judgment, and such like. We find at once here all that which is so fully true of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is here; and connected with this, we find most remarkable allusions to the whole history of Israel.

The next thing is, he goes on till he sets the Lord Jesus Christ as being avenged of His enemies, and having been made the head of the heathen. The history of Israel, looked at by the Spirit of God, is identified with the history of Christ as in Acts 18. In these last words of David, it is the God of Jacob, the Rock of Israel. In the 4th verse, he speaks of that one who should reign in peace over man; that true Solomon was what he was looking for. There must come in one with the power of judgment also to exterminate this evil, vv. 6 and 7.

I would trace some traits of what David was up to the time of his contending with Goliath. We see in him the one forgotten of man, taken up of God (1 Sam. 18). Just the contrast with Saul; he the strength of the flesh, a goodly person, head and shoulders higher than the people, and so on; but all the strength of the flesh. What we specially see in David up to this time, is his humility and forgetfulness of himself, and his simplicity of faith in doing the Lord’s work as a matter of course. There is no boast about it. He kept the sheep; well, it was his duty to keep the sheep, and if a lion or a bear come amongst them, of course it was the shepherd’s duty to send them away or to slay them. And it is here I see the power of faith, -- the full consciousness of the Lord’s working with him, and doing these energetic works with simple reference to duty.

While the energy of faith was found in Jonathan, there was a great deal of blessing accompanying the career of Saul. Wherever he turned, he vexed his enemies; and though he had been in a certain sense rejected, we find, for the sake of Israel, the Lord blessing him.

When David came to the camp, he had learned -- not from what he saw around him, but from his own secret communion -- the faithfulness of God. There was no other thought in his heart, and therefore he is astonished. “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” He identifies the glory of God with Israel, and, in the simple consciousness of His faithfulness and power, he knows that no uncircumcised man can have any power against Israel. There is no question about it; he knows that the same God, who helped him to slay the lion and the bear, will help him to slay the Philistine also. And afterwards in the character of David, I find the consciousness of weakness, the consciousness of infirmity; never thinking of taking vengeance against Saul, never (except in one instance, and he got well chastened for it) acting without consulting God. He always felt that he was in conflict with a power that he could not set aside; he had no strength, but in God, to put down any, though they may persecute him even
to death. No matter who comes against him, whether Doeg the Edomite, or anybody else; Jonathan, if it could have been so (but it could not, because God had a faithful remnant even in the camp of Israel); I say he had no strength, but in direct simple reference to God in every circumstance. Therefore he says, “Shall I go down to Keilah?” The Lord says, “Go down to Keilah.” “Shall I go up to the Philistines, wilt Thou deliver them into my hand?” God says, “Go up, I will deliver them into thy hand.” In the cave of Adullam, what a company they were; but in the cave of Adullam was God’s King, God’s Prophet, God’s Priest; and there was God’s power, God Himself was with him.

When Jacob comes before Pharaoh, he blesses him, he is identified with the power of blessing, because he is identified with God. Beloved brethren, if we are seeking God’s glory, we shall not want to justify ourselves. I do not mean that we should have this feeling, “I do not care for it; what do I care?” but, as Peter says, “doing well, suffering for it, and taking it patiently.” This was the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, and should be the picture of every saint. But now the day is coming upon Saul, when he has the terrible consciousness that the Lord is not with him. But, not to dwell upon this, Saul dies, and David takes the power, and after this we find him acting in the strength of the flesh, not waiting upon the Lord, not consulting Him. About building the house, it was a good thought, but he did not consult the Lord; and in bringing up the ark, though it was not a bad thing, he had not consulted the Lord about it, and the Lord breaks forth upon him; and it was only the sovereign mercy of the Lord that kept him from fighting against Israel, because He turned the hearts of the Philistines against him. And again, in numbering the people; and in the case of Uriah; wherefore the sword never departed from his house.

We have a lovely character of David up to the time of his taking the kingdom; he was a man after God’s own heart, and now, not like Saul, -- beginning in the flesh, and ending in the flesh, -- but the man in whom most precious grace shone, though the blessings, that were the result of faith, were too great for the faith that brought them to bear. And this is a most amazing warning; and the only thing to do, is to be always going down, down, to the Cross. And now, I ask, is there a single heart, that has the Spirit of Christ in it, that does not say, “Although my house be not so with God?” Can we say God’s house is such as it should be, for God to be satisfied in it? There is truly the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; but should we be contented with the ruin and evil that is now in the house? Surely we would not say that there is a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and that Christ’s glory is a thing of no consequence. And, beloved friends, we look forward to the coming of the Lord; that is what brightens the heart, it is that upon which our affections can rest, as a scene and sphere of blessing where all our associations shall be pure and happy. Then the order and condition of
the world shall come down from God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; even as life comes to us individually from Jesus now, so to the world then; and then all things will take their place in their proper relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church, the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (Eph. 1); Head over all things to the Church, &c.

Israel, the Gentiles, and then all men shall call Him blessed. There is the sphere of blessing, and it is He Himself that is the thing manifested; and we are to look for no blessing apart from Him who is the center of it all. The great characteristic of that day is the blessing coming down according to God’s mind. God is the center of blessing, but He has not shut Himself up from us; God is love, and it flows out from Him through one another.

David looked not for the setting right of his house then, but he looked beyond, for the morning without clouds, and so must we. The Apostle Paul said, “All seek their own,” even in his time. See how soon his house was not so with God. Well, I say, we want something; we want not only to have the Lord Jesus Christ as the object of hope, but to see Him in the display and unfolding of the glory, in heaven and in earth, of which He will be the center, and the thoughts of God’s heart finding their rest in that glory.

I would close now with one practical remark, which I would urge upon you, and it is, that the effect of all this should be to throw us back into the first part of the history of David. Here we find David’s heart in sympathy with the sufferings of Christ’s heart; and oh! beloved friends, though we are called now to have fellowship with His sufferings, yet a little while, and He shall compass us about with songs of deliverance.

THE DISPENSATIONS AND THE REMNANTS

A dispensation is any arranged dealing of God in which man has been set before his fall, and having been tried, has failed, and therefore God has been obliged to act by other means. Man was good for nothing; but in order to bring out the variousness of Christ’s glory, and the resources we have in Him, man was put into these different circumstances. It was not simple promise, because this rests solely on the faithfulness of the promiser. Further, when we talk of a faithful remnant, there has been a remnant without a close at all. There has always been a dispensation, and always immediate failure, and consequently there has necessarily been a remnant all through. Joshua, Caleb, the seven thousand, -- always a faithful few, who were just the exhibition in that sense of the Father’s work. This is a very serious question, because it supposes that we are at the close of this dispensation. The responsibility is most important, but yet simple to them that understand, and plain to them that keep knowledge; and the Lord has said, “He that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness.” The question
supposes, that there has been a certain body in contrast to others; that there
has been failure; and then that some should be faithful at the close, when
judgment comes in. There has been one in every dispensation. If darkness
had set in, it brought out the character of those who did not sink with the
darkness. And then, beloved friends, our duty is not only faithfulness in
ourselves, but most especially grace; the faithfulness is called for with
reference to the evil, but our proper position is grace towards those who are
in the darkness.

We find when the golden calf was made, -- the first manifestation of
this, -- Moses takes the tabernacle of the congregation, which was not yet set
up, without the camp. Joshua stays there, but Moses goes back to the people.
Joshua, the type of the captain of salvation; but Moses had another character
to bear, and in studying this, we shall find our position as a remnant. Before
the proper dispensation of God, we get the world before the flood; not
exactly a dispensation, but a body of men left, in a certain sense, to
themselves. There was testimony, as in Enoch and Noah, but no dispensed
order or system by which God acted as governing the earth. We find even
in this, that God acts in the grace of His own character. Noah was a faithful
witness; in him was the great principle, though this was not strictly a
dispensation. Adam had not, before his fall, taken his character as head of
the first-Adam family; so Christ, till after His resurrection, did not take His
place as head of the second-Adam family. “The Lord said unto Noah,” &c.
(Gen. 7:1; 6:8, &c.), two things, “Thee have I seen righteous”; and, thou
hast “found grace.” The earth was corrupt, and there came the flood upon
it; then the remnant was called out. To this faithful remnant, He
communicates the result of His looking upon the earth, -- as He did to
Abraham respecting Sodom; so, before He destroys Babylon, He
communicates His mind to His Church, or chosen ones. Another thing as
regards the close of this dispensation is, that it does not come till all remedy
is impossible; till then, God never acts in judgment; till then, He never
destroys what His hands have created. At this time of Noah, all remedy was
impossible, all flesh had corrupted itself; and it is not only that God knows
all remedy is impossible, but He never acts till He has justified His own
conduct, -- towards the Amorites for instance.

In the Jewish dispensation there were always those that were to be
saved; σωζόμενοι, the same as in Acts 2:47. The contrast is constantly put
between the remnant and others in the prophets, &c. As regards this
dispensation, it is just the same truth as regards the Jews (Rom. 11) out of
the ten tribes, seven thousand preserved; so of the Church, if we take the
epistles of John or Jude, we see evidently this faithful remnant, but under
different circumstances, and placed in different positions, those in whom the
Lord has proved His grace and faithfulness. As regards the remnant in
Israel, they refused to go along with the evil around them. This precedes service, -- God found Noah faithful; Lot showed love to the world, it was all selfishness; he chose Sodom, and then his righteous soul was vexed; and we read, God remembered Abraham, and delivered Lot, &c. There will, I believe, be some coming out lame and weak, who have brought upon themselves sorrow of spirit, not having done as Caleb did, followed the Lord fully. There are many who will doubtless be saved so as by fire, but there will be some found faithful; so that in every dispensation the faithful were the remnant all through. At the beginning it was not so. Israel, the Church, were set in blessing, but evil came in, and then the faithful remnant. And it is not only faithfulness in the world, but faithfulness in the failure of what God had established to be faithful in the world. Failure now was not of the same grossly evil character as the breach of the ten commandments, but sin against the higher blessing, which is worse. The apostasy began in the time of the apostles. In John and Jude the same corruptions were there, and it was of those that Enoch spoke, who declared the judgment of the Lord. The real place of faithfulness is in the remnant that judges the dispensation, and not in the dispensation itself; more spiritual judgment is required now. It was so from the time of John (1 John 4:1). This is most important, for it was not in the corporate power of the dispensation. It is important to connect the remnant all through the dispensation with those who will testify at the close. By the spirit of prophecy, God has always wrought deliverance, and consequently brought in something future for the saint to cling to. In Noah no mediation, but always afterwards; like the Lord Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, the heart yearning over those upon whom judgment is coming. It must be the spirit of grace, and the spirit of intercession accompanying it. So in the Psalms, “How long, O Lord; for ever?” This respecting the wicked, the spirit of prophecy saying, “how long?” He might have brought in some new thing, as in Habakkuk, but now He knew this was impossible. Isa. 6, the character of Ahaz was such, that God, knowing what was coming about, saw what support the remnant would require. The first thing required is the perception of the glory of God, -- I may say, of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:18). The first effect of this, is the consciousness of one’s own condition, -- not the Church apart from Him, -- but it always begins here, in the seeing of one’s own condition. So Gideon (Judg. 6:28), first throwing down the idolatry that was there. Isaiah says, “Woe is me”; not Israel, but himself; then his lips are touched, and he becomes a witness of God, he pronounces judgment on the people; and immediately the spirit of intercession says, “How long?” There then came a development of the Lord’s dealings in answer to the prophet’s intercession. The same thing takes place exactly in Habakkuk, and in Moses about the golden calf. We get first the spirit of prophecy, then the remnant found faithful; then the necessity, as a positive present thing, of bringing in some hope; then the faithfulness
of the remnant proved at the close of the dispensation. The very fact of their being called out into a place of testimony is the painful proof that all is evil around. And whatever love, whatever intercession, all that we can say, and all we can desire, will never alter the judgment of God. Jeremiah had wept and prayed for Jerusalem, but he was still the testimony that Israel had failed, and they could not bear it. Moses said, “If not, blot me out of thy book.” Paul desired to be an Azazel for the people, but the testimony was against them, and must be where there is righteousness. But our place is grace, our proper disposition is the testimony of grace; our place was righteousness before testimony, as Noah, Lot, Nathanael, the Lord Jesus Himself, then grace. The Father’s work has always been grace. We are found in the place of righteousness, and the practical power of our conduct will be the testimony of righteousness; and troubles, reproach, &c., will always accompany it, but our privilege is to carry along grace. Moses interceded, because he identified God and the people; but there is something more: he had anticipated grace, and he takes the tabernacle afar off out of the camp. He then gets into special communion with God. God speaks to him face to face, he takes the veil off. There is the spirit of intercession, in the remnant going out without the camp. Joshua abode there; when Moses had to inquire, he went there, but returned to the camp afterwards. We ought to have such thorough assurance of our communion with God, and nearness to Him, that we may be able to go into the camp without fear. It might have been questioned what right he had to do so; we have no revelation spoken of, but he had certainly the secret of God (Ex. 33). It was not a bit in order, neither the staves, nor the boards, nor anything else, but he had the secret of God, he had God’s mind, and could go into the place before the tabernacle was set up. We have not got the tabernacle either, because it is in glory, but we have the spirit of grace, and know the tabernacle above; and that is just our proper position, and not to go and put the tabernacle back again into the camp. In Jer. 11, the Lord was weary of their repentance. He speaks to the prophet as if he were Jerusalem. This was the character of the Lord Jesus, “The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me,” and Psa. 44. Jeremiah sat alone, not going on with the people; yearning over them, but not going on with them; v. 17, “For thou hast filled me with indignation.” He says, “Do not go to them, let them return to you”; have nothing to do with the bad fishes, gather the good into vessels, separate the precious from the vile; “and thou shalt be as my mouth; they shall fight against thee, but thou shalt not fight against them.” Never mind that your righteousness is not found out, never mind the discontent at the tabernacle being removed; if you are talking with God face to face, do not be surprised that those in the camp do not hear what you are talking about; never let your good be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. We are not to justify ourselves, but to commit ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously;
as in the case of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Moses was the meekest man; then God comes in. God will take care to justify us, wherever there is the spirit of meekness. He will tell our character, as He did that of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is painful to the flesh. Let us give a reason, of course, of the hope that is in us, but always have it to God. The power of our duty is in communion with God; and where He has recorded His name, He will meet and bless, that is, “where two or three are gathered together in His name.” The only possibility of being faithful is, by doing as Moses and Isaiah did, -- seeing the glory, and communing with the Lord face to face. We may have trial, as Jeremiah had, but our position is to testify of grace; and let us not be surprised, if others do not understand the fulness of the grace that we have been taught; and oh, beloved friends, we shall always have plenty of reason to be humbled.

The Aaronic priesthood was evidently a provision of mediation without any reference to judgment, and this is our proper place now, not the Melchisedec priesthood yet; because we follow Christ, we have fellowship with it in spirit, but all our service is according to the Aaronic priesthood. This is what Christ stands in as to service, -- in order, He is after Melchisedec; in Heb. 9, altogether after the analogy of the service of Aaron. Melchisedec priesthood (Gen. 14), that great sovereign title of God, Most High, and Possessor of heaven and earth; this is the character for blessing, and thus the Lord Jesus Christ comes to be the priestly center of all blessing. It is a priesthood of blessing and praise; no sacrifice then, the value remains, but it is a priesthood of blessing; not the maintaining of the communion and priesthood of a people who are passing though a world contrary to God, as the Aaronic priesthood does. But in one sense we are not to consider the Melchisedec priesthood a higher than the Aaronic, -- it is the king acting as priest, -- and our place is as kings with Melchisedec, we reign with Him. The place of the Church always is going on to perfection; when the Melchisedec priesthood is spoken of, it is perfection, not intercession for our imperfection, but perfection in unity with the Lord Jesus Christ. “As he is, so are we, in this world,” -- not as He was -- that we shall never be, but as He is, associated with Him in the Melchisedec priesthood, His life ours -- neither beginning of days, nor end of life. Jesus takes His place by this of mediator of blessing, not intercession. I do not say there will be none, but this is the special point, as in Eph., Col., &c. As regards the Aaronic priesthood, we get the Lord Jesus Christ, the present mediator for the Church; there is the discernment between clean and unclean, offering of sacrifice, teaching the statutes, while the written Word of God is our only guide. We are in the place to learn the mind of God, that we might teach the statutes, and they will be according to the written Word.

We should recognize the two principles of union and mediation. Besides
His mediation for us, between the two parties, as Aaron, He has, in His own person, all the promises of God; and if I am in Christ, I get the promises too; I get them in union with Him, all the promises of God, &c. (or the difference between righteousness and priesthood). I get righteousness as being united to Him, it is already settled, and then I am in the presence of God righteous, as He is righteous, -- accepted in the beloved, righteous in His righteousness. But besides this, I have mediation to maintain my communion, because of what I really am; the blood was a token, but was soon forgotten; but this was all before the Red Sea. Pharaoh, and the Canaanites, -- very different types of Satan. Israel were slaves to Pharaoh, but were conquerors of the Canaanites.

Covenant is not promise; *diatheekee*, is just covenant, -- anything revealed for all. Unless we can tell what it is to have nothing, and yet possess all things, we cannot understand covenant. All arises from the union of the Church with the Lord Jesus Christ; everything is mine, glory, resurrection, -- everything. There was no covenant made with man {Gen. 3:15} -- a mere sentence passed upon Satan; the covenant is with the Lord Jesus Christ. To Abraham, a promise, which is confirmed to the seed in the accomplishment of obedience, -- and the obedience of Christ is ours. “In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed” (Acts 3). Paul says, “Not of seeds, as of many,” &c.; the true seed was Christ, the true Isaac {name means laughter}, the laughter of heaven and earth. It is only in the Spirit, and by the Spirit, that we enter into this, because it is all in heaven. Israel could have no blessing, but in Jesus; no covenant, old or new, independent of Him; whatever blessing we get, it is in connection with Him. In Matt. the blood of the new covenant is spoken of as “shed,” not the new covenant made. Whatever promises there may be, they are all in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God by us.

Wherever we cannot speak as the oracles of God, we should be silent; nothing hinders light to our souls more than playing with unascertained truth. “As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word.”
Nine Lectures
on
The First Epistle of John

Explanatory

It should be stated that these Lectures on 1 John were delivered in London more than thirty years ago, and also that, while there is abundant evidence that they were carefully reported, they have never been seen or revised by the Lecturer. Many will be interested in their perusal, as well as in comparing them with the Lectures of a later date; and beyond this, they contain so much valuable truth, and truth so simply put, that, with the Lord’s blessing, their publication cannot fail to be for the profit of His people.

London, 1882

LECTURE 1

The great purpose of God, in all His dealings in grace, is to bring us -- and to bring us individually too -- into fellowship with Himself. “Truly our fellowship is with the Father.” Thus we have the full knowledge of God as far as it can be known, and that in full communion with Himself. Not in the way of creation; that is, not merely as creatures, for we are made partakers of the Holy Ghost that there may be power. “We dwell in Him and He in us.” There cannot be anything more intimate.

It is not knowledge or science that has anything to say to this; for if it be but the human mind working on the things of God, it is but that “high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.” Babes in Christ have possession of these things, they have not to seek them, they are in possession of them, though of course they have to ripen in acquaintance with them. Knowledge itself, mere knowledge, puffs up; but, being brought low, the Spirit of God can act upon the soul and give knowledge in communion with God.

Although the epistle of John is very abstract, yet it is abstract about things that the very feeblest saint knows in Christ. God is brought down to
our nature, for God can come down to us in our weakness in Christ. The
difference between the writings of Paul and John is this, that Paul unfolds to
us the counsels of God in creation -- the counsels of God towards the Jews
(there are various developments of Christ’s person, as in Hebrews and
Colossians); but John may be called more abstract, because he speaks of the
nature of God Himself. The purpose and object of God is to bring us into full
fellowship with Himself.

There are three things I would here notice:

First, the work of God, by which we can stand in His presence
perfectly free from any question of sin, so that we can enjoy all that
God is;

second, justification by faith and acceptance in the Beloved -- the
perfect cleansing of the conscience, knowing we are accepted so as
to be able to be before Him in perfect peace;

third, the new birth, commonly called regeneration. There must be
a new nature capable of affections towards God. An orphan who
never knew a father has the affections of a child, is capable of loving
a father, and is often very unhappy because without the object
towards whom those affections would naturally flow. So the capacity
to love God is that which we get by being partakers of the divine
nature. The Holy Ghost is that which gives us competency to enjoy
these things. We have an unction from the Holy One given to us, to
enable us to enjoy what God has given to us. There must be our
standing in the presence of God without our conscience being at work
at all; a nature capable of enjoying God -- a new nature, and power
to walk in that new nature, which is by the Holy Ghost dwelling in
us.

The thing brought especially before us is what that is we are to enjoy --
the nature of the thing brought down to the understanding of a poor sinner;
and that tries the conscience, just as it moves the affections. God is light, and
if I am brought into the blessedness of what God is, it must put the
conscience to the test; and I ask, Am I standing in it? If I am capable of it,
then I enjoy all the blessedness of standing in the light, and am in a position
to test all that pretends to possess this character. “God is light” {1 John 1:5}:
He is bringing this home to the hearts of the saints. And this must be by
presenting Christ Himself. There was, at the time this epistle was written,
a great deal made of development, and he wants to bring them back to the
truth. Science, so called, had got in. The character of apostolic teaching was
to bring them back “earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the
saints.” “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned.” “That
which was from the beginning.” My soul ought to know Christ better every
day. The moment I get “God manifest in the flesh,” I cannot know anything out of Him, but that which is false. The question of knowledge is to give place to Christ. If I get there, nothing can shake me; I am in Christ. “These things write we unto you that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” Do you believe on the Son? Then rest there.

1 John 1:1. First, it was from the beginning; second, it was a real substantial person they had known familiarly, not a doctrine; that is the blessed secret of all. If they have Christ, then they have all that the Father has, all that is revealed of Him; and they cannot go from that without being wrong. They have got eternal life, the perfect revelation of God -- the power of life in Christ. This is what is presented to us as the full enjoyment and the safeguard of the saint. It is ours, though that which was with the Father, yet was so near to us; not union, but so near to us that nothing could be so near as Christ Himself. Instead of wanting anything between myself and Christ, it is revealed to me, so that nothing could be so near to me as Christ Himself. This is the eternal life that was with the Father.

And it is as we study the Lord Jesus Christ that we shall have affections established towards Him, which nothing can break. The poor woman who was a sinner had such confidence in Him that she had come to Him, and loved Him; but the secret of our joy is to know the love of Christ to us; and then we have confidence in Him, understanding that God has come so near as to reveal Himself, and inspire confidence. The more we go out and study Christ -- the more we penetrate into His ways -- the more we learn the depth of all these riches in Him, the more is His divine fulness revealed to us. If it is His taking little children up in His arms, I see in it what God’s character is. “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” Having truth thus revealed in a person, I get it for the humblest, lowest, poorest sinner, because it is a personal act of our Lord Jesus Christ. “That which was from the beginning.” And now, mark, this “Word of life,” while it shows what God was in Christ, shows it communicated to us; and everything, true or false, is tested by this. So he asks, “Is there love?” No. Then it is not of God. “He that loveth not knoweth not God.” This is now what he teaches. He brings me up to the object -- what God was. “That which we have seen with our eyes”; “God is light”; “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”; the communication of life to the Christian; the height of the source of the life communicated to us. But in the Gospel of John you will find, “Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace,” “which thing is true in Him and in you.” “An old commandment which was from the beginning”; now a new commandment, become true in Him and in you. He called it a new commandment, though an old one -- a simple truth that Christ Himself is become our life, “that the life of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal bodies.” If a poor sinner is converted, he has the life communicated from
Christ up there, which comes down to the lowest need in us; and yet how high it rises!

This Gospel begins before creation. Genesis begins with creation, and gives the scene in which all is to be acted; but John gives Him who created. So also in the epistle to the Hebrews, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth,” “Thou art the same” -- we get Christ before the creation, and then in creation. “The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” and became the source of life; and we receive our life from Him who existed, before all worlds, from everlasting. We receive our new nature from Him, and are united to Him who was before the world, and who created the world. This has a double effect (if right with God), lifting our hearts up in ten thousand thousand thanks, if it does manifest the life of Jesus. The least thing manifests the life of Jesus. Whatever does not manifest Him is of the world; whatever is not the manifestation of the life of Christ in our souls, that is sin. And do not think that a hardship. No; rejoice in it. I would have your hearts enlarged; as the Apostle says, “Be ye also enlarged.” Oh to have Christ so before the eye as to be able to judge everything in His light! Do not think it is great learning; no, there may be the lust of the mind as well as the lust of the flesh; but if in communion with God, it discerns all things.

I call your minds back to see the way we received the life; it was in the humblest and simplest way. He who came into the world to save sinners, He has made us vessels of His fulness. Thus we have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and display it. “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” {1 John 1:3}. The effect is, we have the Father and the Son, and we have nothing more to seek. I have the Father and the Son. Can I get truth outside the Father and the Son? I may have more to learn. If a man is on the ocean, there may be a great deal he has to discover of it, but he has not to get there; he says, “I am there.” So I am in the truth. I have got a great deal to learn; but I am in the Father and the Son, and I am in the truth. I do not want to seek it if I am in it. I have the very eternal God in whom I dwell -- I have come to the Father. When there is a consciousness of this, oh, what comfort and what peace! It not only guards us from evils without, but it gives spiritual rest within. If I am striving to get something, I have no communion. If I want to get to the Father, when I am in His presence already, I have no communion; and if I am not brought up there, I cannot have the sense of what the conscience ought to be in God’s presence. The joy is, that our fellowship is with the Father, and not in the hope of getting there.

“These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” {1 John 1:4}. There is where God brings the saint if there is humbleness. And if there is not humbleness, we shall slip. When we lose the sense of God’s
presence, the sense of it, I say (because we are always in His presence in truth), we are at the point to sin. My natural character or flesh will show itself if I am out of His presence. There is such a thing as the saint’s dwelling in the conscious presence of God without fear. If there is anything between me and God, my conscience will be at work; but when the Spirit is not grieved, the soul is in the presence of God for joy; learning holiness, it is true, but in joy, because occupied in communion instead of in detection; and that is a great thing. There is such a thing as being in His presence without the conscience having to be exercised, and in perfect joy. “My peace I give unto you.” What was that peace? There were no wandering affections -- there could not be, and so there was full peace of heart with God. Christ was divinely perfect -- all His affections always in tune with God. Now, through the grace and power of God, we may be brought to that, Christ having been revealed to the soul, the world is cast out, and Christ is everything, and there is perfect joy. This is often what our experience is after conversion, but afterwards the love to Christ grows less fervent -- the world creeps in little by little, and we have less joy.

There are three things which characterize a Christian. First, “he is in the light as God is in the light” {1 John 1:7}. Now God had said to Israel, “I will dwell in the thick darkness”; and at Sinai told them to keep off; “for if so much as a beast touch the mountain it shall be stoned.” There was a great deal of good there, but He was in His pavilion of darkness, not seen. God acted towards Israel, but did not show Himself. Now the veil is rent from top to bottom, and all is light. It is the very nature of the truth we are in, that God is now manifestly revealed, and he that is come in through the rent veil stands in the light of God’s holiness, perfect purity in itself, and it shows everything that is not so. Second, “Fellowship one with another.” We are there together, and all have fellowship by the same Holy Ghost dwelling in all. Third, we can be there because “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” The more thoroughly in the light {practically}, the more it is seen that there is no spot on us through that blood. This could not be said of a Jew; but now the righteousness of God is set forth, and we are brought into the light as He is in the light. Is this a thing that makes you unhappy, or that gives you joy of heart? If we are true of heart, we shall be glad of the light to detect the darkness in us. “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” We do not want to escape from the light, but to be searched by it -- not with a pretension that we have no sin, but the consciousness that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. For the effect of being in the light is, that we confess our sins. “In whose spirit there is no guile.” There are two things there, the confession and the love.

1 John 1:1-4 are that there may be no deception. Then in v. 5,
This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

Now that is the test when Christ is known in the presence of God: there is no question about sin. How came I there? I came through the blood -- then I have got peace. If I am reasoning about God, this is another thing; but if we have got there, we got there through the blood, and that gives peace, a peace which is never lost. There is a peace which may be lost: happy at first, while fresh from conversion, and all is easy and smooth with us, our hearts attracted by the grace of Christ; but if failure comes in, conscience is awakened, a sense of sin alarms, and we lose our peace, so that we do not know where we are. Until we have apprehended that we are brought to God -- where we never could be brought if there remained a spot of sin upon us -- we cannot know settled peace in our souls, as spoken of in Hebrews, “no more conscience of sin”; and that is enduring peace. The power of the affections of the new nature forms a link of fellowship with God; and only as we keep in the light, shall we know the practical enjoyment of it. We must be in the light that evil thoughts may be shut out, so that we may have fellowship with God. In how many things, in our intercourse with one another or with the world, self comes in and is not judged by us! There is a practical consciousness in the Christian that he cannot go on without God, and he judges, waits, and confesses, trusting in God, and thus his heart is kept calm and in peace.

There are two things: first, the manifestation of the eternal life -- for it has been manifested to us; second, we are partakers of it, I have fellowship with the Father and the Son. He has communicated to us that nature, so that we can delight in His fellowship.

The Lord give us to keep ourselves in the love of God -- in His presence, in the light, detecting everything that is not of Him, judging it, and thus to be in the enjoyment of His love.
The beginning of this chapter refers to the preceding chapter; there he is speaking of the manifestation of the light and life, for the life is the light of men.

If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth {1 John 1:6}.

Then in the second chapter he is speaking of the resources of a Christian when he fails, as, alas! we know we all do fail. In the former chapter, as we were seeing, he speaks of three things:

First, in the light, as God is in the light;
second, fellowship with God;
and third, the blood of Christ cleansing from all sin.

There, in the second chapter, the Christian having sinned, we have an Advocate with the Father, and this is bringing out quite another principle altogether. It is not merely having a divine nature, because that he has when he fails; but he is not walking in the power of it, and consequently fails, and therefore needs an Advocate with the Father, and this is quite another aspect; it is not joying in God, but the interference of God in grace in the person of a Mediator, one between God and us; but this is not a question of justification; there is no possibility of anything being imputed to me. Christ was made sin for us, and His work has put us in God's presence without any question, and that we never lose. It is not that here, but another thing of importance to me -- the daily exercise of affection. It is not that we fail before Him, but down here we do. In many things we offend all; we fail constantly, inwardly and outwardly; but there is the exercise of affections, according to what we are down here, an increasing in the knowledge of God, and what His love is, and what our real state is. God demands righteousness; but it is not, as many think, that the work has to be done over again; for the moment I believe, I am God's righteousness in Christ. There is no decay of it; it is always of the same value; it is a question of who He is; it is founded on the fact that in virtue of this sacrifice I can now exercise my conscience in a way I could not. He is Jesus Christ the righteous{1 John 2:1}. The righteousness is always in the presence of God. He has not to look for that now in His dealing with us; He is always there. God has been perfectly displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and now I can go into His presence and not be afraid, because of this righteousness. How is my intercourse with God to be carried on by such a poor, failing thing as I am? It goes on in virtue of what I am in Christ. Christ's righteousness does not need to be maintained, but I need to be sustained. Suppose I have failed, well here the advocacy comes in; Christ's intercession comes in to meet me; it does not acquire the
righteousness, but lifts me up if I fail. The intercession of Christ as the Advocate with the Father leads me to judge myself according to the light I have been brought into by this righteousness. My discernment of good and evil increases as I grow up into God. Here are two things needed -- grace to keep us in the way, and mercy to restore us to communion. There is all the grace we need by the road, and he is assuring us constantly of the certainty of our position before God. Peter did not lose his trust and confidence in God, though he denied his Master. Satan might come and say to the soul, “It is all over with you; you are too bad; His sentence is gone out against you, and there is no hope.” So confidence in God may be lost; but before Peter failed, Christ had prayed for him; thus he learned what he was in himself, and knew the grace that sustained him, and then he uses it to profit. “Strengthen thy brethren.” He was competent to help those who were weak and failing like himself. It is exactly the same grace that met us at the first that sustains us all the journey through.

Here is the government of God, as a father with his family. It is not like “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone”; no, God having an interest in us will never leave us alone or give us up; but He will deal with us according to our ways. As I have before remarked, this is sometimes made to depend on our acts and doings, as in John 14:23, 15:10; but God's love to us is not made to depend on our love to Him, on our conduct; for after all it is grace that enables us to go on well. God, and Christ as a Son over His own house deals with the children. If we speak rashly to our brother, or talk abroad carelessly through the streets, and see some vanity, we shall find the effect of it in our own souls at the end of the day with God. If any angry word escapes me, I feel the effect at the end of the day with God; grace will restore us; He will follow us and bring us back. If we had a child that was unruly we should not give it up, but wait upon it in love, and correct it in hope of reclaiming it. I might see a child go wrong and leave it; but because it is my own child I must go after it and bring it back. This is the patience of His grace. At the same time God can never give His holiness; no, He could not pass by or suffer unholiness in His child, therefore it was needful Christ should die. Thus God was debtor to Christ, on account of His work for the glory of His character. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” “I have glorified thee on the earth.”

The same thing is true in regard of His advocacy in virtue of the propitiation. Christ exercises His advocacy for us. If there is failure, God sees it; but Jesus comes in and intercedes for us. Some say that we have to use the advocacy of Christ, but it is not so. Christ uses it for us. Why do I turn to God when I have failed? It is because He uses it, and fresh grace is applied, fresh grace is wrought in my mind. There is nothing in us that
brings us back to God but fresh grace working in our conscience. Therefore it is said, “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father.” It is not “if any man repent.” It is just as much pure grace as at the first when He looked upon us when we were in our sins. In the case of Peter the Lord foretold him what would take place. “Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.” We all want sifting; “but I have prayed for thee.” Before Peter got into the danger the Lord had prayed for him, and His grace is in exercise, and at the moment when it is needed. “He looked at Peter,” and his weeping was an avowal of Christ’s intercession. The grace and intercession of Jesus is towards us in all the grace and wisdom of God. It is grace which makes our very failure the occasion of God’s coming in with more grace. The righteousness is not called in question; it is not touched. It is through the intercession of Christ that I can get to God about my evil thoughts. All the consciousness of failure, all the exercises of heart, are the occasion of my going to the Father, and so many links to link my soul to God. We learn it in our every-day wants and failures; we are all astray if we do not see that God has a holy foundation for all this. It does not follow that we must fail any more than that we must sin. We ought not to fail, though we all do. Our wretched self-confidence makes us fail, and then comes in the advocacy.

In a similar manner it was Aaron’s rod that swallowed up every other rod, showing divine power in Priesthood; that is the way grace takes way the murmuring of the heart. Two years Israel were in the desert, and thirty-eight years more because they did not go up and take the land as they had been told; and if we, like Israel, will not go up it detects our state, we are making the way long. Israel had not the faith to go up the against Anakim. If we would break with the world, and take up the cross properly, it would give us the enjoyment of the full power of communion with God at once; if not, we must learn by its daily mortification in the desert what flesh is. If we think to escape dangers by leaving the path of faith, we shall surely get into sin. Israel found the same people were there, the giants still there, when they got into the land at last, that frightened them at the first and hindered their taking possession. What is the reason Christians have often more joy on a death-bed than all their life through before? Why, the reason is they had never till then surrendered up all for Christ, and never before learned Christ to be everything, and every thing else to be dung and dross. Israel’s raiment had not waxed old for forty years in the wilderness, neither did their feet swell. They learned in all this way the wonderful detail of all God’s goodness. The manna never ceased, and the patient grace never failed to the end; but our foolish hearts will not trust God, and so the Lord shows us the patience of His grace. He goes with us wherever we go, even in our failures, and if our hearts have experienced the exercises of the desert, we have learned the vanity of earthly things, and after all find it better to give it all
up, and trust God, that He may be every thing to us; and if we had done it at first we should have had it at once.

And now as to the constant exercise of Christ’s intercession, it is carried on in heaven in connection with our heavenly standing, and is also made to bear on our actual daily state down here. Christ was a man down here; we are joined to Christ by one Spirit. “He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit” -- mark the effect. What was Christ? Not only the obedient Man, the perfect Man under the law, but He was the perfect manifestation of the divine nature in man; there was in a Man all the effect that Godhead could produce of goodness in a man. I am not speaking of miracles, patience, endurance, love, etc. It is not that we can be as Christ was, because sin is in us: there was none in Him; but we are called to walk as He walked; we are called not to walk in the flesh, but to walk as He walked; but we do not walk as He walked; there is not a willingness to walk, there is a will in us. He must break our will so long as our walk does not flow from the word of God. There is flesh working and must be weakness. Well, but one may say, “I am so young a Christian, I am so weak.” It is not a question of age in grace; Christ would not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but would, with the temptation, make a way for you to escape. We may be weak, but that is no hindrance to our walking as He walked; for His strength is made perfect in weakness; but He cannot be the strength of our own will. One born only yesterday may follow Christ as well as an old Christian, and Christ is as much for him. There may not be so much wisdom, but in the child there is often more singleness of eye, and more of undividedness of heart: the great thing is, that the will does not work. There again we see where Christ was so perfect. The will of God was the spring of all Christ’s conduct. He came to do His will -- “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.” “Mine ears hast thou opened” -- put Himself in the place of obedience. “A body hast thou prepared me,” He became a man, took the place of a servant. He was to walk by what He heard: He was willing to do this: “Lo, I come.” “Not my will, but thine, be done.” The will of God was the spring of all His conduct. He was only the obedient One, conformed to it -- man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” We are not only so to walk, as He walked, but the way He walked. The spring of Christ’s conduct was never His own will, not that His will had to be corrected, but He came to do His Father’s will. Satan tried to hinder, man tried to hinder, but He goes through it all. He takes the place first, He must go first in the difficulties; when He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them. He was led by the Spirit to be tempted; everything that could put His obedience to the test must be tried on Him. We see the difference in the glory of Christ’s person from another. Moses had to fast forty days to be with God on the mount. Christ as a living man on earth was always with
God. He fasts forty days to be with Satan, tempted in the wilderness, and you could not see Him in those circumstances without seeing who was there. If all the glory of the world was offered to Christ there, it is offered to you every day, and we see in a day like this people are hurrying after it with all their hearts. Well, Christ meets him. “Make these stones bread,” satisfy your hunger by your own will. He had no word from God for it. His will was never showed; it was perfect obedience; the humble, holy, patient life that does not stir without God. If you will not do anything without a word from God, then you are sure to have the strength of God in what you do. “Cast thyself down.” No; He would not put God to the test. He was not going to tempt God by trying whether He would protect Him. He had confidence in God; so we read, “The people tempted God, saying, Is God among us?” They would prove whether He was among them or no, and this is called “tempting God.” He was sure in the way of obedience to find Him. When Mary and Martha sent to the Lord, saying, “Lazarus is sick,” He did not stir. He had no word from God, and Lazarus died. Mary might think it cruel that He should abide two days in the same place, and not come immediately to heal him. If He had been there, He might have wrought a common miracle; but His raising him from the dead is for the glory of God.

Satan then tries Him in another way. “If thou wilt fall down and worship me, all shall be thine.” “Get thee behind me, Satan.” He again takes the word “It is written.” Satan has power against pretension, against knowledge, but no power against obedience if we are acting by the Word -- no will of our own. He ordered His conduct from the Word. It was the source of His conduct. If we say we abide in Him, we ought to walk even as Christ also walked. Satan was baffled, the strong man was bound, and that is how He bound him, by simple obedience. (The exercise of power, as healing the sick, is a distinct subject. He would have set men right if they had been capable of happiness and prepared to enjoy God.) Christ passed through everything that could be put before Him to hinder Him in the path of godliness, everything that could test the divine life. Christ knew in that sense what it was to be tempted; it was all the exercises He went through which prepared Him to be our High Priest. We need sympathy in the exercises of the divine life in our souls, not sympathy in our lusts; those we must mortify. Everything that could try a living man, He passed through, perfect in all, and He learned the application of it all in the peace which He experienced, and now He can say, “My peace and my joy.” If the world has hated me it will hate you; but “be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” He knew; and understood experimentally and practically, as a man in passing through this world, how the grace from above, in the comforts and applyings of divine grace to His soul, was sufficient for every soul’s need to live in holiness, not applied to a testing from sin, but a life of holiness. “He suffered being tempted.” The Lord knew what trouble was;
His soul was bowed down with trouble; but the first word is, “Father.” The first moment we are in sorrow, instead of looking around for comfort, for sympathy, or looking to the actings of the flesh, as to what I have done, or what I have not done, and pouring forth our sorrow in nothing but fleshly murmuring, let us turn immediately to God, and then the heart would be cast down in perfect submission to the will of God, and thus the sting of the sorrow would be removed. The instant there is perfect submission there is perfect peace. “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour”: “not my will, but thine, be done.”

Another thing, He could have raised Abraham and Isaac as He did Lazarus, and have brought in all the promised blessing at once; but men did not like Him to be there. Man showed himself to be alienated from God, and was proved utterly incapable of enjoying happiness. “Now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.” Christ could not have anything to do with the world in its moral state. He now had to meet the effect of sin in the power of Satan – holding man captive under death to the judgment and wrath of God against sin -- to redeem man, and now He takes His place in resurrection to apply redemption. The righteousness was worked out that we should take our place in heaven. We must be broken off from the world. He gives us everything in the way, but never presents it as our end; it is neither Canaan nor Egypt, but a wilderness. By clinging to it we are not in the wilderness but in Egypt, and that is why so many need chastening; for if we would make a Canaan of it, then it will become Egypt to us. The moment we make it our home, and settle down in it, it is our Egypt. The Lord must break our will. He says, “A little while and the world seeth me no more.” It is all done with. He puts a distinction between Himself and the world, therefore if we take Him we cannot have the world, and if we take the world we cannot have Him: we cannot have both. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.” Men are everywhere playing into the infidel’s hands in thinking to make the world better with their brotherly love, their arts and sciences, their social intercourse, making themselves happy without God; for while they make a show of their cleverness, and talk a great deal about acknowledging God’s gift in the skill and ability He has bestowed upon man, they continue still to reject both God and His gifts, and will not have a “God in Christ.” Men think the world can be set right by cultivation and science, by encouraging the arts, and such like. Why, Christ could not set it right. Infidels are saying; Christianity is all a figment, for it has not set the world right; and men are taking the words of Christ in their mouths, saying, “Men should love one another as brethren,” and bringing all nations together to cultivate amity and good-will, and the very words that they take in their mouths while they are thus seeking to make the world happy are the words that the infidels use. The world, its day is over. Christ was rejected by the
world, and its day is closed. God’s grace is gathering out sinners; but as to
the world the Lord said, it “seeth me no more.” Either it is to get better
without Christ, or not to get better at all. “It has hated both me and my
Father,” and its day is over. “I have got one Son; it may be they will
reverence my Son.” They took Him and slew Him, and said, “The
inheritance will be ours,” and are making the world comfortable. The Lord
preserve us from all the deception which by the side of Christ we so soon
detect. He has taken a heavenly place. “Such a high priest became us, who
is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the
heavens.” He exercises His ministry where we belong. I do not belong to the
earth; we have a heavenly calling {Heb. 3:1}, and need a heavenly Priest,
who has gone up on high to take our hearts up with Him; our body is not
gone up yet, but we have our place with Him up there. Christ Himself, who
was a man on earth, manifested a heavenly character down here. Christ
having given us our place down here, and taken away all our sins, sends
down the Comforter, that we may manifest Him in our walk down here,
being the living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. God loved us
when we hated Him; we are to love those who do not love us, and thus show
the character of God down here. Christ was the living expression of it as a
man. “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk, even as He
walked.” By His intercession Christ obtains for us all we need, and lifts us
up if we do fall; but He sustains us to walk as He walked, having the word
of God as the source of our actions, as God was the source of all His
thoughts; but if we fail there is grace to restore us. “These things write I
unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin; we have an Advocate with the
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” {1 John 2:1} Flesh ought never to work;
your life ought never to be an expression of the flesh, but the obedience of
a child; the youngest child in Christ cannot walk as a father in Christ, but he
can walk in the obedience of a child with Christ. We have the flesh; but if
I am in the light practically with God I know all about the flesh; but then all
that I am is judged. A child of two years old can be as obedient as a child of
twelve years. It is not a question of age, of strength, but obedience. We have
the pattern of Christ at twelve years old, who was obedient to His father and
mother, and went home with them, being subject unto them. “He that saith
he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk, even as He walked.” Is this the
delight of your soul, to walk as He walked, as self-denying, as separated
from the world, with as much love? or would you spare something -- a little
bit of the world, a little bit of comfort? Christ never did, or you could not
have been saved. Peter said this, “Be it far from thee, Lord; spare thyself.”
His reply was, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” How often does our wretched
heart say, “Spare thyself”? That is not walking as Christ walked, not doing
His bidding as our Master. Have your hearts been attracted by the beauty of
Christ? It is real liberty. The world is merely a snare to entrap us; not that
I would scorn the world. Christ did not scorn it; but the world is just this, Satan using all manner of things to seduce the flesh. Satan attracts us by his snares, and has the soul in bondage; but the liberty in which the Son has set us is to be free from the flesh, the world, and sin, and Satan; not only to walk as He walked, but to walk with Him in perfect freedom, and in the comfort and consciousness of walking with Him. May we find our joy in Him, not pursuing a life of our own hearts, but a life of His grace and goodness, and may He keep our hearts fixed on Him and on a crown with Him.

LECTURE 3

It was not my thought to go through the epistle; but as we were lingering last week on the intercession of Christ, I take up the subject again; that is, the communication of divine life from the Father Himself in the person of the Son, who comes down on earth, and by Him it is communicated to us. There is the manifestation of all we ought to be, and a test by which we may prove what is of Christ, and detect that which is not.

The greater part of the New Testament (the epistles) owes its origin to the mischief Satan did in the Church. The mischief was only permitted that the folly of these things might be made manifest, and that the full glory of the truth might be brought out. “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.” The things here written of are what some pretenders held; they were persons of the highest pretensions, that would seduce them. Not the gospels of course, but the great body of the epistles, of which those to the Thessalonians, Corinthians, and Galatians are examples, were occasioned by the mischief the adversary brought in. The attack of the enemy brought out in the epistle to the Corinthians the truth of the resurrection; in Thessalonians the coming of the Lord; in Galatians justification by faith. This was hardly the case in Philippians, because Paul was comforted by the love of those at Philippi. It is the same in regard to the mischief he has done from the beginning. The fall itself is the occasion of God’s introducing greater blessing than before. Whatever Satan seeks to do, as it has done from the beginning, must ultimately tend to the divine glory, and the comfort and blessing of our souls, who seek to serve God. Of course man gets humbled in it; but God overrules it for greater good. If we turn to Christ’s rejection by the Jews, it brings out the Church. Though He wept over Jerusalem, the energy of Satan was there exhibited against the Lord Himself, so He said, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour . . . For I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” He looked with sorrow at the evil; but it was the occasion of infinite blessing. And thus by His
rejection was the greatest blessing brought out; for if Jesus had not died, we had not been saved; and though Satan thought he had triumphed over Him by the cross, God raised Him from the dead. So whatever Satan does, it is always the bringing out on God’s part of greater blessing, and so it is in our day. We find man spoiling that which has been committed to him, and God bringing in something much better. And what do we find here? Antichrist was going on, and it led to the bringing out of the workings of divine life. It is the occasion in God’s hands of bringing into greater blessing them that trust Him. The history from the beginning is just that, so it will be to the end, until Satan is cast into the burning lake of fire and brimstone; it will be then to bring in heavenly blessing. The power of divine life, first manifested in Christ, is then manifested in us. We shall see the instructions He gave, guiding us by His precepts according to His life. “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk, even as He walked.” Not so to be, because we have sin, and He had none; but so to walk. “Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” {1 John 2:8}. Here we get a very important principle of the divine life -- what is our life, and whence its source. There are two points of the manifestation of the divine life. What He was in His own person down here, and now what He is as exalted -- what He manifests through and in us of the divine life.

1st. Christ the source of it for us. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

2nd. The manifestation through and in us. There we can correct every estimate we form of our lives, because we have the perfect and wonderful model of it in Christ Himself, who is the power of it. He is the very eternal life that was with the Father, and He has given us that eternal life.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life” {John 1:1-4}. He was eternally with God before He created. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” {John 1:14}; and he adds, “Of His fulness have all we received.” Two things. First, “The Word was made flesh,” as also in Hebrews: “The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.” “The image of the invisible God,” as in Colossians, the perfect representation of what God was. “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” We get in His person the life itself that was with the Father “from the beginning.” He was the life, it was in Him. Now it is never said eternal life is in us; it is in Him. But it is given to us; that is a different thing. He Himself is our life; He has life in Himself. “God has
given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son”; but the Son has life in Himself. My hand is alive, but my life is not in my hand; my hand lives by virtue of its union with my body; take it off, and I shall live still. So the Church or an individual soul lives by virtue of its union with Christ, the Head. It is in Him the reality of the life is.

Secondly, When Christ was down here, all His instructions were the expression of this life. It was not like a commandment given by the law, because the law exacted from man what was becoming, and what man ought to be in relation to God. It took the responsibility that attached to man’s character as man, and did not go beyond it; but we get in Christ the manifestation of what God was to man -- love acting in the midst of evil. It was no part of the law to love sinners; but it was a part of the Lord to come down to love. Another thing in all His thoughts and tones of feeling for us He went far beyond the mere letter of the law; for the law could not say, “Blessed are the poor in spirit”; that must arise from an estimate of God; the law could not proclaim, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Christ was Himself the Prince of Peace, showing there was peace to be made. So the duties. There was a spirituality in the law beyond what we see; but there was a power of good in Christ that went beyond the evil. The law never manifested power over evil in the shape of love -- there was manifested in Christ the power of good over evil -- and that was Christ’s life. We get in all His actings the character and expression of what God was in man when on earth -- and that is so lovely. He was the eternal life that was with the Father. John the Baptist -- who was next to Christ, and immediately preceded Him, of whom the Lord testified, “Of them that are born of women there has not been a greater than John the Baptist” -- came in the way of righteousness, and therefore went away from men altogether, was in the desert, kept no company with any, was a herald before Christ to announce Him, had nothing to do with any, ate locusts and wild honey -- but God, being the person that was offended, could come in grace near to them, and speak to them in the spirit of grace, which rises above and overrides the evil, and expresses what God is; and they said, “Never man spake like this man.” Then it is said, “He went about doing good.” In Him was found the activity of good; the suffering for righteousness’ sake, and for “His name’s sake”; the exercise of love in the activities of grace.

There is another thing which specially characterizes the divine life of Christ, the discernment of it in those who possess this life, the power of discerning the spirit of life in another. It has been said, “It requires much grace in oneself to discern a little grace in another.” There is an attractive power in grace which recognizes the spirit of Christ in another. He could say, “Forasmuch as this man also is a child of Abraham.” There was that which attracted in Christ. The moment a Christian recognizes divine life in
another, in spite of difference of education, rank, and many other things, he will be drawn towards him. It is characteristic; he cannot help it. The moment a man discerns the Spirit of Christ in another, there is a necessary attraction to it. At once they are united together in love. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” The instant the Spirit and character of Christ is manifested there is necessarily an attraction where the Spirit of Christ is. “He went about doing good.” Then there is the blessed discernment of the traits of it – its discerning Christ, “Love your enemies . . . do good to them that hate you.” In Christ we see God coming down, and manifesting this life in a man on the earth, so as to attract towards Him, and to bring into His presence in rest. “As I have loved you, you ought also to love one another.” “Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.” He overcometh evil with good; you must do as God does, love your enemies. It proved Him to be God, in that He could love that in which there was nothing lovable. In God, the spring of love is from Himself; but we need something to attract us.

The primary revelation is that which was from the beginning, and however much we may go on, we must come back after all to it. It is always perfect, because it is God Himself is manifested. You never can bring me to anything where God was manifested but to the living word of Christ, or the written word of Scripture. We have only to ask, “Is it that which you have had from the beginning?” If not, it is evil seducers. If it is that which we have had from the beginning, it is of God, and that must test everything, and that is the character of the Word. Bring a sinner opposite the Word, and you learn what he is, as in the case of the poor Samaritan woman. The written Word is the manifestation of Christ, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Man cannot judge God’s word without judging himself; so if he judges it to be wrong, he is judged himself. “He that believeth not is condemned already.” He is incapable of seeing Christ, who was God manifested in the flesh, and the Word judges him. You may talk about colors or light to a blind man; but if a man is blind he cannot understand you; it is his non-perception of light and colors that proves he is blind. It must be so where God is manifested. If I am incapable of discerning what manifests Christ, and the Word does not reach my soul, it is that which judges me. “The Word that I speak, the same shall judge you in the last day.” All God’s ways now are presenting His moral manifestation; it will next be His judicial manifestation. If the moral manifestation is not received, “the Word which I have spoken shall judge him in the last day.” The Lord did not accompany the Word with judgment when it was spoken; but that Word will judge him at the last day, and he will be condemned; and man still is proved. The first way God taught them was through the Lord Jesus Christ, “whom ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” Being rejected, and having ascended up on high, and become the expression of what we should
be, the Church should be the manifestation of what Christ is. Then comes the communication of the life from Him in heaven. This was the new thing: “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another” {1 John 2:7, 8}. It was not a new commandment to love one another; it was the old commandment, and yet new, because it was now given in the power of it, being not merely commanded in His word, but communicated to you by the power of the Holy Ghost, to reproduce in you the life of Christ; and there is a new thing, and you are to manifest it. The Church of God is to be that vessel for the manifestation of Christ down here, according to the power of the life of its head in heaven.

God acted in government towards Israel when He dwelt in thick darkness; He acted in government according to a known law; but He was hid behind a veil, “set bounds about the mount.” But now, when Christ died, the darkness was passed in the cross, and there was a full display of the holiness of God. At the same moment His wrath burst forth against sin, the light burst forth which fully manifested His character. “The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.” The veil is rent, and we can now enter into the presence of God Himself, into the holiest, which is opened to us. “Walk in the light, as God is in the light.” “Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” “If we walk in the light as God is in the light.” Nothing must be allowed that cannot bear the light. Men perish for lack of knowledge, alienation from the life of God. “The true light now shineth.” The veil is rent. God is fully manifested in truth and love, If He had been only just, we should have perished. If He had been only love, there would have been no justice; but there was justice and holiness with love, and God has been glorified about our sins in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The light now is shining. Christ, the source of that light, to be manifested in us, which thing is true in Him and in you. It is an old commandment which was from the beginning, Christ Himself. You cannot have a better than that; and now the manifestation of it is learned in us. If we want it as a test, it must not be the imperfect light that is in us, but in Christ Himself. While it is given to us as the means of detecting errors, it is also to build us up in what Christ is. In looking at these traits we discover more and more that they are thoroughly divine. I learn in Christ such and such a trait, and I say, “That is God manifest in the flesh”; and thus I learn what I shall know in heaven. You have “seen the Father.” We learn the beauty in Jesus, and learn that it is divine; and learning what God is, we are happy and peaceful; and if you have seen a saint dying, if he has faith in the blood of Christ, he will have peace; but if you look for joy it must spring from the affections being acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ. You will sometimes see a saint, and there is joy, and by-and-by, his peace is gone. That is where the soul is not settled; there ought to be both. The blood gives peace; but it is my acquaintance with and knowledge of Christ that give me joy.
Three characters are presented here. He says, “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother” {1 John 2:9}. The Apostle always speaks of the abstract principle, “He that loveth his brother.” “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.” If He stumble at Christ, it is his own fault. We never ought to be, by not being like Christ, a stumblingblock. There is no greater snare than the fear of offending, and no greater sin than the fear of offending, if Christ is the offence. If it is Christ that offends, the offence of the cross has not ceased; you will never please the world with the cross of Christ. If I am walking in perfect love, my love will flow out to others; if I have the affection in myself, I shall love my brother, and shall not stumble. If I am not walking in love of the brethren, I am going all crooked myself. I may rebuke, Christ did that; but if the desire to do them good is not in me, I am going crooked myself, I have not the Spirit of Christ.

(1 John 2:12.) “I write unto you children” (not little children, but all saints) “because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.” A settled thing -- you are not Christians at all without your sins are forgiven you. The poor jailor wanted salvation, and that is what he got. He cried out, “What must I do to be saved?” That is what he wanted. If I come to hear the testimony of God, what I want is to be saved, to get life. Nicodemus came by night with his question. The Lord said, “You must be born again.” He that is in Christ is a new creation. The jailor did not know what being in Christ meant; but he believed. What is the consequence? He was saved by a work which was accomplished before ever he asked to be saved. If he believed in Christ, he was saved; he had eternal life. If the light gets into the soul men cannot be happy until they have peace with God. There is difficulty now with Christians having peace. Before Christianity became a profession in the world a Christian was counted and understood to be saved; but now all pretend to be Christians, and they who are really so want to know if they are true Christians, whereby the simple fact of redemption is very much lost sight of. “Your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” God’s judgment is passed already on your sins in Christ. If I looked to Christ to be saved, as bearing my sins, His judgment is, “You have eternal life.” That is just as much the judgment of God as if Christ had pronounced it on His judgment-seat. God knows the value of the work of His Son. He is the judge, and not you.

“I write unto you, little children.” He can add a great deal to the little children; but to the fathers He has only one thing to say, “You have known Him that is from the beginning.” Whatever else it might be, it ends all in this, “Known Him that is from the beginning”; that is, Christ. If anything is brought to me that is not of Christ, I reject it. If I know a person, it is himself that I know. I am to know that my sins are forgiven me for His
name's sake; but I am to know Him that was from the beginning. “No man knoweth the Son but the Father.” What is the object of all this knowledge of Christ? All the promises are in Christ; He is the object of the Father’s delight.

The Apostle distinguishes growth {1 John 2:12-14}. The fathers have known Christ, who is from the beginning, the true Christ that guards the soul, knowing Him perfectly -- no ambiguity, no uncertainty; and all the exercises and experiences of the Christian, which are often so much dwelt on, are but the scaffolding of the soul to get at this -- “known Him that is from the beginning.”

The young Christian is full of the joy, and is thus taken up with himself, whereas the old Christian speaks less about the joy; but says, “It is Christ Himself possessed that makes me happy.” His heart trusts in the Lord. The things of the world, even the things of the Church, don’t disturb him. He knows that though heaven and earth were to dissolve and crumble into pieces, and even (which is impossible) the Church itself, God’s throne remains. There is a steadiness in the man’s soul, because he knows “Him that is from the beginning” -- knows and manifests Christ; One whom John had looked upon with his eyes, and his hands had handled. He was speaking of a Christ he had known, and seen, and handled, and which was from the beginning, and says, “There is the Father’s character”; and he has nothing to add.

How far have your souls found steady rest in Christ? or how far are they satisfied with Christ? Forsaken of friends, are you still satisfied with Him? or how far are there things that you crave and have to resist? Have you done with the world, not as tired of its vanities, and weary of its pleasures, but because your souls have found something in Christ that satisfies for all? Is He found such a manifestation of God to your souls that you rest in Him; having found such a ripeness in Christ that the soul is satisfied, so as not to want other things? Then, if you have, you can say, “None of these things move me.”

The two points to young men and children are,

1st. That they have overcome the wicked one, the prince of this world.

2nd. That they have known the Father through believing in Christ, and have therefore the Spirit of adoption, and have no doubt of the Father’s love.

The young men overcoming the wicked one is connected with their having the word of God abiding in them, and overcoming the world. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”
Then the little children are warned against the seductions of false doctrines, etc. “But the anointing ye have received of Him . . . Abide in Him.”

I would remark that what specially characterizes the young men is conflict with the world, and if we would be satisfied with the knowledge of Him that is from the beginning, there must be the overcoming of the world. “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” {1 John 2:16}. There must be conflict with the world if the soul is to grow up into Christ in all things; there must be the giving up of the world. “They are not of the world.”

May we so see the excellency of Christ, and so know, in the ways of that lowly man, the full expression, unfolding, and manifestation of the character of God, that our hearts may be knit to Him; and soon we shall see Him face to face, “and know, even as we are known.”

**LECTURE 4**

Any of you who were here last Tuesday will remember we were dwelling a little on the three characters of the common position of Christians, which are twice repeated; viz., fathers, young men, and little children. Fathers are addressed in the fourteenth verse, young men from the fourteenth verse to the seventeenth, and little children from the eighteenth to the twenty-seventh. That which characterizes the fathers is the knowledge of Him that is from the beginning. “Ye have known Him that was from the beginning” {1 John 2:13}; that is, Christ. In the Gospels we get what He was from the beginning; but John goes further than the other Gospels. These pretenders thought to bring in something else, to add something else by way of precept to what He was down here, and the Apostle draws their attention to Him that was from the beginning.

Now Christ being risen, and ascended up on high, has become the communication of that life (which we have received) of which He was the expression. The fulness of eternal life was manifested in Him, and is reproduced in us. The only real value of experiences is that they are the means of developing what Christ is, breaking down what we are, so that we may gradually lose sight of ourselves, and grow up into Him. When he comes to young men and little children he has a great deal to say; when speaking to the fathers he has nothing to say but “ye have known Him that is from the beginning” -- simply tells them of the fulness of Christ, and that is sufficient to draw forth their affections; but to the young men and children it is different: “I have written to you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one” {1 John 2:14}. The characteristic is not that of knowledge
of Him that is from the beginning, but conflict with Satan. That which characterizes the babes in Christ is the knowledge of the Father. They were more sensible of His love as little children, and as such were in danger of being seduced; “but ye have an unction from the Holy One” {1 John 2:20} to judge them that would seduce you. The Apostle refers to that which is the power by which they are to overcome them.

You will find three great contrasts:

Christ in contrast with Satan,
Spirit in contrast with flesh,
and the Father in contrast with the world.

Christ put the world to the test, and found it wanting when He says, “But when the Spirit of truth is come, He shall convince the world of sin,” not wicked men of their sins, but the world that rejected Christ. “The Word was made flesh.” The Son of God came and is gone away. What the Holy Ghost calls the world to account about is the absence of Christ; like Cain and Abel, “Where is Abel, thy brother?” Adam had been turned out of Paradise because he did not obey God in the garden. Now in his posterity there is hatred in his heart, against his brother, but more than this, against Christ. Christ was presented, and man’s enmity broke out. It was not only that Cain had slain Abel, but his blood cried from the ground; and as God said to Cain, “Where is Abel?” so now He says by the Holy Ghost, “What have you done with my Son?” It is not merely that the law of God has been outraged, but when God Himself came into the world as a man, they rejected Him. Satan is the prince of this world, was always so from the fall of man, but was first called so in connection with the scene of Gethsemane. “I have yet one Son”; I will send Him, it may be they will reverence my Son; and when He came they said, “This is the heir, come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance will be ours.” They crucified God’s Son, and there is no more to be offered to the world, nothing to be presented, as if it were a question whether the world should be condemned or not. Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers {Rom. 15:8}; but the Jews would not have Him, and the Jew now has no title whatever to the promises, but must come in as a sinner on the same ground of mercy and grace as the Gentiles. The testimony of the Holy Ghost is, “that the whole world lieth in wickedness” -- all that is in the world. Therefore these things are valuable in the world, “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” {1 John 2:16}. Satan manages the world by them, and men manage one another as well as they can. Satan is of the world, the Son is of the Father. He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, and the energy of nature. Just so far as we have the Spirit of Christ in us we shall be dead to the world, not for peace, for that God gave us in
Christ -- inward peace I mean. Here he puts the young men in contrast, as overcoming the world, and shows where their real strength is, divine strength. “The word of God abideth in you,” not merely you refer to it, but it *abideth in you*. If you look to Christ in the temptation, His answers to Satan, there was no lust of the flesh, could be none; but He was hungry. Satan says, “Make these stones bread,” to tempt Him; “Cast thyself down”; then shows Him all the glory of the world, and says, “All the glory of this world is given to me; the world is given to me; worship me, and all shall be thine; own me as the prince of this world, and you shall have it all.” His answer was in every case the word of God. All Christ’s thoughts and life were the expression of the word of God abiding in Him. He was the Word, the living Word. So what characterizes the young men is having the Word abiding in them. It is not merely recollecting something to say, or finding out something in the Word when we want it; but the word of God must be the spring of our actions, and that’s what he means by the word of God “abiding in you.” A “young man” does not fly to it just when he wants it, but lives in it. God’s words living in his mind, he knows all that is in the world is not of the Father. If I get my thoughts from this world, and talk of riches, I shall say, “That man has a fine fortune.” The Lord says it is almost impossible for a man with a fine fortune to get to heaven, though all things are possible with God. Many are the expressions of our desires in this world. If the mind is living in that sphere of thought, our taste and habit will be formed by it. The Spirit of God has a world of His own, and the written Word becomes the guide for everything. That is how we are to judge everything: by the word of God. I can do so according to the state of my soul. If the word of God is abiding in me, the world and everything beside will be judged by it.

For example, Israel was called out to be put into the land, and certain things were stated on the ground of which they might get into the land; but they had totally failed, and they were in a peculiar condition. One book (Deuteronomy) contained the precepts which were to conduct them into Canaan. Well, Christ was sent in the proper time as Messiah to take this position with the poor people, but their consciences did not recognize Him. That book formed His mind. The Lord quotes out of that book: “Cast thyself down.” No, He was with His people to obey God. He had got into Israel’s place where God’s mind and Spirit put the godly. His soul was fixed: His soul and life were in God’s thoughts, and so if your mind were habitually formed by God’s word, instead of living in the world, you would not want to be getting a text for what you do, but you would be living in the Word, and the world would be at once judged: that is what it is to have the word of God abiding in you. Some did not discern Christ, because, as He says, “Ye have not the word of God abiding in you.” If their hearts had not been in a fleshly state, they would have known John the Baptist. All the poor and needy ones did. They would have known Christ; but they said, “He hath a
devil, and is mad.” John came in the way of righteousness, dwelt in the desert apart from all men, and ate locusts and wild honey, and they said, “He hath a devil.” Christ came in grace, eating and drinking with men, and they said He was a glutton and a wine-bibber; but God’s wisdom was in Christ, and in John, and wisdom is justified of her children. John proclaimed that the axe was laid to the root of the tree; but when Christ came it was to “bind up the broken-hearted.” The poor broken heart said, “That is what I want.” Wisdom is justified of her children. The Word abode in Him, that is how the strong man was bound. It was not by a miracle wrought by the putting forth of His power, or we could not be enjoined to do it; but by meeting him with “It is written,” and we are to use Scripture as He did, not looking for a scripture to meet it when the temptation comes, but having the soul in that state through the word of God abiding in us, that Satan cannot touch us. Satan attacks the flesh; but if I am walking in the Spirit, he cannot touch me, for the new nature cannot sin when cast into temptation.

Thus I have not to seek the Word for a text to suit my case, but to be living in it; for it is the delight of the new man to be living by every word of God. There is strength and real liberty, and Satan cannot touch me if my soul is living in that; all the rest is set aside. I am not harassed or uncertain. I may have sin in me, but my food is to do the will of God. The heart is at liberty, and the Spirit of God feeds it with Christ. We are not perfect; indeed, none of us are as perfect here as we might be; but we have the privilege, that though we have the flesh in us, we are not obliged to live and walk after it, or even to think of it. “The word of God abideth in you,” not for you to fly to it when temptation comes. We are to keep Satan out, to have the door barred against him. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” A woman may be alone in a house, by herself, and a robber be attempting to break in; but if the door is shut she is not in danger. As long as she keeps the door shut, she need not fear robbers; for the question is not as regards her own weakness, but the strength of the door. So we are to be dwelling in the Word to keep out Satan. Having Christ between us and Satan, we are safe, whatever his artifices.

A Christian has no right to have a will of his own, nor should he desire it, but rather “to know what is that good and perfect will of God.” All that is in the world is not of the Father; the affections of the flesh are in the world, and there is the power of Satan. The Father delights in Christ. If I delight in Christ there is communion of affection. I have the affections of the Father: “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,” and the fashion of this world passeth away; “but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” All His counsels He will make good morally. I am brought into the way of God’s will, and He is not going to destroy His own will; it abideth forever. I am to grow up into Christ.
The address to the little children would be esteemed by many the most obscure part of Scripture. It is the last time. The thing that marks it is, there are many Antichrists. That which characterizes the last time is the corrupting and spoiling of God’s last testimony of good, and thus bringing weakness where there should be power. We see in the case of the disciples and the dumb spirit that man is not able to use the power God gave to cast out Satan’s power -- “Why could not we cast him out?” -- which brought out the exclamation: “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?” As much as to say, “It is no use my staying here if there is not power to put out the evil.” It is the last time {1 John 2:18}. There are many Antichrists. That is a solemn thing. God’s patience, how wonderful! As long as there is a soul to win, God’s patience goes on bearing with wickedness and corruption; but many Antichrists are come in. It is often thought to be something requiring depth of knowledge. No; little children are told of it; it is a common truth. Antichrist was to come; but that before he comes there are many Antichrists, and they might seduce them, there is the danger. The Antichrist is to come, who will deny both the Father and the Son. They cannot mistake him; there is no subtlety in Antichrist. His is a bold, open denial; but John speaks of Antichrists already come. He says, “They went out from us because they were not of us.” Jude says, “There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.” It was a common doctrine that Antichrist was to come, and the babes knew he would come in opposition to Christ, to oppose and set aside what Christ had done, but the Apostle tells them there are many Antichrists now; there were those before the Antichrist came; that they would need the union of the Holy One, as well as the warning of the Apostle, to be able to detect; for “Satan transforms himself into an angel of light.” It is the seductions of the Antichrists now in the world against which he warns them; those who, by the power of Satan, set up to seduce away from Christ, not to frighten away, but to ensnare those who have not the unction from the Holy One. He does not tell them there were many Antichrists to come; but many now, and it is the direct power of Satan. That is what characterizes properly Antichrist. Satan is not only called a Liar, but a Serpent. Antichrist is a religious character; he works miracles, and all that have not received the love of the truth are seduced by him {2 Thess. 2}. He is a prophet, and has a religious character, as spoken of in Thessalonians, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, not merely civil power.

Of what is Satan the Prince? Of this world. And how? By the lusts of this world. Where the object of the heart is the grandeur of the world, or prosperity in this world, the character of it is to oblitera that which shows what man is. The spirit of the world hides from man the secret of man’s departure from God. I must keep myself from it. The saint has to be kept out
of the spirit of the world. Whatever has not the character of the word of God is of the world, and Satan is the prince of it, and I cannot have Satan’s prosperity without having Satan’s idols. If you take Christ and His glory, you must take His cross; you cannot have Christ and the world that rejected Him. Where there is the unction from the Holy One (if the Spirit is not grieved in us), though only a babe, we can say at once, “It is not of the Father, but of the world.” The Apostle said, “He that is of God heareth us.” Where there is not due place given to the word of God, there is no protection against the seducers. Is the place of the Church of God in the world that rejected Christ? No; it is in heaven, joined to Christ, and the Church takes the word of God as a guide while on earth. If I have a desire for a single thing in the world, it is not of the Father, it is of the world. Speaking of responsibility in Christ, I do not see how we can be kept from imbibing the spirit of Antichrist, except it is as being not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world.

First, then, we must have the word of God abiding in us; next, there must be the unction from the Holy One, by which everything will be judged; and, lastly, there must be the perception of the distinctness and definiteness of the place of the Church of God. The world cannot know the place of the Church. “They went out from us, but they were not of us.” “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

We are to judge the many Antichrists, not the Antichrist, but the many Antichrists, before he comes, that which ministers to the flesh and seduces from the Father. “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” It is a moral thing to be kept from the things of the world; they are not of the Father. We must be identified with Christ if we would realize joy and strength.

LECTURE 5

In speaking of the three classes of Christians, we were led to see, in the last specially, it is warning against the seductions of Antichrist.

In the first, to the fathers, it is, that they have known Him that is from the beginning. In the second, to young men, they have overcome the world; and in the last, to the little children, it is warning them against the seductions of Antichrist. And now we resume at 1 John 2:28, “And now, children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.” On this the third chapter is founded. Being born of Him, there will be the nature and character of Him of whom we are born.
That is the character throughout the epistle. “He that does righteousness is righteous.” If the life of Christ is there it will show itself; if the eternal life that was with the Father was manifested in righteousness, it will be manifested in righteousness in us. If I see righteousness in the sense that Christ is righteous, I say the eternal life is there; that person is born of God. I do not mean righteousness as between man and man. We see in Christ that righteousness is having no will of one’s own; that is never found in an unconverted man. Again, we see He never did a single thing for Himself, yet you find Him full of joy. Well, that kind of righteousness is only found where the divine life is. Where God is the motive for everything to the heart and conscience, the motive of the heart characterizes the man, the thought of the presence of God governs the conduct. Take an honest man in the world. There is righteousness between man and man, but what detects the unrighteousness of the world is, God is entirely shut out. It is man’s righteousness, and not Christ’s righteousness. Man’s righteousness never brings God in. If a man has wronged his neighbor, he is condemned by all as a bad man. God may be wronged over and over again, all their life through, and they do not care. They say nothing about it; they will let God be what a man pleases, and say, “It is between man and God; it does not concern us. We have nothing to do with it, provided only that he is honest with men.” And that is horrid unrighteousness, because self is the center from beginning to end; that is how the world is governed. It may be seen in a child at school wanting to get a prize, to the exclusion of others; for only one can get it. That is what is called emulation, which men are so ready to praise. Self is the spring of everything, and not God; so if there is righteousness in the things of men, righteousness in the things of God is altogether left out, and God must call that horrid unrighteousness which is called honor in the world. We should be thankful for government; but when the young man in the Gospel came to Jesus, and said, “Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me,” He replied, “Who made me a divider and a judge?” He leaves the question of right according to man (for it was right that he should have that which belonged to him), and shows what is under the surface: “Beware of covetousness.” The Lord is our pattern in everything, and when the Lord is the pattern it detects the motives of the heart; so He said, “Beware of covetousness.” The one desired to have it, the other desired not to give it up. Take care that the motive and spring of conduct is God, and not self. There He strikes at the principles of covetousness; there must be that state of heart in which God is the spring of the will. Christ is the test -- “He that is born of God.”

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons {children} of God” {1 John 3:1}. Now let us see what are the privileges and condition of those in such a state. Born of God, think of the love expressed in our being “called sons {children} of God.”
And what a thought it is; not merely I am safe, but I am connected with God’s nature. I can delight in God’s nature and affections. I have the nature of God to delight in, and enjoy God in the character of a son; and knowledge of the nature Christ came to tell of and to declare in the character of Father. He who knew it as dwelling in His bosom from all eternity -- “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him” {John 1:18} -- told us God’s character. He who had enjoyed the outgoings of the Father’s love, He came to tell us of that love as He knew it to be. If I am to give you the character of my father, it must be as I have known him. Christ has entered into, apprehended, and enjoyed all that God was as the Father. “In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” He in whom all the divine nature rested, He has declared Him. Christ having become a man, and come down from heaven to declare the Father, takes this place as Son on the earth, that we might know the relationship of sons; and the heart of the Father came out in approbation, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Christ having enjoyed His sonship down here, desires that we should know down here all that love, that our souls should understand the relationship of what God was to Christ down here, and know that the Father loves us as He loved Him. “I have declared thy name unto my brethren, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” -- this our souls may know. It may be very feebly, but we are called to know God in fellowship with Christ; that while down here we are to see in what He was to Christ, what He is to us, called sons of God, “that the same love may be in them, and I in them.” He is the conductor of all this love into our souls.

How can we know God? The mind can never find out God. “Who by searching can find out God?” Nothing but faith can put God in His place. If I am to find out God by searching, my mind must be master of my subject, and then God would not be God. The mind cannot judge the character of God; we can only take it where it is revealed. It is in Christ. We learn it there, not as a matter of knowledge, but as that which should sanctify our souls. I know we fail, but there is such a thing as dwelling in God. There is acquaintance with God, so as to give settled peace. “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.” “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” {John 17:3}. Do not say it is too high for us, as if it were an attainment in philosophy. No, it is not the mind. How do I begin to know God is love? Why, He loved me, a sinner. I thus begin at the lowest point. “Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” I know it by the incarnation of the son of God; He is become everything to us. He is perfect love, perfect patience, perfect goodness; all that is nearest to the every-day wants of a soul, the commonest wants of humanity.
“Beloved, now are we the sons {children} of God” {1 John 3:2} -- we are called sons of God, thus called by the same name as Christ, and the world knows us not, but thinks we are bad -- “therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” It was just the same thing with Christ. They said He was mad, had a devil. No wonder they do not understand what we are: “Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” Who? Him, Christ. The Apostle’s mind was so occupied with Christ, he did not even name Him; he thought everyone must know. Suppose your child was sick, and I were to ask you, “How is he?” you would know directly I meant your sick child, because your mind would be dwelling on nothing else, so here it is taken for granted, you know; therefore he does not tell us, does not say who it is. His mind is occupied with Christ, the eternal life that was with the Father, and has been manifested to us. He dwells in you, and you in Him; that is where the world has no knowledge, and that is how the world is no match for a Christian. It does not know his resources; nay, it will even taunt him on that score, as Rabshakeh did Hezekiah, when he said, “Now I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.”

“Now are we the sons of God”; not merely when we are up where we shall be, but now. It is the only relationship we can be in to God. A man under the law was a servant; but now the Son has come, born of a woman, born under the law, and we are sons. We cannot be anything else, as in the case of the prodigal son. God cannot take His child into His house as a servant, because His heart could not be satisfied. He could not treat as a servant for this reason one whom He loved as a son. When the prodigal knows the father’s love, he does not say as he had intended to say, “Make me as one of thy hired servants.” How could he say it when his father’s arms were hanging on his neck, and when all the house was to be happy because the father was happy and satisfied with his son? He could do nothing but wonder and adore; and, as it has been remarked, we lose sight of the prodigal, and all we get after is about the father and his house. Now as the father’s house was approached, what fears and tremblings, what questionings were in his mind, such as, What will he say to me? and the like; and the nearer he got, the more uneasy he would grow, until the father was on his neck, and then all was over. So it is with a soul getting to God. There is uneasiness, if the work of the Spirit is there, until God’s mind has been accepted from Himself; not from any progress or experience we may have known, but from Himself; and the nearer the heart gets to God, it is always the more uneasy until we know God’s mind and get it from Himself. Then we know it for ourselves. When we have learned to take our thought of our case from God’s mind, we get peace. It would be inconsistent for us to say we are not sons because we are so failing; for if the Father is Father, the son must be son. He has no other place to give us but sons; for He cannot take
us out of Christ and make us something else. “Now are we the sons of God.” We have our place as sons on earth. We know the perfect relationship, but we do not know the glory yet, “what we shall be.” “We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness.” I do not wait to be a child, I am one; nor wait for righteousness, I have got it in Christ; but for the glory which is the hope of righteousness.

How am I to know the clue for all this, that I may understand it? I must get back to Christ as the pattern of revelation, the model Man; “for we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.” He is the first-born among many brethren. “We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” All the glory is His who became a man, that He might take us back into all the joy of the Father’s presence. It is this that makes Christ’s coming again the one object, the one hope of our heart, though death would be gain to me. I do not hope for death. I might rejoice, but I do not hope to die. I hope for Christ to come; “not that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon”; not to put off this tabernacle, but that mortality may be swallowed up of life. Paul had eternal life, having got hold of it in Christ; and he has such a sense of the power of this life, that he longs to be in the enjoyment of all its consequences. He is always confident: “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” If I drop the body I have life, eternal life, in my soul, and I am looking for the glory if I die. Blessed as it is to see a saint die (and it is the most lovely sight in the world), that is not the hope of the saint. Our only hope is, when Christ shall appear “we shall be like Him.” We shall not all die, but we shall all be conformed to the likeness of God’s Son. It is God’s intention to conform us to the likeness of His Son in glory. I do not look to be conformed to Him in the grave, but as He is; for we shall be witnesses of His victory over death. The thief on the cross said, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” But Christ said, You shall not wait till then; you shall be happy today with me in Paradise, thus bringing in the separate state of blessedness of a soul; and it surely is a blessed thing. But God’s intention is to conform us to Christ in glory, and Christ’s coming is the only hope of the Church. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him” {1 John 3:2}. And what is more, “We shall see Him as He is”; not see Him as He was, but as He is. In one sense, I am not nearer to His likeness at the day of my death than at the day of my conversion; but morally I am, and they are never separated. The revelation of the glory to my soul shuts out everything inconsistent with it. Paul says to the Philippians, “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead,” nothing can ever satisfy my soul but that. There is present fellowship with His sufferings, looking forward to the prize of His high calling; but he says, I have not got it yet, “I press toward the mark.” “Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body,
that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” Actual glory with and in Christ, “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before.” He would not have or allow one atom of his life to be inconsistent with the resurrection. We ought all to be able to say, This one thing I do; forgetting the things which are behind, I am reaching forward to be like Christ. “He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” {1 John 3:3}.

Take Christ’s love in Ephesians: “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church.” The application of the Word did not make the glory brighter, but was preparing for it. The revelation of Christ as He is forms the soul to think, If I am to be like Him by-and-by, I will be as like Him as I can now. “He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” {1 John 3:3}; so that he may be like Him now, having the blessed privilege to get this as the measure, “even as He is pure.” “I sanctify myself” {John 17:18}; that is, He is set apart as the one according to God’s mind, as the model, that we may look at Him and be like Him. “That they also might be sanctified through the truth,” the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us. “We beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory” {2 Cor. 3:18}. The real practical power of the hope of the coming of the Lord sanctifies and forms the affections of the heart, and the revelation of the glory of Christ is the means of my purifying myself as He is pure, the Word revealing Christ, and drawing forth the affections of the heart to Him; that I may grow up to Him in all things.

In Colossians it is that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; that is, having the heart fully set on everything that belongs to Christ, “who is the image of the invisible God,” in whom all the fulness was pleased to dwell. After developing all these things of Christ’s glory, he says, “I want to get every man perfect according to these glories of Christ”; and that which makes it so blessed is, that it is the joy of being like Christ. It is not as giving us a law to walk by, or precepts to guide us. There are precepts; but that which purifies is the affections being set on Christ, to be like Christ now, as it is the purpose of God that we should be conformed to the image of His Son. I would just say, Christ’s coming is to receive the Church to Himself before He appears {in glory}, as in Thessalonians; and this is the delight of the heart’s affections (it is a little different to the appearing with Him in glory); “so shall we ever be with the Lord.” We get the thought, we are all to be caught up together to meet the Lord. I might say, “There’s one so strong in faith and good works, he will surely go up first.” No; all distinction fades away in Christ; all is gone in the thought, we all get there together. When I look back and see the devotedness of Paul, I think of the
love of Christ, who takes us *all up together*, to be with Him for ever. That there may be no difference, all alike are to be conformed to the image of God’s own Son. Christ’s love rests perfectly upon the Church, because it is Himself; He cannot hate His own flesh. That which is most intimate in affection is common to us all. We go to be with the Lord; not to appear with Christ, blessed as that is, but to be with Him. It is a special blessing to be with Christ, which is far better than to appear with Him as partaker of the glory. It is a marvelous honor to be honored with Him, but it is better to be with Him; therefore the apostle says, “So shall we ever be with the Lord.” He is satisfied with that. In Col. 3:4 it is, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory”; and he immediately connects it with responsibility. “Mortify therefore your members which are on the earth”; but when he speaks of being with the Lord, oh, that will not be connected with any growth or progress I may have made, but on the common ground of Christ’s love to His own! I can look at the saints, even at Paul, and say, We shall be with Him together. The appearing with Christ is connected with responsibility of service. I shall delight in the Thessalonian believers when in the glory as well as Paul; but they will not be my crown of rejoicing, but Paul’s -- the reward of his service. That principle is never to be the motive of conduct. The hope of reward should never lead me into service; but when tried in service, as we surely shall be, then it sustains the soul in the path. What was Christ’s motive? Infinite, divine love. But what is said of Him, “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross,” is also said of Moses: “He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward.” If I am preaching to sinners the love of Christ constrains me, but I want something to sustain me in the path. Love is the motive, but we need to be sustained by the hope set before us as we tread the path from the cross to the crown, when we shall be conformed to Him.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” We have not to enquire if we are sons, but take that as the ground of our now being conformed to Him. Our souls must get to delight in God. God has unfolded Himself. “Oh,” you will say, “that is so high!” Well, but Christ has come as the link to what is so high by coming so low (and He stooped lower than any), and He made Himself our only object. It is not the power of the mind that thinks about it, but the singleness of the eye that looks at it; the single eye has no object but Christ. The old nature is not to act. The new man has no other object than Christ.

You are called to know God. “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.” That was always true, but you are now called to know God in Christ. Oh that the world may not get into our hearts in such sort as to make us incapable of enjoying God! He is leading us from circumstances by the
communication of the divine nature to the knowledge and enjoyment of God. If I am in sorrow, God is my comfort; if I have suffered loss, Christ is everything to me. We are to cast all our cares upon Him, great and small; and so “the peace of God shall keep our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus.” Is His throne shaken by your cares, because they are so many, and so great? No; His throne is unaffected by them all. Thus, while it is applicable to the commonest cares, all these things but bring us into the knowledge of God.

May our communion and fellowship be such as that we may know His peace; not peace with Him, but the peace in which He dwells; to know that His throne is not disturbed by all our cares, and thus to know Him, and find our joy in Him, “purifying ourselves even as He is pure!”

LECTURE 6

It was not simply now (any more than with us) the setting forth of the grace and goodness of God in a world that knew Him not, in the midst of a world of sin and misery, though it was a blessed privilege that one should be permitted to be the channel of such a testimony as the Gospel, the messenger to bring in the wondrous message of love to this wretched world. That, of course, met with opposition, but it was a wonderful and sensible blessing to man. But the Spirit had another service to perform, another truth to unfold. “Ungodly men had crept in unawares” {Jude 4}, and it became necessary to warn against evil. It is far more difficult to preserve blessing when it is brought in than to testify of it at the first. So we find in Jude the exhortation given to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, not merely to publish the tidings of the blessing that had been brought in pure and uncorrupted. “Believe not every spirit” {1 John 4:1}. Far happier to say, “Believe the Spirit”; but because of error it had to be said “Believe not.” The mystery of iniquity which was to come in, and was already in the world, required it. All the Apostles had to warn thus against the evil which had come in, and John more especially, as being the last of them.

“Try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” Men had slept, and the enemy had sown tares. Satan always seeks by violence and opposition to resist the coming in of truth, and to hinder its reception; or if he cannot do that, then, when it is come in, he will corrupt the truth. “Evil men have crept in unawares,” false prophets (or false spirits) are gone out into the world, a holy kind of men, it may be, in their way, but false prophets, who attack true and simple souls with great apparent power, a mingling of much real truth; but error must be put down in the heart and conscience. It is a great mercy to have orthodoxy professed; by orthodoxy, I mean the cardinal truths of the Gospel, although,
of course, the profession of orthodoxy is not life. There may be orthodoxy, and yet not life, especially in these days, and we have to come back to where the Spirit of God will keep the soul in the possession of the truth. There may not be salvation, though there may be orthodoxy of profession. The Lord may allow intellect to work, and then the question may arise, as with Pilate, “What is truth?” We find in men two things, scepticism and infidelity. The sceptic doubts all the truth; the infidel denies the truth altogether, and says there is no truth, no knowledge, no doctrine; that is what infidelity always will do. But there is difficulty in every truth; the consequence is, that when men get tired of their sins, and think about giving them up, or are troubled about the consequences, they begin to enquire about truth, turn very serious for a while, attend to their religious duties, as they call it, and all that; but finding it difficult, they tire, and soon grow weary of it, and seek to get hold of something that promises certainty, and at the same time saves them the trouble of knowing truth for themselves. So they look for something established on human authority, and lean on the judgment and opinions of men. This is authority in a bad sense, man’s word. God exercises true authority over the conscience. The truth is authority; but men want something that will save them the exercise of their hearts and consciences before God. On human authority the conscience is not with God, and they would be independent of God. Now this degrades man beneath what he was intended to be; for his true position was to be dependent on God. This is man’s true glory. The conscience must be brought into contact with God, into the presence of God, and this is true ministry. Whatever ministry fails to do this, or has not this for its object, is not of God, because it is putting something between the soul and God. If ministry be real, it brings God directly to the conscience through the Word, whereas that which is false stands between God and the conscience; and this will enable us to detect the difference, and to discern at once what is false or true ministry. God has promised to guide the humble, and He will secure the humble soul against false prophets. The word of God never treats man’s mind as being competent to judge it; for it would be the judgment of what is authority itself over the conscience. People have confounded the power of the Word to work in the conscience, with a competency to judge the Word, and it is an awful thing! Man’s mind is incapable of judging God’s word. If he could, it would not be God’s at all; for that would be supposing man’s mind equal with God’s, and there would be no God. But the natural conscience may judge of individual commands; such as, “Thou shalt not steal.” I am capable of also judging, so far as to know that it is good when it has acted on my soul. It is like taking food. I may be entirely ignorant of the process of nutrition and digestion, yet I may know the full value of food, and be conscious of the invigorating effect produced by the food when eaten. There are many things that may be estimated when they have acted on me, though I may have no competency
to judge of them but by their effect. God’s word tells me that I am thus or thus. The soul receives the effect by divine power. That is the Word judging me, not my judging the Word; but the Word can produce in me the competency to judge, and these are often confounded in reasoning. Where am I to find the competency? that is the question. It is in the Word, because it comes and approves itself to the heart by acting with power on the conscience.

Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; it begins with power. “Believe not every spirit” {1 John 4:1}. It is not simply the truth, and men’s minds at work; there are false spirits acting on man’s mind; certain energies are at work acting on man’s mind. While poor man thinks himself independent, there is a spirit working which is either of God or of the devil, either truth or error to the soul. “False prophets are gone out into the world.” The confession of Jesus Christ come in the flesh is of God. That which puts all to the test is the real acknowledgment of Christ come in the flesh. It proves the truth of the person; it is the proper faith of him that speaks, and not a mere confession, because if I have faith in a thing I am subject to it; that is, I am subject to Christ. No evil spirit is so subject. It would not be an evil spirit if it was. “Try the spirits.” Unless Jesus Christ is owned as God manifest in the flesh, it is not of God. “Many false prophets are gone out into the world” {1 John 4:1}, and the owning of the lordship and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be the test of everything. You will find a thousand things set up instead; but that spirit that does not bow to the Lord Jesus Christ is not of God. “Ye are of God, little children.” There is no thought of putting them on their own competency or ability to judge, or on the authority of other men, but on the Spirit of God; “for greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” As much as to say, If the Holy Ghost is in you, He will overcome; if not, Satan will surely get the better. The Church of God is, as it were, the great prize between Satan and God. So with Pharaoh and Israel when he refuses to let the people go. “Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go.” Immediately the answer is, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?” Though there it was to bring out the manifestation of the power of God in His judgment upon Pharaoh that He might prove Himself the mightier, as Jethro speaks, “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly He was above them” (Ex. 18:11). And by-and-by He will show this out more fully: when the Lord appears, and Satan is bound, there will be an end of this conflict. But now it is carried on in our individual walk, and God would now exercise men’s faith and conscience, and manifest His power in keeping them. And we get here the power of walk: “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.”

One of the most alarming symptoms in the religious world at the present
day is the idea that there is power in the truth to preserve. There is no power in the truth to preserve; but the question is, whether the soul holds fast the truth. Unless my thoughts, my heart, are in the truth, there will be no power in the truth to me. It is very certain that God will keep His truth; but is my heart kept? If not, it is the mere confidence of man’s mind; for “greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” The only ground of victory is the power of the Spirit of God in the affections and consciences of the saints, and then the heart will be set on Christ, and the things of Christ, to love Him, enjoy Him, and serve Him better. The conflict and difficulty are rather when the truth is brought in question than when it first goes forth in power. If I am not kept by the Spirit of God, I shall not be able to resist the daily solicitations of sin. Man may grow tired of his sins, and tired of the world; for he has long been in bondage to them, and desires sincerely too to break off from his sins; and he is attracted at first by that which promises him deliverance, and is glad to close with the offer, and so breaks off from his sins for a while, and is very religious, and seems devoted too; but his soul does not continue. He does not like the trials and tribulations which arise. He cannot bear to lose his friends, and his prosperity, and his place in the world, and then error is found the easier thing, and there must come a falling away, and so it will be but a little flock. False religion might make a monk, but can never put the conscience into the presence of God. Error quarrels not with men’s passions; for false religion in the man ever ministers to the passions, the thoughts, the feelings of men; and thus it is false religion that suits the world better than truth, because it suits itself to man, and the mass will ever follow error, so Paul had to say, “All in Asia are turned away from me.” The Apostle did not expect that truth would have power over the world, but plainly declared that error would. So we see, when the Lord allows the sifting of a large body of people on a point of truth, the greater number will adopt the error.

“They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” But “ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them” {1 John 4:4}. If God were in them, they were kept; if not, they would fall away from the truth. We must rely on what has been declared by the Spirit of God, rather than on what is the expectation of men. The Apostle himself believed in the power of truth as much as any one, but he had not the vain expectation that the truth had power to reform the world. “Ye are of God, little children.” This is the guard, not of the power, but of the means. We are of God. “He that knoweth God heareth us.” It is not said “overcomes,” but heareth us -- he is of the truth. They had the spiritual power of discovering what was truth. The means of ascertaining truth from error was the recognition of the Word, Whosoever did not submit to the inspired Word was not to be listened to. Though they might speak like angels, it was not of God, it was of themselves.
“He that is of God heareth us” {1 John 4:6}. I could not say, You must hear me or you will be lost; but I could say this, If you do not hear the message of the Gospel which I speak to you, you will perish, because it is the truth of God, and you are to search for yourselves and see. I am no guarantee of truth. I have it from God; but in the Apostles themselves I get the guarantee and the test of truth. If you are of God you will believe it; but if anyone hindered any from hearing an Apostle he could say at once such a one was not of God; for “he that is of God heareth us.” Their immediate testimony was the test God was using of truth and error. No man now is the immediate vessel or guarantee of truth. Mark further, the moment I require anything to establish the authority of the Word, I take the authority of the Word away; for the thing rested on is, of course, that which is supposed to establish the Word, and not the Word itself. If I take anything as proving the word of God, and so believe it, that is not believing the Word. The Spirit of God and the word of God must go together. The word of God will not do alone; for I may attempt to judge of the Word by my own private judgment, and so get wrong. The Spirit of God will not do alone either; for I may mistake my own fancy for the Spirit; they go together. Then the moment the Word reaches my heart it is absolute authority, and the Word judges me. When they are both received into the heart, when thus in complete possession of me, Satan cannot touch me, because they will allow nothing of the flesh, self-will, etc., to work. Is there evil in me? They will enable me to judge it in myself and in everything around me. Such a one is guaranteed against all error; he has the Spirit and the word of God. These are the comforting, peaceful, blessed means of guarding us from all evil. The effect of a man’s being saved is, he is brought to God, having perfect peace, brought into an entirely new world, where God is revealing Himself in His word, and he has his soul constantly delighting in the Word, where all the wisdom of God is brought out for his soul to be exercised in, endless and safe, learning all that God is. And what we have all to seek is to be occupied with the truth every day, knowing more of delighting and feeding on Christ, as the true God, and as the perfect Man, subject in all things to His Father; and all this not so as to be able to write an essay on it, but as the Christ, in whom I know God and man, the One who lived by the Father, depending on the Father; then everything that is not of Him strikes upon my soul. It is that Christ who is touched, and it affects the whole harmony of the soul. Be sure of this, if it is not the living power of a living Christ known and enjoyed in the soul, you cannot withstand error. It must be truth held in connection with the person of Christ or it will not guard you against error; the mere truth is no match for Satan. I would not venture to meet Satan on the truth if I were not called to do it, to warn the saints, and for the glory of God, because I should be afraid, but I know God will keep me when in His service; but I do not therefore cast myself down from off the pinnacle of the
temple, because it is written in the Word, “He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”

We get set forth in Cain and Abel the traits of the two families; viz., in Cain, hatred, violence, and wickedness; in Abel, suffering, righteousness, and love. The eternal life which was with the Father is communicated to the Christian, producing in him Christ’s ways, thoughts, and feelings. “Every one that loveth is born of God.” “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,” for God is love. Love is the inner development of the divine nature. As I cannot enjoy or exercise the faculties and affections of a man if I have not got the nature of a man, no more can I enjoy God’s affections unless I have the nature of God. It is an old remark, that “knowledge cannot love.” You must have this nature, be born of God, or you cannot love. Man’s searching gets nothing. Unless he know the love of God in the Lord Jesus Christ he cannot love. Suppose there is a general notion of God, and that His eternal Government is seen and acknowledged. If I have knowledge, and try to understand things, I shall be confounded; for when the state of the whole world is looked upon, what do I see? Why, three-fourths of it given up to idolatry, worshiping the devil, and oppression, degradation, and misery overwhelming multitudes even in this great city; and the mind gets into confusion. Men may try to say that it is all needful for the general government of man, but this will not do for those who are suffering. If it be said, “Sin is the cause of it all,” then I say, If sin has come in, what can I have, as a sinner, to say to God? How can I meet God? It is of no use to tell me that He is good. He is that; but I am responsible to God, and the more I get into the truth, the more I am confounded, and thrown almost into despair. Neither scepticism nor authority will do anything for me here; but the moment I get Christ the whole thing is clear; Christ clears all up. I have not got something now that can deal with it, but God who has dealt with it. God is seen in Him as dealing with this creation in all its sin and misery. Then, I say sin has ruined us; all are guilty. I am guilty; but He has met my sin in the very way I wanted it. When I was in perplexity and despair about my sins, and when I found no way of meeting God, then it was God who met me, and showed me how He had settled it all to His glory in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has met all for me, coming into the world to be a propitiation for our sins, into all the misery, to put it away, and give Himself as the source of life, and put away of that sin which would hinder the enjoyment of God; and then, to the perfecting of this love, to introduce us into that which is above. He came down that He might take us up with Him. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” {1 John 4:10}. “Herein is our love made perfect” (or love with us made perfect), “that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.” I get the love manifested in His coming to me, and taking me up into the
presence of God, perfect in Himself. The communication of the nature gives
the power to love, and then it is, “Not that we love God, but that He loved
us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Thus giving us the
object for our love to rest upon and work upon, always elevating, always
satisfying. It is not the mysticism that delights in its own exercise working
on itself; but there is an infinite and blessed object, and we are brought into
association with and likeness to that blessed object, not allowing in us the
least fear, all being taken away by His divine work, and we at rest, perfectly
happy with God. Whatever does not make our hearts know God as perfect
in love to ourselves and in ourselves is not the whole truth; whatever does
not set me in the presence of God without a single fear remaining, so that I
can enjoy His love, is not adequate to His love to me.

LECTURE 7

The apostle in this part of the chapter returns to the great doctrine of the
whole epistle. It is not here so much the great truth which sets the soul
before God, but the truth we have when we are before God. We have
already been seeing the difference between Paul and John. While Paul sets
the Church as justified before God, opening out the counsels of God, etc.,
John brings out the nature of God in the saints. It is not so much the ground
of that which brought the soul to God, although he does speak of that too,
but it is the character of the life that is communicated -- the life which is in
God the Father, derived through Christ; it is first in Christ, and then
manifested in the saints. The traits of the divine nature are brought out
through the Christian, and this is particularly brought out in John. There is
also another thing in this chapter. It is not merely that there is a nature and
capacity to enjoy God, but the Holy Ghost is given as the power of that
nature. The Holy Ghost dwelling in us gives us the power of enjoyment; but
that there may not be mysticism, that there may be no vacillation or
uncertainty, he grounds the testimony in the public manifestation of the Lord
Jesus Christ; but the capacity of enjoying the source of the life is by the
power of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. God is love, and that is first openly
seen at the cross of Christ; and then in the new nature we have a capacity to
enjoy that love; but the fear must be taken away, because fear hath torment,
and torment is not enjoyment. Then he shows what removes the fear.
“Perfect love casteth out fear” {1 John 4:18}, not perfect righteousness; that
had given the peace before God, but the revelation of Himself, and what He
is, alone casteth out fear. If it be asked, “How do you know God loves
you?” Oh, I reply, I have a certain and constant proof of that in the gift of
His Son! and then besides that I have the daily and hourly enjoyment of God
as my Father, and I know it because I am enjoying it. I may prove to another
the love of God by certain acts, such as the gift of His own Son, which is an
open manifestation of God’s love; but this does not take away from the daily enjoyment of God, the capacity for which I get in the new nature and by the power of the Spirit.

It is remarkable to see how the apostle guards from mysticism by bringing the mind back to the plain statement of the gospel. “We have seen, and do testify, that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Savior of the world” {1 John 4:14}. In the seventh verse he begins by saying, “Beloved, let us love one another.” Here we have the love of God in exercise in the new nature, and the characteristic of this nature is to recognize it in another. If I have got this divine nature, I cannot help liking it in another. I may have many prejudices to overcome, but there is an attractive power in the thing itself. I do not speak of it as a mere duty; it is there in the nature, and being divine it is much above angels, although they are higher creatures. We are to love all men, to do good to all; that is, benevolence which acts towards that which is in need. I do not speak of that now; but there is an attractive power in the communication of the divine nature which necessitates love, which links one to another, and to Christ. There is power there; it may be very imperfect in us, but it is real, and attracts to the Divine Person. We need something more than the new nature, because the new nature is a dependent nature, therefore wants something else. Christ when down here lived a dependent life. “I live by the Father.” The old man sets himself up and pretends to be independent, but all the while is under the power of Satan; but the new nature is a dependent nature. It leans on power, and delights to do so. The Holy Ghost is the power, “strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man.” And that is the full blessing, both in the individual soul and in the Church of God. Though we have the new nature, we want the power of the Holy Ghost in us to remove the obstacles to its display. Labor will not do; you may labor, but just as a mountain of cold snow, which no labor can remove, melts before the bright shining of the sun, and all vanishes away, so nothing but the warm kindlings of divine affection in the soul by the power of the Holy Ghost will dissolve the thick ice of our hearts, and melt away all that which is in us to obstruct and hinder its fuller manifestation.

“Love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God” {1 John 4:7}. When I have got this nature I am born of God, and am brought into a position to refer everything up to God; for the nature we get from God has God for the object of that new nature to act upon. When I see the traits of this nature in another, I say he is born of God. I see love in natural affection, but here it is in a divine sense. In natural affection selfishness is the ground of it all; but in the saint “he that loveth is born of God,” while selfishness is the spring of everything out of God. We find in the soul that is born of God another principle which takes a man clean out of himself. A man makes
himself a fortune by some new invention that makes the world more comfortable, and what is this but selfishness? And all that gives an impulse to the progress of the world is selfishness. And here is the difference, because we are in a world where we all have to follow our various occupations and callings. In a Christian it is not selfishness; it is love. He has got out of every other motive; he is born of God, and love is the spring of all his actions, as love is the principle of God’s nature. It may be very feeble in me; but am I to be satisfied that it should remain so? Whatever is born of God came down from God, and returns to God again; therefore “be ye imitators of God, as dear children.” This perfect love came down from God that it might return to God again; for whom did Christ come down to glorify but His Father? for all that Christ did returned to God, a sweet-smelling savor, or else it would have been lost. There are many beautiful qualities in a creature of God; but do they return to God again? No; then it becomes sin. I get a good thing, and I enjoy it, and leave God out, and that is man’s sin. There may be a great deal of selfishness under that which outwardly appears like liberality, and you will see a Christian help his brother, and look up to God as doing it to God, because he loves God; but if he helps him and says to himself, “I have done well,” it ceases to be love; it is self-applause, and that is selfishness. The new nature gets God as the source, and God as the object, and thus is the truth of the new nature guarded, by being connected with this counter truth, that God is the object for this new nature to act upon. The new nature acts in us like God, so that others can see it; but then it knows God, and I can conceive of nothing higher than to know God. “Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God”; and it is a great comfort to say in everything, I have found God.

Then mark another truth (1 John 4:8), “He that loveth not knoweth not God.” There is no knowledge of God but in the possession of the nature of God -- there is no power to apprehend Him. You may see His works, and say there must be a God; but is that knowing Him? I must have God’s nature to know Him, because none can know love but by loving, and he who thus knows Him will apprehend Him. Take a philosopher who talks about God, and set him in the presence of God, you would find it is the last place he would like to be in; and why so? Because he has never been there before.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us” {1 John 4:9}. This is no abstract notion about love; it is not said merely, “In this was manifested the love of God,” but, “In this was manifested the love of God toward us.” Man’s mind cannot measure God; mind can only measure mind, measure thoughts; but mind cannot measure love, for love is only known by loving and being loved. If man’s mind were a competent judge of what God should be, God would not be God, and how must this love of God be found?
In a most humble way (so much the better) the soul must come in as wanting this love; for if it can come in any other way it does not want God. The moment any soul finds its need of God, there and then God is waiting to meet its need. It was so in the case of the Syrophonician woman, which brought forth that word of the Lord -- “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt!” The great faith is knowing my need, counting on God’s willingness to meet it. It may be vague; it was in the woman who came into the house; but still there was faith. When I find that manifested in God which meets my need, that is faith. I never get into the place of God’s meeting my need till I know God is God and I am a sinner. When we are in our place we shall find God in His; when I am brought down to the sense that the only thing I have got is sin, then God can act; “when we were yet without strength” God acted “in due time.” God being the doer, He does it in the perfectness of His own love and time. “In this was manifested the love of God toward us.” I can stand before God and talk to sinners, and say, “I know God in a way in which angels do not know Him, which things the angels desire to look into -- God’s love toward us.” I do not say me, but towards us, taking in all the saints -- that little word us, ceaselessly rung in our ears by the Holy Ghost putting us in the full consciousness of the favor of God toward us, “that we might live through Him.” Not only is God’s love manifested when it is wanted, but where it must have its own proper perfectness, and it comes out perfectly where nothing depends on man to bring it out or make it clear. It was manifested when we were dead, “that we might live through Him.” If I examine my own heart I cannot find it out. I know more of God’s heart than I do of my own; for my own is so subtle I cannot get to the bottom of it; for “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” and the best man upon earth will be the first to confess this. I do not get the full character of God to my soul till I see it in the cross; for what was in man was nothing but sin, and when that sin was met there was nothing between God and His Son; and if He was alone in that work, this is a proof of what God has done in my circumstances of death. He sent His Son that I might live through Him, and not only live through Him, but my sins being all put away I see eternal life through him for me, and He being the propitiation for my sins, I find my sins are gone, and life is come. Well then, after such a proof of God’s love, let us not be thinking of our love to God. Who am I that I should be coupling God’s love with mine? Do not talk to me about loving God; it is a wretched poor thing (I do love Him); but let us talk of God’s loving us. The moment I begin to think of my love to God, that moment it ceases, it is gone; the manna I gathered yesterday has turned to corruption.

Heaven will be when I have entirely forgotten myself, and am filled with God. That very same love which will fill heaven was manifested in the cross; for there it put all my sins away, and in heaven there are none. I want
something on which my soul may be stayed. Well, God loves me; and that which makes me know how much He loves me is, that He gave His Son for me. Then, as my soul rests upon this love of God, no measure of failure can be adequate to shake my confidence, as I estimate God’s love in the gift of His Son. His love is not exhausted, though my need may be great and my failures many; but I have a constant abiding proof, which follows me all my life through. How much He loves me is shown in the gift of His Son; and my soul rests in peace on this love, as manifested in the cross, which is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” It was proved at the cross, and abides there; it was outside us in the world, and it was made known to us when we wanted it in getting life, finding nothing in us but the need that depends upon it. The enjoyment of this love is another thing, and that is carried on by the daily and hourly communion with God as our Father, by the Spirit in us.

1 John 4:11. The Apostle having given a proof of God’s love goes on to the exercise of it in us while down here. “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,” and this principle we find brought out in other parts of the Word, as in Eph. 4:32: “Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”; also in Col. 3:13.

1 John 4:12. No man hath seen God at any time.” I cannot know God by seeing Him; but in John’s Gospel (John 1:18), “The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” He who knew what was God’s love has told it out -- the Son who dwelt in the bosom of the Father, who enjoyed the Father’s love without any alloy, He is the One who comes to tell it to me, as He knew and enjoyed it Himself, and I know God according to that revelation He has made; for “He hath declared Him.” But in the Epistle of John he goes a step further. It is communicated livingly to us. “True in Him and in you” (1 John 2:8). It was true in Him, and now it is true in you who believe.

“If we love one another, God dwelleth in us.” That is the source of it, and the enjoyment of it is by the power of the Holy Ghost. “His love is perfected in us.” It is not my love perfected in God, but His love is perfected in me; and I know, being in Him that is infinite, I shall never get out of it. It is not that I am infinite myself, but I am in Him who is infinite. His love is perfected in us. “Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit” (1 John 4:13). Here it is communion, and not merely power. It is in the nature of God, and not merely the power of God. I enjoy it because He has given me of His own Spirit, the joy of communion being by the power of His Spirit. Angels know not this joy; and why is this? Because they never have the Holy Ghost dwelling in them; but God hath “given us of His Spirit,” because we are members of Christ, the fruit of the travail of His soul, what He desires (not
we), for we are lost in Him; therefore, having received of His own Spirit, we ought to seek to have the life of Jesus made manifest in our mortal bodies. The divine nature in a man is shown by having God for its object.

“And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world” (1 John 4:14). Observe, the apostle gets back to the person of the Son, but in a more advanced state of soul, as knowing Him who sent the Son. “We have seen.” Thus it was a known and enjoyed love. While Paul gives us the Church and the purposes and counsels of God, John speaks of the nature in which God dwells; and what is the effect of this? Worship, because the highest thing we can enjoy in the knowledge of God. Look at the scene in the Revelation. God is on His throne, and the elders are on thrones around. Can anything be higher than this? Yes; they fall down and worship before Him who sat on the throne, and cast down their crowns before the throne, saying, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power.” Then observe, when the apostle realized the privilege of getting up to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, then he turns to the very simplest truth -- “The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” Thus we see the very highest saints are the best evangelists. The father in Christ links himself with the weakest babe, and the very way of bringing God into a world of sinners was by linking Himself with the most needy thing on the face of the earth. It is not the extent of knowledge that is needed, but the knowledge of God in the power of living communion, that is the power of evangelizing. The love that reaches the highest will stoop the lowest. The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world; it is not here merely as the Messiah to the Jews, but as the Savior of the world.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (1 John 4:15). The soul that has this fellowship and communion, God dwelleth in it, and it in God; for “whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” “The Father sent the Son.” Here we have the subordination of the Son in connection with the Father. “The Father sent the Son.” His eye rests on Him, on the Man Christ Jesus. We are not to reason about it. I must not have philosophy, but faith; and the soul taught of God can say, “I know that the Man Christ Jesus was the Son of God.”

“Herein is love with us made perfect . . . because as He is, so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17). Here he is not speaking of the love of God manifested to the sinner on the cross, but the extent of it in the saint, who is taken up in and with Christ. As He has been made sin for you on the cross, so you will be made the righteousness of God in Him in heaven, therefore there can be no question of judgment unless Christ can be judged.

“We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.” Love cannot be enjoyed where there is a bad conscience, therefore you must get the conscience purged. Satan may act on the conscience, as well as the Spirit
of God, but you may always detect the difference, as Satan always acts in the way of despair; while the Spirit of God always points to a resource in God, and the soul, however much distressed, feels there is goodness in God if it can only get at it. So the prodigal knew his need, and said, “There is bread enough and to spare in my father’s house.” Thus the soul knows God’s love, and believes in it; and when the Father is on the neck of the prodigal that settles every question; for the son is lost in the testimony of what the Father is; and having peace with God, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. “God is love.” There is not a word here of what man is. God is love; that is the only God I know, and the only way that I can know Him. If I am in Christ, is God going to impute to me the sin Christ has put away? Certainly not. I have sins, but they have all been judged in Christ; then God will not judge them again. What difficulty we have in believing what God really is, because we have been so long away from God, that we have become so narrowed in ourselves; but if we do come to know Him, then our hearts should be as wax, ready to receive the impressions of His love.

LECTURE 8

The last time, speaking on the preceding verses of this chapter (1 John 4), I was, in closing, referring to two things here -- the first, in v. 9, the love of God as manifested to the world in giving His Son for us; and, in v. 17, in its double fruit of love and life in us. God’s love, in contrast with man’s, is distinguished by this, that while man must have something to draw out his love (as it is said, “For a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”), God’s love is without motive, there being nothing attractive in the object that draws it out. “In due time Christ died for the ungodly.” God’s love sees no good in us. The brightest proof of God’s love and man’s enmity was seen in the cross; they met there, and thus showed the superiority of God’s love. As Jethro says, “In the thing wherein they dealt proudly He was above them” (Ex. 18:11). 1 John 4:9 sets out the open manifestation of His love to us while we were yet sinners. We learn His purposes and counsels about us as saints, in the second place, in 1 John 4:17: “Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.” This is a very different thing from His first visiting us in our sins. “Herein is love with us made perfect.” The perfectness of God’s love towards His saints is seen in the bringing them to be like Christ Himself. The sovereign grace of God puts the saint into the same place as Christ, that we may have the same kind of fellowship with the Father that Christ had. So in John 14 the Lord says, “My peace I give unto you” -- that is, the peace He had with His Father -- “not as the world giveth,
give I unto you.”

The world has the character of a benefactor; and that it sometimes gives generously I do not deny. But then it is by helping a man as he is, out of the resources which it has, which may be all very well; yet, while helping him, it is only taking care of itself. But it is evidently a different thing here; for Christ takes us clean out of our condition, putting us into the same relationship with the Father as Himself. The world cannot give in this way. There is no guarding anything for self in Christ’s unjealous love; but in us there is. Therefore He could say, “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” His delight was to show that the Father loved them as He loved Him. “The glory thou hast given me I have given them . . . that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” Jesus not only loves them Himself, but He will have it known by the world that they are loved by the Father as He Himself is loved. Can there be anything more disinterested than this? (although the word “disinterested” fails to give the full meaning). Still all this is guarded; for Christ ever keeps His place as the eternal Son of God. At the mount of transfiguration, the moment there is the question of putting Moses and Elias on an equality with Jesus, they both disappear; for when Peter said, “Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias . . . While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them,” and instantly the glorified men vanished. “And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear Him.” It is not said, “Hear them,” but “Hear Him.” “And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone.” If Christ, in His wondrous grace, reveals Moses and Elias as His companions and associates in the glory, the moment Peter, in his foolishness, gives utterance to the thought that would place them on an equality with Christ, they must both vanish from the scene.

It does not say, “As the Father has loved them,” but “As He has loved me” (as a man); for however Christ may bring us into the same place with Himself, He abides the object of homage and honor, even as the Father. If we elevate ourselves to an equality with Christ, immediately we set ourselves above Him; but it is ever the case, that the more a saint enters into his elevation, as being brought by grace into the same place with Christ, the more he adores Christ as over all, God blessed for evermore. This is ever to be borne in mind.

The thought in 1 John 4:17, “As He is, so are we in this world,” is that the saints are in the same place as Christ. If I have righteousness, it is a divine righteousness: we are “made the righteousness of God in Him.” If I have life, it is a divine eternal life: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear.” If I have glory, it is the same glory: “The glory thou hast given me, I have given them.” If we have an inheritance, we are “joint-heirs with Christ”; if love, it is the same love wherewith the Father loved Christ: “Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.”
The love is the most difficult thing for us to enter into, but the Lord would have our hearts enjoying it. All that we have in Christ is brought out in this passage, in the general expression, “As He is, so are we” {1 John 4:17}. It is the thought and purpose of God’s grace to bless us not only by Christ, but with Christ. Christ could not be satisfied unless it were so, we being the fruit of the travail of His soul. “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me.” Again, “I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” The Father’s love is seen in giving His Son for us, and the Son’s love in His giving Himself for us, and thus bringing us into His perfect place.

Some Christians do not give this v. 17 all its power; they refer it simply to our position before God respecting the day of judgment. Whatever judgment may come, the saint has nothing to do with it; for where there is a question about judgment, there can be no boldness. There is nothing more comforting than the perfect confidence of having God as my Father. I cannot get the affections in full play if I think God is going to judge me; but I have the Spirit of adoption {i.e., sonship}, and if I sin or do wrong, I run to my Father directly, because I know my Father is not going to judge me for it; for God is my Father, and will not judge (save as a Father, now, for my correction, by the way). Therefore boldness is needed for the exercise of the spiritual affections in me. And we ought to remember this, for Christians often shrink from it; but it is evident that if I am hesitating whether God is going to bless me or to judge me, I cannot love Him.

Then observe another thing -- there is a great difference between spiritual desires and spiritual affections, although they both have the same root. The spiritual desires, if the relationship which would meet them be not known, only produce sorrow. Take an orphan, for instance, in a family where the parent’s love to the children is witnessed every day, the sorrowful experience would be, “Oh that I too had a father!” The child who has its parent has the same desires, but the relationship existing of parent and child, it knows the joy and gladness which flows from such relationship. So, also that we may have joy and gladness as the children of God, we must have the consciousness of the relationship in which we stand to God. It is not merely that we have a divine nature which gives us spiritual desires, but we must also have the consciousness of the relationship into which we are brought by the power of what Christ has done. It is clear there never could be a question between Christ and His Father. He daily and hourly enjoyed the consciousness of His Father’s love. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” So also He says, “My peace I give unto you.” Again He says, “That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” The Father’s delight was in Christ, and He knew it in the daily enjoyment of it. And now “as He is, so are we in this world.”

While Christ lays the ground of our relationship by being the propitiation
for our sins, and the source of our life, yet it is not by Christ’s righteousness that I get “boldness.”’ I must be righteous, of course -- I cannot have boldness without it; but besides this there is the character God has towards me -- that of a Father; and I have another character towards God -- as a child. I have not only righteousness, but I am a son. And here I would notice the defectiveness of some of our hymns which call Christ our brother. We never find in Scripture that Christ is called our Elder Brother. In the fulness of His grace He is not ashamed to own us as and call us His brethren. My father is a man, but I do not call him a man; it would show a want of filial reverence in me if I did. In nothing is the power of the Spirit of God more shown in the child of God than in the suitableness of his expressions and feelings towards God. If we are really enjoying our place of infinite privileges, the Source and Giver of them will maintain His own proper place in our hearts.

Theorizing about it will not do. A common expression is, “We cannot be always on the mount.” So far that is true, because we all have our place of service down here. But I would observe that when we are in the mount of God, it always humbles; although when a saint gets down again, he may be proud of having been there. He is never so when there. Paul was not puffed up when he was caught up into the third heavens; but after he had been there, he needed the thorn in the flesh to keep him humble. The heart is never proud in God’s presence, and only when it is really there is it in its right place; for when out of it, the flesh turns everything into mischief.

“As He is, so are we in this world” {1 John 4:17}; not only in the same standing as to acceptance with God in Christ, but we are brought by the communication of His life into the same relationship as Himself. While in the beginning of the epistle the foundation is laid deep and wide in the blood which cleanses fully, still the grand subject of the epistle is the place into which we are brought. “Herein is love with us made perfect.” If my heart has seized the truth that God as a Father is acting in grace towards me, there is no place for fear. In all my need, and even (in that with which I ought to have nothing to do) in all my sin, I fly to Him. I could not in my sin fly to my Judge, but I have confidence in my Father’s love, and I fly to Him because perfect love casteth out fear.” In all my sins and follies I can look to Him who gave His Son for me. That is where grace puts me.

The proof of God’s love is, that He has given His Son; the perfection of it is, that we are as He is; and fear is cast out even in view of judgment. But if we ask how this came to pass, the answer is, “We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). There we are brought back to the simplest principles -- we love God because He first loved us. We did not come to God because of His loveliness; “we love Him because He first loved us.” We do not come in by loving God, but we come in as sinners, as debtors to His grace; and then, having come in as such, and finding God to be what He is -- love, meeting us in our every need -- then we love Him.
1 John 4:20: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.” Here is a check upon man’s deceitful heart. If a man does not love his brother, he cannot love God. Wherever the divine nature is, it is attractive to one born of God.

1 John 4:21: “And this commandment have we from Him.” We have another important principle in this verse: whatever the energy of the divine life in me, it always will have the character of obedience. Whilst there was in Christ the devotedness of love, there was also obedience. We are to love the brethren as being led by the energy of the Spirit; but I am to love them in the path of holy obedience. There is nothing so humble as obedience, and love never takes us out of the place of obedience. The Lord Jesus said, “As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.” When Lazarus was sick, and they sent to Jesus, He abode two days in the same place where He was, because He had no word from His Father; and so, if I have any little service to do for my brother, it must be as in the path of obedience to the word of God. This is what Satan tried to get the Lord out of in the wilderness. “Oh,” says Satan, “have your own will, if it is only in ever so little a bit, by making these stones into bread now you are hungry.” “No,” the Lord says, “it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Here we get a counter-check to all the workings of nature; for if it is not a command, it is not of God, and we are here to obey.

1 John 5:1: “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” Here we get the link between God and the family. When anyone is born of God, he is my brother. If the question is asked, Who is my brother? How am I to know my brother? Every one that is born of God is my brother. I may have to sorrow over him sometimes, but still he is my brother, because I am related to him by the same divine nature. It is of great importance to remember this in the present day, because, where the Holy Ghost really acts, there will be a constant tendency to follow different courses. There has been an awaking from the dead mass around by the power of the Spirit. There are glimmerings of light. Mere stones would be motionless, but there is life; therefore the moving power would lead in different directions, because of what we are. If we were all subject to the Spirit of God, we should all go one way. There is another thing also to be observed -- we are not at the beginning of Christianity, but at the dark end, and escaping as it were by different roads. The very fact of the operation of the Spirit would be to produce perfect unity if we were subject, but we are not so.

The remedy for this is for the heart to be in close fellowship with Christ; and in proportion as this is the case, will love for all saints be there. To the same extent as Christ is valued will the saint be valued. In proportion as Christ’s thoughts about His saints are known to me, will all saints be in my thoughts. I do not know Christ’s love aright if one saint is left out; as it is
said in Eph. 3:18, “Ye . . . may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ.” I can only enter into this in any measure when I embrace all saints. If I should leave one out, I leave out part of Christ’s heart. In Colossians we have “your love to all saints”; and in that epistle we have the fulness of the Head; in Ephesians the fulness of the body. God’s grace working in me makes every one born of God the object of my affections. I cannot go every way at once, and a real difficulty arises how to walk in fidelity to Christ, and in love to the brethren, so as not to let the affections get into a loose and general way. I cannot be loving God without loving all the children of God. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments” (1 John 5:2). Now men would say that is reasoning in a circle, but there is in it a deeply practical check against the evil of my own heart. If I love the Father, I shall love the children for the Father’s sake, and not lead them into wrong paths, because this would displease and grieve the Father. If I should lead them into anything wrong, I should prove that I do not love them for the Father’s sake, but for my own pleasure and comfort. If you truly love them, you at the same time love God and keep His commandments. Obedience and faith in your own walk will prove that it is as God’s children you love the brethren. If I know that a member of Christ’s body is going wrong, does this make me cease to love him? No; but because he is going wrong my soul is more deeply and affectionately going out after him, as being one with Christ. To be able to love the brethren faithfully we must keep close to Christ.

Again, we have another counter-check: if one comes to me with a vast amount of truth without holiness, or if there be a great show of holiness and truth be absent, neither is of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Satan never touches that which is born of God; he cannot touch it.

Worldliness is a terrible hindrance to the saint. We have the threefold opposition in the world, the flesh, and the devil. The world is opposed to the Father, as the flesh opposes the Spirit, and the devil opposes Christ.

The difficulty lies in not maintaining nearness to Christ, which the world would come in and hinder. Then I am open to all sorts of error, for I shall not take the trouble to be right if I am not near Christ. It is very troublesome and disagreeable sometimes to have to do even with saints: one will not give up this thing, and another that; and if we are at a distance from Christ, we shall be ready to give them up, and shall not take the pains to get them right when they are wrong. So Moses said, when in a wrong spirit, “Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom?”

Paul says, “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.” You have got off the right ground, and I must have
you, as it were, born again. I am travailing over again for you, that you may be right, because you belong to Christ. When Paul looked at them in confusion, as they were, away from Christ, he could only say, “I stand in doubt of you”; but when he looked at them as in Christ, he could say, “I have confidence in you through the Lord.”

Faith not only sees Christ in the glory, but sees also the connection between the glory of Christ and the saints, the link and tie between God and His people, and it is that which enables one to get on. So Moses said of Israel, not only God was their God, but they are “Thy people.” The real hindrance is the world. See Gehazi in the king’s court: his heart had drawn in the spirit of the world, and he was able to entertain the world with accounts of the mighty actings of the Spirit. The world must be entertained, and it will be entertained with religion if it cannot get anything else. All that I know of the world’s path, spirit, affections, and conduct is, that it has crucified my Lord; not in its affections and lusts merely, but by wicked hands it has crucified my Master. Suppose it were but yesterday that you had seen Pontius Pilate the governor, and the chief priests, and the elders, putting Christ to death, would you feel happy today in holding communion with them? The stain of Christ’s blood is as fresh in God’s sight as if it had been done but yesterday; the time which has elapsed since makes no difference in its moral guilt.

The question then is, Am I to get under the power of this world, or am I to overcome it (in my heart I mean)? When Christ was down here, in all the beauty and attractive grace in which God the Father could delight, there was not found in the world one thought or sentiment of common interest or feeling with Him. The world in all its classes -- rulers, priests, Pharisees, and the multitude -- have all been associated in hanging the Son of God upon a gibbet. Such is the world’s heart. If I have seen the glory of Christ’s person, and see that He is the very Son of God who came down and was turned out by the world, can I be happy with it? The link between the natural thoughts and affections and the world exists in every heart; so that in all kinds of things, even in walking through the streets, I constantly find that which attracts my eye, and my eye affects my heart.

Nothing will overcome the world in my heart but the deep consciousness of how it has treated Christ. Take my children, for instance. Do I want them to get on well in the world? must I have good places for them in it? Nothing but knowing the place Christ had in it will overcome the world in my heart. There is no possibility of getting on with God unless the world is given up, and the heart is satisfied with Christ. Christ must be everything. Look at Abraham’s history. He sojourned in a strange country, where he had not a place so much as to set his foot on. So we are not of the world, and this is the test of our affections; for as we are not at once taken out of the evil, we must have our hearts exercised to godliness. It is very easy to overcome the world
when the love of Christ has made it distasteful. Satan is the god of this world. Perhaps you will say, “That is true of the heathen world.” Yes; but it is true of the whole world; although it was not till after the rejection of Christ that it was brought out, it was true before. God had spoken by His servants and prophets, and the world had beaten one, and stoned another, and killed another; then He said, “I will send my beloved Son: it may be they will reverence Him when they see Him.” But Him they crucified, thus proving that Satan was the master of man. So the Lord said, “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.” You will not have spiritual discernment or power of motive unless the heart be kept near to Christ. I shall not want the world, if Christ is in my heart; if my delight is in that in which God delights -- that is, in Christ -- then I can overcome. “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

What! must I do everything to Christ? Oh, that very question proves a heart away from Christ, showing it is bondage for you to do all to the glory of God. It is not that we are to scorn the world in the least; for God’s grace is for every poor sinner that will receive it. It is the spirit of the world in my own heart which I have to overcome -- that which my heart is in danger of being led by.

I will now just look back to the three points on which I have touched. First, perfect love with us. There is not merely the manifestation of God’s love to the poor sinner, but association with Christ’s life, putting us into relationship with God.

Secondly, love to every saint; but we are to love them as God’s children, and keep ourselves in the exercise of love to God and keeping His commandments.

Thirdly, we are to overcome the world. The heart, resting on, looking to, eating, feeding on, Christ, gets the consciousness of what the world is, and overcomes.

The Lord keep us in humble dependence on Himself. His grace is sufficient for us; His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

LECTURE 9

We were seeing last evening in the preceding verses that the question between God and the world is brought to an issue; for the Son of God having been seen in the world, and in the world and by the world crucified -- thus putting the world to the test -- God could do nothing in the world in the hope of finding good in it, after it had crucified His Son. Jesus had to say, “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.” Having hung God’s Son on the cross, it is plain that this act cut the world off from all possible association with God, and thus the world has become a thing to be overcome
by the saint, as the apostle says (1 John 5:5), “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” But he then adds, “This is He that came by water and blood” {1 John 5:6}.

That is, he now presents the character and value of the cross -- “He came by water and blood.” The water and the blood are as a witness on God’s part, or the testimony that God gives; for it should be observed that the words “witness,” “record,” and “testimony,” are all the same word in the original.

You may remark here that “this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” This is the thing witnessed. “This is the record” (or testimony) “that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” {1 John 5:11}. It is not in the first Adam, but in His Son; not in man, nor by his works, nor by any means whatever, but it is God’s gift. “He hath given,” and though we possess the life, it is not properly and intrinsically in us, but in His Son. When we are quickened, the life is not looked at as in us; for Christ says, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” It is therefore immutable. If Christ’s life, indeed, can in any way be annulled or set aside, then can the life in us be so likewise, and not otherwise. If Christ can die, so can we; but if death has no more dominion over Him, no more has it over us. And this it is that gives the amazing value and most blessed character of this life; namely, that its spring and source is in Christ. It is given to the Son to have life in Himself (John 5:26). And thus He becomes through grace our life. For example, my finger has life, my natural life flowing through it; but the seat of life is not there. My finger may be cut off (I am not here supposing that a member of Christ can be cut off, which is impossible); but if my finger be cut off, the life still remains in my body, the seat of life not being in my finger. My finger was as much alive as the rest of my body; but the seat of life was not there. The seat of life is in Christ -- “Our life is hid with Christ in God.” Hence all the character of the life and all the communion flows from the blessed truth -- “in His Son.” The character of this life is nearness to God. Christ Himself is my life. It is of the last importance for the strength and comfort of our souls, and for all blessed delight in God, clearly to understand what our life is; for our thoughts on regeneration are necessarily altogether imperfect until we apprehend that it is a real life which we have, a life associating us with God’s Son, a life not possessed before, and in virtue of which we get communion with the Father, who has given us eternal life -- not in us, but “in His Son.”

We get brought out in various testimonies what Christ is to us, as in 1 Cor. 6:9-11, where the Apostle, speaking of the offscouring of the earth, says, “Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” And so here we get a corresponding testimony brought out in these three witnesses -- the water, the blood, and the Spirit.
In John 19:34 it is recorded that “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water.” The blood and the water flowed from a dead Christ. Hence we see how manifestly the link between the natural man and God is broken, and broken for ever. For “in that He died, He died unto sin once.” All that Christ could have blessed in nature is now entirely and for ever gone; and if there is to be any blessing now, it must be in a new nature, and through a dead Christ; as also all connection and association with God. Expiation, purity, life, can alone be had through a dead Christ. It is a dead Christ that must purify me if I am to be purified; for it was from a dead Christ that the water (the symbol of cleansing) flowed. Until the death of Christ, God was dealing with nature, to see (or rather to teach us, for He knew what it was) if any good thing could come out of nature. But the cross proved -- God’s rejected Son proved -- that it was not possible that any good thing could come out of nature. Man is not merely a sinner driven out of paradise, as we know Adam was; but man’s state now results not only from his being turned out of God’s presence because of sin, but from the will and energy of his evil nature, which has cast God out of His own world.

The cross shows that man’s nature is utterly incapable of being acted on by any motive whatever which could set it right. This is very humbling, yet very blessed. Heaven will not do, earth will not do, the law will not do. “I have yet one thing in heaven -- my beloved Son; I will send Him. It may be they will reverence Him when they see Him.” But no. The determination of man’s will is to have the world without God. This is what man wants. He will not have God in any sense. Here it is brought to a climax; and the very worst display of Christianity will be just this. If any of you should be seeking pleasure in the world, you know you do not want to find God there; for if you did, it would upset it all. Thus are you saying in spirit, “Let us kill the heir, and the inheritance shall be ours.” You may not have lifted up your hand to slay God’s Son, but you have kept Him out of your heart. Man’s great abilities will be much more developed in the day that is just approaching, than they have ever yet been, in trying to make the world go on thoroughly well without God. When was there ever a time when everything was going on so well, as men speak, such unity among nations as now, or such drawing out of resources? The cry is, “Peace, peace,” by the energies and working of man’s will without God. Man looks for progress in the philosophy, commerce, politics, and comfort of this world; but still there is in his heart a dread of the consequences of the progress of this selfwill. Thus is fulfilled the apparent paradox of Scripture, the cry of peace combined with “men’s hearts failing them for fear.” Now, men would say this is a contradiction, but it is not; for while men are building up commerce and arts and science in the energy of selfwill, who is there among them that would undertake to answer for the state of any nation in three years’ time, or for
even a much shorter period? Man is afraid of the working of self-will in his
neighbor, though he likes to exert it in himself. But the Christian has learned
that the question as to the world is settled in the rejection of Christ. At that
moment it was all over with the world.

The question between God and man is settled as to man himself; for not
only is man turned out of paradise, but when God’s Son came, they crucified
Him, and now grace comes in; and the Christian goes outside the world to
get, in God’s rejected Son, the life which is to be had in Him alone. This is
God’s record, that He has given to us eternal life; and this life is in His Son.
Amidst all this turmoil and trouble where shall I get peace? The moment I see
a pierced Christ, I have that which expiates and purifies. All this is not a
theory, not a doctrine merely, but a reality; for the moment my conscience
begins to work, I find that by nature I am separate from God; that my carnal
mind is enmity against God; that it is not only the world that has crucified
God’s Son, but my sins pierced Him. This is an individual thing, for this is
how individual souls are brought into the blessing. When I have real faith in
what God’s word tells me about my own evil, then the question arises, What
am I to do? All that which makes me a mere moral man declares that I could
have nothing to do with God; but through a pierced Christ I have three
witnesses that I can have to do with God. The highest act of insolence that it
was possible for man to do against God brought out the very thing that put
guilt away, even the blood and water flowing from Christ’s pierced side.
Suppose it was but yesterday that I wielded the spear against Jesus; the very
act that showed my enmity brought out that which put it away. I cannot
estimate sin aright until I see the water and blood flowing out of the pierced
side of Christ, putting it away. But then I must be brought to the
consciousness that I in spirit was there; my enmity to God did it; my sins
pierced Him. It was thus God addressed the Jews, telling them that they had
killed the heir; that is, their hearts had consented to it. Those Jews whom
Peter addressed, saying, “Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified
and slain,” had not actually murdered the Prince of life. They did not hold
the spear any more than you did; but in the same spirit they refused Christ a
place in their hearts; and it is thus God deals with the world. His question
with the world is, “What have you done with my Son?” As with Cain,
“Where is Abel thy brother?” And the only answer they can give is, “We
have slain Him.”

The moment the Messiah was rejected, that moment all title to the
promises was lost to the Jews. All hope of salvation -- everything is now
gone from them as a people; and now, if they would get blessing, they must
come in as sinners, and have their sins put away by the blood that flowed
from the pierced side of the Messiah {John 19:34}. Now, then, as all title on
the part of man to everything is gone, God is giving eternal life. God must
direct the heart away from itself (except to the sense of its sinfulness) to
Christ. Have I estimated my own sin as the murderer of Christ? Well, the blood has put the sin away; for the blood has cleansed the man who held the spear that pierced His side. We are nothing but sin; well, Christ was made sin for us, and through a dead Christ we get the blood as a witness that our sins are all put away; the blood being a witness of the perfect expiation of all sin. Christ “hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Here, however, it is not looking at the part man took in it, but at what Christ came into the world for, and what He accomplished.

There is, however, the water as well as the blood; and what is that? The water cleanses as the blood expiates, “that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.” While the blood expiates, the water cleanses. The water bears witness to the same life-giving power. “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” {John 3:5}. The Spirit of God is the source of life and the power of the Word, and gives life. Practically the Word is the instrument, the incorruptible seed; and it is also a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and it is that by which God’s thoughts are communicated to us. And it is out of the pierced side of Christ that these testimonies of God flow, thus writing death upon every production of nature. For it is not a modifying of the nature which now exists that the cross brings in, but the counting everything outside Christ to be dead, as there is not a thought, lust, or desire about the world upon which Christ does not write death; and thus it is that we get altogether new affections, “dead unto sin, but alive unto God,” through the life in His Son. And the real character of purifying is this writing death upon everything that flows not from a pierced Christ. The water is the purification, but the purification is through a dead Christ. Christ all His life through was the pattern in man of what man ought to be; but our participating in this could only be by the cleansing of His death.

But there is a third thing -- we have not only the blood which expiates, and the water which purifies, through which we are dead to sin, but He has obtained for us the Spirit, the presence of the Holy Ghost, as the power of the Word. It may perhaps be objected, I do not find myself thus dead to sin and purified. But you have a hatred to sin, which is a proof of your having died to it. And

in that Christ died, He died unto sin once: . . . likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin {Rom. 6:11};

for God ever treats us according to what He has really given us, treating us as though we had realized it all. So in John the Lord says, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” Now they did know Him who was truly the way to the Father, yet Thomas objected, and said, “We know not the way,” because they had never realized it. The instant I believe in Jesus, I am called on to reckon myself dead. I am never told to die, but I am told to mortify my
members that are upon the earth. A man under the law will be trying to die with all his might, but he will never succeed. A Christian is dead, and his life is hid with Christ in God, and therefore he mortifies his members which are upon the earth, as living in the power of the life he has in the Son of God.

Observe, he does not speak of our life being on the earth, for that is above with Christ in God; therefore he treats us as dead, but our members which are upon the earth we are to mortify. He never tells us to kill ourselves, but faith takes God’s testimony as true, therefore I say I am dead, and because I am dead, I have to mortify my members, being as dead to the world as Christ was, for I have God telling me that I am dead through believing. This is most practical as to peace of soul; for the moment I believe in Christ, I am delivered from all these things. I am not seeking to die, for I have the secret of power, and count myself dead. There is a practical difficulty as to the water; for how can I say I am washed, if I still find myself to be dirty? But I can say I am dead with Christ, for I shall never succeed in killing myself. The moment that I believe in Christ, all that He has done as a Savior is mine, and God appropriates and applies it to me. I may have failed to realize it, but the treasure is put into my possession.

Some souls often say, I believe all the value and efficacy of Christ’s work, but I cannot apply it. And who asks you to do so? It is God who applies it, and He has applied it to you, if you believe in its value and efficacy. The moment we believe in Christ, we have the Holy Ghost as bearing witness: “He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.” Just as the Son came down to do God’s will, and then ascended up again into heaven, so, at the Son’s ascension, the Holy Ghost came down as a person on the earth; for the Holy Ghost is always spoken of as being now on earth, and it is this which gives the true and peculiar character of the Church of God. And here we get the third witness in the Spirit of truth coming down to the earth. The moment I believe, I am sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise {Eph. 1:13}. All that I can produce of God’s good fruits as a Christian is in consequence of being sealed by the Holy Ghost. Redemption being perfectly accomplished, then the Holy Ghost comes down in person; so that the position of the Church on earth is between these two things -- the redemption made, and the glory in prospect -- as the Holy Ghost comes down between the Church’s redemption and the Church’s glory.

The knowledge of being dead with Christ gives me a pure heart as being myself dead to sin, the world, and law. By the blood I get perfect peace and a good conscience; and then the Holy Ghost comes down from God; thus we have perfect peace with God, having God’s own witness. Well, then, I have left the whole scene; I have done with it altogether; my sins are all gone, the blood has put them away, and I am now dead unto sin, and alive unto God. The cross, the wounds of Christ, are the door by which I entered, and the presence of the Holy Ghost is the power by which I enjoy the fruits of it. As
we have seen, the witnesses of God on the earth are *three* -- the *Spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, and these three agree in one; “for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son” {1 John 5:8}.

The heart is constantly looking for God to give it a testimony about itself; but God is giving a testimony about His Son, and not about what we are. If God were to give a testimony about us, it must be about our sin and unbelief of heart. But no; and it is of great importance in this day of infidelity to see that, if God gives a testimony, it is about His Son, and what He is to the sinner. If you believe that, you will get peace.

If I am going about to get a standing before God on the ground of my holiness, that would be self-righteousness, and of course I shall not get a witness from God as to that. But if my soul takes its stand with God, on the testimony God has given to His Son, then I get the witness in myself. When I have got this faith, I have got the thing in my own soul. For instance, look at Paul before Agrippa: “I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.” He was so thoroughly conscious that the Christ in his soul was the Christ in heaven, and he was so happy in this consciousness, that he wished the whole company were like himself (except the bonds), having Christ as a well of water springing up within. That which makes heaven to be a heaven to the saint is just this -- that he finds the same Christ in heaven that he has in his own soul; and all the subtleties of infidelity cannot touch the soul that possesses Christ thus within. No reasoning of an infidel can shake my confidence if I am happy in Christ; for if a man came to tell me there was no Christ, when my soul was happy in Him, I should not believe him. There may be no intellectual or logical proof on my part, but there will be, to a certain extent, a moral testimony in the happiness of my soul, and the warmth of my affections being centered in Christ. I have often found how much it tells with men of all conditions to assure them that I am perfectly happy in Christ, and quite sure of going to heaven. “Are you so?” they say; “I only wish I could say it.” It would not be a proof to an infidel, his merely seeing you were happy; but it comes home to the heart of man, as there is a craving in man’s heart that will never be met till he gets Christ there; for man is never happy without Christ, whatever he may say.

“He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar” {1 John 5:10}. The sin of men is in making God a liar when they do not believe the record God has given of His Son; for men do quarrel with you when you tell them you know that you are saved. They say, How can you know that? which is just as much as saying that God is not capable of communicating any blessing to man. It is calling God’s wisdom in question, as well as His power, in the testimony of His mercy and grace. This is what I have felt in the great question about the Bible. It is not whether it is the people’s right to have the Bible, but it is questioning God’s right in giving it. The treason is in keeping
away God’s message from His servants. It is not merely the servants’ right to have the message, but it is God’s right in giving it that is called in question, as it is interfering with God’s right of communicating His thoughts in His word. Whenever God gives a revelation, man is responsible to receive it. God has given a witness in which He reveals the glory of His Son; and when man calls in question that word, he is disputing with God in the testimony of His grace as to what He is.

Who can explain the riddle of this miserable world without Christ? Go into the alleys and lanes of this vast city, and see the woe and degradation even in this best and most civilized of countries, and learn there what sin does. In the drawing-room you may philosophize about it, but it is not in a drawing-room that you will learn what the world is. But when you tell me that it was because of all this sin and wretchedness that God’s Son came down into this world to put the sin away, then I can understand it; and God gives eternal life -- not life for a moment, or a life we can sin away, as Adam’s, but eternal life, which is above and beyond sin altogether; being in His Son, and therefore as near to God as can be. “This life is in His Son” {1 John 5:11}, who was ever the object of His Father’s delight; for when Christ was down here God could not be silent in His expression of joy, “This is my beloved Son.”

And God, in giving me eternal life, has also given me a nature and capacity to enjoy Him for ever. I am brought into an association with God, a relationship to God, and an enjoyment of God, which the angels know not, although holy in their nature, and exalted. We are thus brought near that we might “know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled to all the fulness of God.”

In what a wondrous place we are set, if we could but be purged from the vanity and earthliness that fills our minds, to enter into all our blessedness, and the association which we have thus with God, the very same which Christ has! He has borne the wrath of God for our sins, that this full cup of blessing might be given to us. In all this God would have simplicity of heart. A man may talk about many things, but knowledge apart from Christ will never do; but if we possess Christ within, Satan can never touch us; and if he comes, he will find Christ there, who has overcome him. It is a sweet and blessed thing, that any saint, though born but yesterday, has all in Christ that I have. And if one says, “But I am such a great sinner”; well, the blood has put sin away, and settled that question for ever.

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us” {1 John 5:14}. Here is a confidence in God that applies itself to all the details of life through which I may be called to pass. This is the confidence we have in Him: His ear being ever open to us, we have what we ask for, when we ask according to God’s will. How
wondrous is this, that God’s ear is ever open to us; for surely we should not desire to ask for anything contrary to His will. “And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” {1 John 5:15}. I am so made to know the love that, if I ask, I shall have. If I am really in earnest to do God’s will, to preach the gospel, for instance, and there are hindrances in the way -- Satan in the way -- I have only to ask, and I have all God’s power at my disposal, His ear being open to me. If you know what conflict and difficulty are, what a blessing is this, to have God’s ear open to you, and to know, if you are doing God’s will, you will always succeed in doing His will.

“There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it” {1 John 5:16}. Temporal death is here intended as chastening in the way of God’s government. There is a sin not unto death. And if there be real intercession, God will forgive us (James 5:14, 15). See also the case of Stephen, when he said, “Lay not this sin to their charge.” If you ask me what the sin unto death is, it may be any sin; it may be the telling of a lie, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter did not pray for them. And in Corinthians, “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” {1 Cor. 11:30}. The horribly confused state of the church causes the government to be kept more in the hands of God; and from the saints’ incompetency to walk in the power of the Spirit, they are necessarily more thrown on the Lord, whose faithfulness to us will not allow our sins to go unjudged. “He withdraweth not His eye from the righteous.”

May we be so walking in the power of holiness, that we may not be struggling with sin under His correcting hand; may we be walking in full communion with His grace. Amen.

J. N. DARBY’S HYMNS

{These hymns and notes are from the fourth edition of Spiritual Songs, London: James Carter, 1918, fourth ed., a 112 page book. Necessarily, the format is changed, which included moving notes at the end of the book to the hymn for which the notes were written. Also, consecutive numbers have been added to the hymns. Note that all references to the Collected Writings of JND are for the Morrish edition.}

Spiritual Songs
PREFACE

The early Hymns in this Collection, with the exception of the first one, are already well known. The later Hymns, from pp. 45 to 76, {numbers 11-22} were bequeathed by Mr. Darby, and would have been brought out by themselves, but that the wish was expressed, that those already made public, with any others that might be obtained, should be printed with them. Hence the Hymns in their present form.

No absolute or undeviating rule has been followed in determining the text, which varies considerably, both in the manuscripts, and in the different printed issues. It may be stated generally, that, unless some after-departure has special claims, preference has been given to the form as originally completed. The original manuscripts have only slight indications of punctuation. That which seems to give the best reading has therefore been adopted. Some of the titles have appeared elsewhere: a few only are found in the original manuscripts. These are noted as “Author’s Titles.” The remaining titles are added for completeness.

The first Hymn, and the last four (two of which were finished, the other two being fragments), were found among Mr. Darby’s papers, after his departure. One of these fragments is most interesting, as an example of his sympathy with children, which was such a sweet trait in his character. The first Hymn was quite unknown till thus found. Now, however, that the Lord’s faithful servant is no longer with us, there is no further reason for its being withheld.

This Collection will afford rich enjoyment and blessing to every spiritual mind; but the Hymns being the free utterance of what the heart learned with God, are without that careful finish that would have been given to mere composition. This, however, increases their reality, and, hence, their attractiveness, for all who will appreciate their intrinsic excellence. On giving the MS. book of his later Hymns to the Editor, the Author said,

There is one thing in all those: they are real. They are not composed; perhaps one.

Hymns such as these will only be profitably read when, in communion of
spirit, careful perusal and meditation are bestowed.

It was remarked in a letter,

It is sweet, now to think of the beloved servant at rest! How often, in his Hymns, that word ‘Rest’ occurs!

This is true. But though he earnestly desired this rest, 4 and could truly write of his “arduous and varied life and labor,” 5 yet he never wearied of the Lord’s service. Thus he wrote --

Though thy way be long and dreary,
Eagle strength He’ll still renew
Garments fresh and foot unweary 6
Tell how God hath brought thee through.

Thus, also, he wrote, on Feb. 21, 1882, just before coming to Bournemouth, during his last illness,

I am (through mercy) better: at my age shall never be well, till all sickness is over: but through mercy work half the day.

He had then entered his 82nd year. It was not rest only that he longed for, but the “Rest of God”; and to this his Hymns frequently refer.

In this life of labor, it was the whole Church of God which he desired to serve and feed; nor will its obligation for this service be known until the Day declares it. Christ, in supremacy in his soul -- and thus, Christ’s interests in all that which related to him -- formed, as we know, his heart, and directed all he did. Hence, as his peaceful call approached, he could say,

Christ has been the only object of my life. It has been Christ to me to live.

During his last illness, he often referred to the need of the affections being in exercise. On one occasion, within a few weeks of his departure, which took place on April 29, 1882, he remarked as follows:

It is not the mind, but the conscience, which is the link between us and God. Yes: and when that is in a proper condition, it makes way for the affections.
When we own the authority of God, then the affections can come into play.
The Lord give us the consciousness of this, that thus His joy may be in us, and our joy be full.

May God, to this end, graciously use these beautiful Hymns, to deepen abundantly in us those divine affections towards Christ, the formation and fostering of which in the saints was always the aim of the beloved Author’s ministry.

4. e.g. p. 6, second and two following stanzas {hymn 1, vv, 22, 25 and 26}.
PREFACE
TO THE SECOND EDITION

In issuing a Second Edition, the opportunity has been taken to revise the punctuation.

The Preface to the First Edition is reprinted, with some alterations in form, and some slight additions.

It will be seen that the Editor has introduced a few extracts from Mr. Darby’s writings, explanatory of expressions, or illustrative of the text. He will be grateful for any reference to Mr. Darby’s writings of a similar character.

Grateful acknowledgments are here made of indebtedness for the assistance of kind friends, in this, as well as in the previous Edition.

May, 1893.

TO THE THIRD EDITION

The only alterations in this Edition are some corrections in the Indexes and footnotes, and some further revision of punctuation.

{NOTE FOR THE PRESENT EDITION

The Notes that were at the rear of Spiritual Songs have been placed in footnotes to the respective hymns. The following statement headed those notes:

The following notes, amongst other details and incidents of interest, give the grounds upon which the dates have been assigned. The earlier dates are only approximately given. The later Hymns, with the exception of “The Hope of Day,” were all written during Mr. Darby’s residence in Pau {France}, in the years 1879 to 1881, when the thought of Hymns addressed to “The Father” was much present to his mind. Hymns from pp. 44 to 83 {numbers 11-24 in this edition}, inclusive, are given in the order in which they were written in Mr. Darby’s manuscript book.
Besides this, there is a note which indicates that Hymns 13-19 “were all written at Pau, in the same year, 1879.”}
INDEX TO TITLES OF THE HYMNS

1. The Call p. 181
2. The Endless Song p. 184
3. God in the Wilderness p. 187
4. The Saints’ Rest p. 188
5. Unchanging Love p. 190
6. A Song for the Wilderness p. 191
7. Patience of Hope p. 192
8. The Upward Way p. 193
9. Home p. 195
10. The Man of Sorrows p. 196
11. The Tree of Life p. 201
12. The Hope of Day p. 203
13. Sons p. 204
14. Echo of Songs in the Night p. 205
15. Rest p. 206
16. Fulness of Joy p. 207
17. The Father’s Love p. 209
19. Waiting for the Glory p. 212
20. Love Divine p. 213
21. Hope p. 214
22. Unfoldings p. 215
23. Love Displayed p. 216
24. The Souls Desire p. 217
26. The Road p. 219
27. Expectation p. 220

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

1. What Powerful, mighty Voice, so near
2. Oh! the joy of the salvation
3. Rise, my soul! Thy God directs thee;
4. Rest of the Saints above
5. O Lord, Thy love’s unbounded!
6. This world is a wilderness wide
7. O Jesus, precious Savior
8. Sing! without ceasing sing
9. Oh! bright and blessed scenes
10. O ever homeless Stranger
11. Soon we taste the endless sweetness
12. And is it so? I shall be like Thy Son!
13. Father! Thy Name our souls would bless
14. To live of Thee -- blest Source of deepest joy!
15. There is a rest for the weary soul
16. Oh! bright and blessed hope
17. Blest Father! infinite in grace
18. Father! in Thine eternal power
19. I’m waiting for the glory
20. Father! Thy sovereign love has sought
21. And shall we see Thy face!
22. O Lord! Thy glory we behold
23. We’ll praise Thee, glorious Lord
24. I’m waiting for thee, Lord
25. Jesus! canst Thou receive
26. It is not with uncertain step
27. Lord Jesus! Source of every grace
Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain (John 15:16).
1. The Call  [1832]

What powerful, mighty Voice, so near,
   Calls me from earth apart --
Reaches with tones so still, so clear,
From th' unseen world my heart?
‘Tis solemn: yet it draws with power
   And sweetness yet unknown:
It speaks the language of an hour
   When earth’s for ever gone.

It soothes, yet solemnizes all!
   What yet of nature is
Lies silent, through the heavenly call;
   No earthly voice like this.

‘Tis His. Yes, yes; no other sound
   Could move my heart like this:
The Voice of Him that earlier bound
   Through grace that heart to His, --

In other accents now, ‘tis true,
   Than once my spirit woke
To life and peace, through which it grew
   Under His gracious yoke.

Blest Lord, Thou speak’st! ‘Twas erst Thy Voice
   That led my heart to Thee --
That drew me to that better choice
   Where grace has set me free!

Then would’st Thou that I should rejoice,
   And walk by faith below --
Enough, that I had heard Thy Voice,
   And learnt Thy love’s deep woe,

Thy glory, Lord. -- This living waste
   Thenceforth no rest could give:
My path was on with earnest haste,
   Lord, in Thy rest to live.

Yes! then ‘twas faith, -- Thy Word: but now
   Thyself * my soul draw’st nigh --
My soul with nearer thoughts to bow
   Of brighter worlds on high.

7. The date of this Hymn is, it is thought, somewhere about the year 1832; but being uncertain, is placed in brackets.

And oh! how all that eye can see
To others now belongs!
The eternal home's so nigh to me --
My soul's eternal songs.

For Thou art near: Thou call'st me now
In love I long have known,
While waiting on Thy will below; --
Till Thou my hopes should'st crown.

And Thou would'st have me soon with Thee;
Thou Lord my portion art:
Thou hast revealed Thyself to me --
Thy Nature to my heart!

My happiness, O Lord, with Thee
Is long laid up in store,
For that bless'd day when Thee I'd see,
And conflict all be o'er.

Yes! love Divine in Thee I know;
The Father's glories soon
Shall burst upon my ravished view --
Thyself my eternal crown!

Thou mak'st me brighter hopes to prove,
Because Thou nearer art;
With secrets of eternal love
Thou fill'st my longing heart.

How shall I leave Thee, Lord? This joy
Is from Thyself: it is
My brightest hope without alloy,
My pure, eternal bliss.

With Thee, O Lord, I all things have,--
Unclouded joy divine
In Thee, who first these "all things" gave
For ever to be mine.

Yet I will wait, in labor still
In Thy blest service here:
What Thou hast given me to fulfil --
Thy will -- to me is dear! 9

I well can wait! Thou waitest yet
The word of that dread hour,
Which shall Thy foes for ever set
As footstool of Thy power.

9. "Yes, I rejoice in this light; I love to obey it. It is my meat to do the will of Him I serve; and I am glad to know it, because it is His -- glad He has deigned to communicate it to me -- glad to have it perfect as He gives it." ("Collected Writings," vol. 6, p. 104.)
Yet, Lord! were once Thy will fulfilled,
    How better far with Thee,
With Thee, my joy, my strength, my shield,
    In cloudless light to be.
O endless joy! how shall my heart
    Thy riches all unfold:
Or tell the grace that gave me part,
    In bliss no tongue hath told.
Lord! let me wait for Thee alone
    My life be only this --
To serve Thee here on earth, unknown; 10
    Then share Thy heavenly bliss.
Lord, be it soon! Thou know’st our heart,
    In this sad world, no rest
Can find nor wish but where Thou art:
    That rest itself possessed!
Soon shall we see Thee as Thou art:
    O hope for ever blessed!
Thou’lt call us, in our heavenly part --
    The Father’s house -- to rest.
O rest! ineffable, divine,
    The Rest of God above
Where Thou for ever shalt be mine;
    My joy, eternal love!
His counsels, all, fulfilled in Thee;
    His work of love, complete: --
And heavenly hosts shall rest, to see
    Earth blest beneath Thy feet!

10. “The Church, . . . a lowly heavenly body, . . . has no portion on earth at all, as it was at the beginning -- suffering as its Head did, unknown and well known -- an unearthly witness of heavenly things on earth” (“Collected Writings,” vol.18, pp. 238, 239.)
2. *The Endless Song* 11 (1835)

11. This Hymn was dictated by Mr. Darby, to a friend, while confined to his bed in a dark room, during the intervals of a severe and prolonged attack of gout in the eye, about the year 1835.

A selection from it was published, in the following year, in “The Christian Hymn Book, 2nd Edition (J. B. Rowe, Plymouth), 1836,” but with considerable variations, introduced by Mr. Wigram (as in other of Mr. Darby’s Hymns), to make the Hymn more suitable for singing purposes.

These variations are shown *by the italics*, in the following text, which is taken from “The Christian Hymn Book”; the printing and punctuation being given as there found: --

```
* * * * *

“Hark! ten thousand voices crying
   ‘Lamb of God!’ with one accord,
Thousand thousand saints replying,
   *Wake at once the echoing chord.*

‘Praise the Lamb,’ *the chorus waking*,
   *All in heav’n together throng,*
Loud and *far* each tongue partaking,
   *Rolls around* the endless song.

Grateful incense this, ascending
   *Ever to the Father’s throne,*
Ev’ry knee to *Jesus* bending,
   *All the mind in heav’n is one.*

All the Father’s counsels claiming
   *Equal honour* to the Son,
All the Son’s effulgence beaming,
   *Makes the Father’s glory known.*

By the spirit all pervading,
   *Hosts unnumber’d round the Lamb,*
*Crown’d with light and joy unfading,*
   *Hail Him as the great ‘I am.’*

Joyful now the *full* *creation*
   Rests in undisturb’d repose,
Blest in Jesu’s full salvation,
   *Sorrow now, nor thraldom knows.*

* * * * *

“Hark! the heav’nly notes again!
   Loudly swells the *song of praise,*
Throughout creation’s vault, *Amen!*
   *Amen, responsive joy doth raise.*”
```

The complete Hymn, as given in this Collection, was not published in its original form, till it appeared in “The Present Testimony, vol. 9 (Groombridge, 5, Paternoster Row, London), 1857.”

* “Full” in “The Christian Hymn Book,” is changed to “new” in “Hymns for the Poor of the Flock (1, Warwick Square, London), 1838,” to avoid the recurrence of the word “full” in the 3rd line; this is followed in other Hymn Books.
Oh! the joy of the salvation
   We possess around the throne!
Countless thoughts of admiration,
   Mingling, leave that joy but one.
Hark! Ten thousand voices, crying
   “Lamb of God!” with one accord:
Thousand thousand saints replying --
   Bursts, at once, the echoing chord!
Long, with free and glad devotion,
   Universal praise prevails,
Till, blest fruit of deep emotion,
   Voice by voice in silence fails.
Now, in wondrous adoration
   Dwelling on His matchless love,
Swayed with power of that salvation --
   Silence fills the courts above.
Then, their richest thoughts unfolding,
   Each to each, with joy divine
Heavenly converse blissful holding,
   Tells how bright His glories shine.
Some on God’s high glories dwelling,
   Brightly beaming in His face;
Some His first-born greatness telling --
   Ordering all things in their place:
These -- of Godhead’s counsels deep
   Him th’ Accomplisher proclaim;
These -- how Jesus’ self could weep, --
   Of Godhead’s love the witness came! 12
All, on love surpassing rest,
   That clothed in flesh the great I AM;
Till, from one heart, 13 divinely prest,
   Bursts forth at length the loud exclaim,

   “Praise the Lamb!” At once awaking
   The gathered hosts their voices throng;
Loud and wide -- each tongue partaking --
   Rolls renewed the endless song

12. See note to Stanza 4, line 2, p. 58 {hymn 15, "Rest"}. -- Ed.
Grateful incense this, ascending,
    Rises to the Father’s throne;
Every knee to Christ is bending,
    All the mind in heaven is one;
All the Father’s counsels claiming
    Equal honors to the Son;
All the Son’s effulgence beaming —
    Glory of His Father’s throne.
By the Spirit, all-pervading,
    Radiant hosts, unnumbered round,
Breathing glory never-fading
    Echo back the blissful sound!
Joyful now the wide creation
    Rests in undisturbed repose;
Blest in Jesus’ full salvation,
    Sorrow, now, nor thraldom knows!
Rich the streams of bounty flowing —
    Common blessings from above,
Life and holy joy, bestowing —
    Tell of God’s unwearied love,
Hark! the heavenly notes again!
    Loudly swells the air-borne praise
Throughout creation’s vault, “Amen!”
    “Amen!” responsive joy doth raise.
Rise, my soul! Thy God directs thee;  
Stranger hands no more impede:  
Pass thou on; His hand protects thee --  
Strength that has the captive freed.

Is the wilderness before thee --  
Desert lands, where drought abides?  
Heavenly springs shall there restore thee  
Fresh from God’s exhaustless tides.

Light Divine surrounds thy going;  
God Himself shall mark thy way:  
Secret blessings, richly flowing,  
Lead to everlasting day.

God, thine everlasting portion,  
Feeds thee with the mighty’s meat; --  
Price of Egypt’s hard extortion  
Egypt’s food no more to eat!

Art thou wean’d from Egypt’s pleasures?  
God in secret thee shall keep:  
There unfold His hidden treasures,  
There His love’s exhaustless deep.

In the desert God will teach thee  
What the God that thou hast found;  
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy --  
All His grace shall there abound!

On to Canaan’s rest still wending,  
E’en thy wants and woes shall bring  
Suited grace from high descending; --  
Thou shalt taste of mercy’s spring.

Though thy way be long and dreary  
Eagle strength He’ll still renew:  
Garments fresh and foot unwear  
Tell how God hath brought thee through!

When to Canaan’s long-loved dwelling  
Love Divine thy foot shall bring,  
There, with shouts of triumph swelling,

14. This Hymn was written in Switzerland, when a large number of Christians left the Swiss Free Church (“L’Eglise Libre”), after some lectures given by Mr. Darby on the Book of Exodus.

It was first published in “The Christian Hymn Book, 3rd Edition, 1837.”

15. “We should be in the spirit of waiting pilgrims, not weary ones.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 25. p. 168.)
Zion’s songs, in rest, to sing,
There no stranger-God shall meet thee!
   Stranger thou in courts above
He who to His rest shall greet thee
   Greets thee with a well-known love.

4. The Saints’ Rest 16  1845

Rest of the saints above,
Jerusalem of God!
Who, in thy palaces of love,
Thy golden streets have trod
To me thy joy to tell?
Those courts secure from ill,
Where God Himself vouchsafes to dwell,
   And every bosom fill!
Who shall to me that joy
Of saint-thronged courts declare --
Tell of that constant, sweet employ,
   My spirit longs to share?
That rest, secure from ill,
No cloud of grief e’er stains;
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,
   And love eternal reigns.
The Lamb is there, my soul!
There God Himself doth rest
In love Divine -- diffused through all --
   With Him supremely blest.
God and the Lamb! ‘Tis well
I know that source Divine
Of joy and love, no tongue can tell --
   Yet know that all is mine.
And see! The Spirit’s power
Has oped the heavenly door,

16. This was first published, on Mr. Darby’s return from Switzerland in 1845, in the form of a leaflet (T. B. Bateman, 1, Ivy Lane, London); and afterwards, in “The Prospect, vol. 1 (S. Barber, Smith Street, Guernsey), 1848.”
Has brought me to that favored hour
   When toil shall all be o’er.
There on the hidden Bread
   Of Christ once humbled here,
God’s treasured store, forever fed, --
   His love my soul shall cheer.
Called by that secret name
   Of undisclosed delight
(Blest answer to reproach and shame)
   Graved on the stone of white,
There in effulgence bright,
   Savior and Guide, with Thee
I’ll walk, and in Thy heavenly light
   Whiter my robe shall be!
There, in th’ unsullied way
   Which His Own hand hath dressed
My feet press on, where brightest day
   Shines forth on all the rest.  
But who that glorious blaze
   Of living light shall tell --
Where all His brightness God displays,
   And the Lamb’s glories dwell?
There, only to adore
   My soul its strength may find --
Its life, its joy for evermore,
   By sight nor sense defined.
God and the Lamb shall there
   The light and temple be;
And radiant hosts, forever, share
   The unveiled mystery!

17. That is, on the whole realm of the Saints’ rest. -- Ed.
5. *Unchanging Love* ¹⁸ 1845

O LORD, Thy love’s unbounded!
So sweet, so full, so free:
My soul is all transported,
    Whene’er I think of Thee.
Yet Lord, alas! what weakness
    Within myself I find;
No infant’s changing pleasure
    Is like my wandering mind.
And yet, Thy love’s unchanging,
    And doth recall my heart
To joy, in all its brightness --
    The peace its beams impart!
Yet sure, if in Thy Presence
    My soul still constant were,
Mine eye would, more familiar,
    Its brighter glories bear:
And thus, Thy deep perfections
    Much better should I know,
And, with adoring fervor,
    In this Thy nature grow.
Still, sweet ‘tis to discover,
    If clouds have dimmed my sight,
When passed, Eternal Lover,
    Towards me, as e’er, Thou’rt bright.
Oh guard my soul, then, Jesus,
    Abiding still with Thee;
And if I wander, teach me
    Soon back to Thee to flee;
That all Thy gracious favor
    May to my soul be known,
And versed in this Thy goodness
    My hopes Thyself shalt crown!

---

¹⁸. Written on the top of a coach, while trying to recall a Hymn by Mr. Deck, beginning with the same words, well known to many.

It appeared on the same leaflet with the above {Hymn 4, above}; and in “The Prospect, vol. 1, 1848.”
6. A Song for the Wilderness 19 1849

This world is a wilderness wide:
    I have nothing to seek or to choose --
I’ve no thought in the waste to abide --
    I’ve nought to regret nor to lose.

The Lord is Himself gone before;
    He has marked out the path that I tread:
It’s as sure as the love I adore;
    I have nothing to fear nor to dread.

There is but that one, in the waste,
    Which His footsteps have marked as His own;
And I follow, in diligent haste,
    To the seats where He’s put on His crown.

For the path where my Savior is gone,
    Has led up to His Father and God --
To the place where He’s now on the throne:
    And His strength shall be mine on the road.

And with Him shall my rest be on high,
    When, in holiness bright, I sit down,
In the joy of His love, ever nigh --
    In the peace that His Presence shall crown.

‘Tis the treasure I’ve found in His love
    That has made me a pilgrim below;
And ‘tis there, when I reach Him above,
    As I’m known, all His fulness I’ll know.

And, Savior! ‘tis Thee, from on high,
    I await, till the time Thou shalt come
To take him Thou hast led by Thine eye
    To Thyself, in Thy heavenly home.

Till then, ‘tis the path Thou hast trod
    My delight and my comfort shall be:
I’m content with Thy staff and Thy rod,
    Till, with Thee, all Thy glory I see.

19. Author’s Title.

The manuscript of this was given by Mr. Darby, to a friend, at Montpellier, in 1849.

It was first published in “The Prospect, vol. 1, 1849,” and is called “A Song for the Wilderness,” in “The Present Testimony, vol. 1, 1849.”

In the previous Edition, the Title “A Song for the Wilderness,” was, in error, attached to the Hymn which commences, “Rise, my soul! Thy God directs thee” (p. 12). It belongs, however, to this Hymn, “This world is a wilderness wide.”
7. **Patience of Hope** 20  1856

O Jesus, precious Savior,
Oh! when wilt Thou return?
Our hearts, with woe familiar,
To Thee, our Master, turn.

Our woe is Thine, Lord Jesus!
Our joy is in Thy love:
But woe and joy all lead us
To Thee, in heaven above.

We ponder the long story
   Of this world’s mournful ways;
We think on holy glory,
   With Thee, through endless days.

We see God’s gracious order
   All spoiled by man below --
See all around disorder, 21
   Meek hearts beset with woe.

Where’er we ope the pages,
   In which -- Thy wondrous word!
Man’s path through varied ages
   Is given us to record, --

Of failure, ruin, sorrow,
   The story still we find:
God’s love but brings the morrow
   Of evil in mankind.

To Thee we look, Lord Jesus,
   To Thee, whose love we know;
We wait the power that frees us
   From bondage, sin, and woe.

We look for Thine appearing --
   Thy Presence here to bless;
We greet the day that’s nearing,
   When all this woe shall cease.

But oh, for us, blest Savior,

---


21. “He sees around him a confusion, a disorder, in the condition of those set as masters over the lower part of this creation, which tells a tale of their moral position before God, which no wit of his can solve; . . . which shows some mighty moral relationship in disorder, proving by its very greatness that it must refer to God, and hence that it is only His coming into it which can give the key to all, or set it right in fact.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 6, pp. 46, 47.)
How brighter far the lot,
With Thee to be for ever,
Where evil enters not!
To see Thee, who’st so loved us,
Then face to face above,
Whose grace at first had moved us
To taste, and know, Thy love!
With Thee, O Lord, for ever,
Our souls shall be content;
Nor act, nor thought, shall ever
Full joy with Thee prevent.
Thy Father’s perfect favor
Our dwelling-place shall be;
And all His glory, ever,
Shine forth on us and Thee.
Oh, come then soon, Lord Jesus;
In patience still we wait
(Await the power that frees us)
Our longed-for heavenly seat!

8. *The Upward Way* 22 1856

Sing! without ceasing sing
The Savior’s present grace;
How all things shine
In light Divine,
For those who’ve seen His face!
He’s gone within the veil,
For us that place He’s won;
In Him we stand,
A heavenly band,
Where He Himself is gone.
There all’s unsullied light;
My heart lets in its rays:
And heavenly light
Makes all things bright,
Seen in that blissful gaze!

Such here on earth, I am,
Though I in weakness roam;
   My place on high,
   God’s Self, so nigh;
His Presence is my home.
My heart is filled with bliss --
Heaven’s own eternal joys
   My soul at rest --
   Of peace possessed --
That world its strength employs.
Thus, in divine delight
Of love so richly known,
   God’s works below
   With beauty glow;
His hand, His grace, I own:
And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day, 23
   Through scenes of strife,
   And desert life,
I tread in peace my way.
That way is upward still --
Where life and glory are;
   My rest’s above:
   In perfect love
The glory I shall share: --
For ever with the Lord,
For ever like Him then, --
   And see His face
   In that blest place,
My Father’s house in heaven!

---

23. “All is a vain show around us; but that which is inside abides. When the heart gets hold of this fact, it becomes like one taken into the house to work for the day; performs the duties well, but passes through, instead of living in the circumstances . . . The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, fulfilling as a hireling our day, till Christ shall come, and then shall every man have praise of God.” Aug. 7, 1863. At the Priory tea meeting, before leaving for America. (Fryer, 7, Byron Place, Bristol.)
9. **Home**  

Oh! bright and blessed scenes,  
Where sin shall never come:  
Whose sight my longing spirit weans  
From earth, where yet I roam.  
And can I call my home,  
My Father’s house on high?  
The Rest of God, my rest to come,  
My place of liberty?  
Yes! In that light unstained,  
My stainless soul shall live;  
My heart’s deep longings more than gained,  
When God His rest shall give!  
His Presence there -- my soul  
Its rest, its joy untold,  
Shall find: -- when endless ages roll,  
And time shall ne’er grow old.  
My God the center is:  
His Presence fills that land;  
And countless myriads -- own’d as His --  
Round Him adoring stand.  
My God, whom I have known --  
Well known in Jesus’ love,  
Rests in the blessing of His own  
Before Himself above.  
Glory supreme is there --  
Glory that shines through all;  
More precious still that love to share  
As those that love did call!  
Like Jesus, in that place  
Of light and love supreme, --  
Once Man of sorrows, full of grace;  
Heaven’s blest and endless theme!  
Like Him! O grace supreme!  
Like Him before Thy face!  
Like Him -- to know that glory beam  
Unhindered, face to face!  
O love, supreme and bright,

---

24. Author’s Title.  

In “Present Testimony, a new series, vol. 1, (Groombridge), 1867”; and called there, “Home.”
Good to the feeblest heart, --
That gives me now, as heavenly light,
   What soon shall be my part!
Be not to me, my God,
As one that turned aside
To tarry for the night, and trod
   His onward path. Abide
With me, as light Divine
   That brings into my breast
Those gladdening scenes e’en now, as mine, --
   Soon my eternal rest.

10. The Man of Sorrows 25  1867

O ever homeless Stranger,
   Thus, dearest Friend to me;
An outcast in a manger,
   That Thou might’st with us be!
How rightly rose the praises
   Of heaven that wondrous night --
When shepherds hid their faces
   In brightest angel-light!
More just those acclamations,
   Than when the glorious band
Chanted earth’s deep foundations, --
   Just laid by God’s right hand.
Come now, and view that manger --
   The Lord of Glory see,
A houseless, homeless Stranger,
   In this poor world, for thee --
“To God, in the highest, glory,
   And peace on earth” to find;
And learn that wondrous story,
   “Good pleasure in mankind.”

*How blessed those heavenly spirits,
   Who joy increasing find,

25. This was written during a severe illness, in Canada, in which it was thought he was dying, and when medical aid had been in vain pressed upon him. He got up, although weak; wrote the Hymn; and was then obliged to go to bed again, for the remainder of his illness.

First printed in “Words of Truth, vol. 1 (R. L. Allan, 75, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow), 1867”; where it is called “The Man of Sorrows.” It was thence copied into the “Present Testimony, a new series, vol. 1, 1867,” with acknowledgment.
That spite of our demerits
   God’s pleasure’s in mankind;

*And chant the highest glory
   Of Him they praise above,
In telling out the story,
   Of God come down in love!

* The insertion of these two verses was left doubtful in the original manuscript. -- Ed.

Oh, strange, yet fit beginning
   Of all that life of woe,
In which Thy grace was winning
   Poor man his God to know!
Bless’d Babe! who lowly liest
   In manger-cradle there;
Descended from the highest,
   Our sorrows all to share:
Oh, suited now in nature
   For Love’s Divinest ways,
To make the fallen creature
   The vessel of Thy praise!
O Love! all thought surpassing!
   That Thou should’st with us be:
Nor yet, in triumph passing;
   But human infancy!
We cling to Thee in weakness --
   The manger and the cross;
We gaze upon Thy meekness,
   Through suffering, pain, and loss;
There see the Godhead glory
   Shine through that human veil;
And, willing, hear the story
   Of Love that’s come to heal!
My soul in secret follows
   The footsteps of His love;
I trace the Man of sorrows,
   His boundless grace to prove.
A child in growth and stature,
   Yet full of wisdom rare:
Sonship, in conscious nature,
   His words and ways declare.
Yet still, in meek submission,
   His patient path He trod,
To wait His heavenly mission,
Unknown to all but God.
But who, Thy path of service,
Thy steps removed from ill,
Thy patient love to serve us,
With human tongue can tell?
Midst sin, and all corruption,
Where hatred did abound,
Thy path of true perfection
Was Light on all around.
In scorn, neglect, reviling,
Thy patient grace stood fast;
Man's malice unavailing
To move Thy heart to haste.
O'er all, Thy perfect goodness
Rose blessedly Divine;
Poor hearts oppressed with sadness,
Found ever rest in Thine!
The strong man in his armor
Thou mettest in Thy grace;
Did'st spoil the mighty charmer
Of our unhappy race.
The chains of man, his victim,
Were loosened by Thy hand,
No evils that afflict him
Before Thy power could stand.
Disease, and death, and demon,
All fled before Thy word --
As darkness, the dominion
Of day's returning Lord!
The love, that bore our burden
On the accursed tree,
Would give the heart its pardon,
And set the sinner free!
Love, that made Thee a mourner
In this sad world of woe,
Made wretched man a scorner
Of grace -- that brought Thee low;
Still, in Thee, love’s sweet savor  
Shone forth in every deed;  
And showed God’s loving favor  
To every soul in need.

* * * * *

I pause: -- for, in Thy vision,  
The day is hastening now,  
When, for our lost condition,  
Thy holy head shall bow;  
When, deep to deep still calling,  
The waters reach Thy soul,  
And -- death and wrath appalling --  
Their waves shall o’er Thee roll.

O day of mightiest sorrow,  
Day of unfathomed grief;  
When Thou should’st taste the horror  
Of wrath, without relief: 26

O day of man’s dishonor!  
When, for Thy love supreme,  
He sought to mar Thine honor,  
Thy glory turn to shame: 27

O day of our confusion!  
When Satan’s darkness lay,  
In hatred and delusion,  
On ruined nature’s way.

Thou soughtest for compassion  
Some heart Thy grief to know,  
To watch Thine hour of passion --  
For comforters 28 in woe:

No eye was found to pity --  
No heart to bear Thy woe;  
But shame, and scorn, and spitting, --  
None cared Thy Name to know.

The pride of careless greatness

26. “For Him, death was death. Man’s utter weakness, Satan’s extreme power, and God’s just vengeance, -- and alone, without one sympathy, forsaken of those whom He had cherished, -- the rest, his enemies, -- Messiah delivered to Gentiles and cast down, the judge washing his hands of condemning innocence, the priests interceding against the guiltless instead of for the guilty -- all dark, without one ray of light even from God.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 7, p. 258.)

27. “For His faith the cup is already given Him . . . Jesus having bowed to this, men availed themselves of it to trample on Him.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 7, p. 353.)

Could wash its hands of Thee:
Priests, that should plead for weakness,
Must Thine accusers be!

Man’s boasting love disowns Thee;
Thine own Thy danger flee;
A Judas only owns Thee --
That Thou may’st captive be.

O man! How hast thou proved
What in thy heart is found;
By grace Divine unmoved,
By self in fetters bound.

Yet, with all grief acquainted,
The Man of sorrows view,
Unmoved -- by ill untainted --
The path of grace pursue.

In death, obedience yielding
To God His Father’s will,
Love still its power is wielding
To meet all human ill.

On him who had disowned Thee
Thine eye could look in love --
‘Midst threats and taunts around Thee --
To tears of grace to move.

What words of love and mercy
Flow from those lips of grace,
For followers that desert Thee;
For sinners in disgrace!

The robber learned beside Thee,
Upon the cross of shame --
While taunts and jeers deride Thee --
The savor of Thy Name.

Then, finished all, in meekness
Thou to Thy Father’s hand
(Perfect Thy strength in weakness,)
Thy spirit dost commend.

O Lord! Thy wondrous story
My inmost soul doth move;
I ponder o’er Thy glory
Thy lonely path of love!
But, O Divine Sojourner
   ‘Midst man’s unfathomed ill,
Love, that made Thee a mourner,
   It is not man’s to tell!
We worship, when we see Thee
   In all Thy sorrowing path;
We long soon to be with Thee
   Who bore for us the wrath!
Come then, expected Savior;
   Thou Man of Sorrows come!
Almighty, blest Deliverer!
   And take us to Thee -- home.

11. The Tree of Life  

Soon we taste the endless sweetness
   Of the Tree of life above;
Taste its own eternal meetness
   For the heavenly land we love!
In eternal counsels founded --
   Perfect now in fruit Divine;
When the last blest trump has sounded,
   Fruit of God for ever mine!
Fresh, and ever new, are hanging
   Fruits of life on that blest Tree;
There is stilled each earnest longing --
   Satisfied my soul shall be:
Safety -- where no foe approaches;
   Rest -- where toil shall be no more;
Joy  -- whereon no grief encroaches;
   Peace -- where strife shall all be o’er!
Various fruits, of richest flavor,
   Offers still the Tree Divine:
One itself, the same for ever,
   All its various fruits are mine!
Where deceiver ne’er can enter,

---

29. Author’s Title.
   First published in “A Voice to the Faithful, vol. 4, (24, Warwick Lane, London), 1870.”
   It is called “The Tree of Life,” in “The Streams, (Tract Depot, Warwick Lane).”
30. “In spirit, we are in heaven. We are in Christ, who fills it with His Glory and His
   perfections . . Holiness and love and joy characterize the land. They are the fruits which grow
   there spontaneously, as are the thanksgivings that arise in the hearts of those who are there
   through redeeming power.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 7, p. 185.)
Sin-soiled feet have never trod,
Free, our peaceful feet may venture
In the paradise of God;

Drink of life’s perennial river,
Feed on life’s perennial food --
Christ the fruit of life, and giver --
Safe through His redeeming blood!

Object of eternal pleasure;
   Perfect in Thy work Divine;
Lord of glory! Without measure,
   Worship, joy, and praise are Thine!

But, my soul! hast thou not tasted
   Of that Tree of life on high?
As through desert lands thou’st hasted,
   Eshcol’s grapes been never nigh?

Ah! that Tree of life was planted,
   Rooted deep in love Divine,
Ere the sons of God had chanted
   Worlds where creature glories shine!

Love Divine without a measure
   Godhead glory must reveal;
In the Object of its pleasure 31
   All its ways of grace must seal.

As a tender sucker, rising
   From a dry and stony land,
Object of man’s proud despising,
   Grew the Plant of God’s right hand!

Grace and truth, in love unceasing,
   Rivers on the thirsty ground --
Every step to God well pleasing --
   Spread their heavenly savor round.

He the Father’s Self revealing, --
   Heavenly words none else could tell,
Words of grace, each sorrow healing,
   On the ear of sorrow fell.

31. “God Himself must have an object worthy of Himself to be the subject of His purposes, and in order to unfold all His affections. This object is the glory of His Son -- His Son Himself.” (Synopsis,” 2nd ed. Revised, vol. 5, p. 69.)
Yes! that Tree of life is planted;  
    Sweetest fruit e’en here has borne!
To its own rich soil transplanted,  
    Waits alone the eternal morn:
Fruits that our own souls have tasted
    By the Spirit from above,
While through desert lands we’ve hasted: --
    Fruits of perfect, endless love!

12. *The Hope of Day*  
1872

And is it so? I shall be like Thy Son!  
Is this the grace which He for me has won?  
Father of glory! Thought beyond all thought;  
In glory to His Own blest likeness brought.
O Jesus Lord: who loved me like to Thee?  
Fruit of Thy work! With Thee too, there to see  
Thy glory, Lord, while endless ages roll,  
Myself the prize and travail of Thy soul.
Yet it must be! Thy love had not its rest,  
Were Thy redeemed not with Thee fully blest;  
That love that gives not as the world, but shares  
All it possesses, with its loved co-heirs!
Nor I alone; Thy loved ones all, complete  
In glory around Thee, with joy shall meet!  
All like Thee: for Thy glory like Thee, Lord!  
Object supreme of all, by all adored!
And yet it must be so! A perfect state,  
To meet Christ’s perfect love -- what we await;  
The Spirit’s hopes, desires, in us inwrought,  
Our present joy -- with living blessings fraught.  
The heart is satisfied; can ask no more;  
All thought of self is now for ever o’er:  
Christ, its unmingled Object, fills the heart  
In blest adoring love -- its endless part.

32. Author’s Title.  
In “A Voice to the Faithful, vol. 4, (24, Warwick Lane, London), 1872.”
Entitled, in Mr. Darby’s manuscript, “The Hope of Day.”
Father of mercies, in Thy Presence bright
All this shall be unfolded in the light;
Thy children, all, with joy Thy counsels know
Fulfilled; patient in hope, while here below.

13. Sons 1879

Father! Thy Name our souls would bless
   As children taught by grace;
Lift up our hearts in righteousness,
   And joy before Thy face!
Sweet is the confidence Thou giv’st,
   Though high above our praise;
Our hearts resort to where Thou liv’st
   In heaven’s unclouded rays.
There, in the purpose of Thy love,
   Our place is now prepared,
As sons with Him who is above --
   Who all our sorrows shared.

Eternal ages shall declare
   The riches of Thy grace
To those who with Thy Son shall share
   A son’s eternal place.
Absent as yet, we rest in hope,
   Treading the desert path --
Waiting for Him who takes us up
   Beyond the power of death.
Unchanging glory fills the place
   Where Jesus dwells on high;
But brighter joy our spirits trace
   With Him, for ever nigh!

We joy in Thee; Thy holy love
   Our endless portion is;
Like Thine Own Son, with Him above,
   In brightest heavenly bliss:

33. Written at Pau, in the South of France, 1879. Mr. Darby first concluded this hymn thus;
   “In holiness Thou keep’st us here,
      With all a Father’s love;
   As Jesus loved – we have no fear,
      Taught, led, by Thee above.”
His Father Thou,-- and ours thro' grace, --
   We taste the same delight --
Blest in the brightness of Thy face,
   In heaven's unclouded light.

Father! Thy love my portion is,
   As son -- like Christ -- with Thee;
Oh, who can tell of love like this,
   So sov'reign, full, and free!

O Holy Father, keep us here
   In that blest name of Love;
Walking before Thee without fear,
   Till all be joy above.

14. Echo of Songs in the Night 34  1879

To live of Thee -- blest Source of deepest Joy!
To hear e'en now by faith Thy voice of love --
Thou living spring of bliss without alloy,
Bright inlet to the light of heaven above!

Come, fill my soul! Thy light is ever pure,
And brings from heaven what Thou alone canst give,
Yea, brings Thyself, the revelation sure
Of heaven's eternal bliss: in Thee we live.

I hail Thee, Lord! Of Thee my song shall speak, --
Poor and unworthy strains, yet still of Thee:
Yes, fill my soul! 'tis this my heart doth seek --
To dwell in love, and God my dwelling be.

Thou'st made the Father known: Him have we seen
In Thy blest Person: infinite delight.
Yes, it suffices: though we here but glean
Some foretaste of His love -- till all be light.

O! dwell with me; let no distracting thought
Intrude to hide from me that heavenly light:
Be Thou my strength! Let not what Thou hast brought
Be chased by idle nature's poor delight.

Father, Thou lov'est me. Favor, all divine,
Rests on my soul: a cloudless favor! There
Thy face shines on me, as it still doth shine
On Thy blest Son! His image I shall bear!

But now, e'en now, Thy love can fill my soul --

34. Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript book, “Echo of Songs in the Night.”
That love that soars beyond all creature thought --
In spirit bring where endless praises roll;
And fill my longing heart till there I’m brought.

Thee will I hail, O Lord! in whose blest face
God’s glory shines unveiled! Thee will I praise,
Whose love has brought me nigh in righteous grace;
And soon wilt come, eternal songs to raise!

* * * * *

And oh! how deep the peace, when, nature gone,
Thy Spirit fills the soul strengthened with might
With love divine; and God, as Love, is known!
Lord! keep my soul, and guide my steps aright.

* * * * *

Praise be for ever His who giveth songs by night!

15. Rest  1879

There is rest for the weary soul --
There is rest in the Savior’s love;
There is rest in the grace that has made me whole --
That seeks out those that rove.
There is rest in the tender love
That has trodden our path below;
That has given us a place in the realms above,
But can all our sorrows know!

There is rest, in the calming grace
That flows from those realms above;
What rest in the thought! we shall see His face,
Who has given us to know His love!

There is rest in the midst of grief --
For grief’s been the proof of love; 35
’Tis sweet in that love to find relief,

35. The “Christian . . . sees in the sorrow, such as none ever had (for who could have such?),
of God come down to carry man’s” [sorrow], “and redeem and bring him out of it, the proof of that love which makes God known, alike in its greatness, and its nearness, -- in its height above sin, and its condescension to those sunk in it.” (“Collected Writings,” vol. 6, p. 49.)

“In this world of sin and misery Christ necessarily suffered -- suffered also because of righteousness, and because of His love. Morally, this feeling of sorrow is the necessary consequence of possessing a moral nature totally opposed to everything that is in the world. Love, holiness, veneration for God, love for man, -- everything is essential suffering here below.” (“Synopsis,” new ed. Revised, vol. 4, p. 176. See Luke 19:41-44; John 11:35, 36. -- Ed.).
When the sorrows of earth we prove,
There is rest in the Savior’s heart
Who never turned sorrow away,
But has found, in what sin had made our part,
The place of His love’s display.
There is rest in the blessed yoke
That knows no will but His;
That learns from His path, and the words He spoke,
What that loving patience is!
Where He too has gone before,
Is the path which we have to tread;
And it leads to the rest where sorrow’s o’er --
To the place where His steps have led.

16. Fulness of Joy 1879

Oh! bright and blessed hope!
When shall it be,
That we His face, long loved,
Revealed shall see?
Oh! when -- without a cloud --
His features trace,
Whose faithful love so long
We’ve known in grace; --
That love itself enjoy --
Which ever true
Did, in our feeble path,
Its work pursue?
O Jesus, not unknown --
Thy love shall fill
The heart in which Thou dwell’st,
And shalt dwell still!
Still Lord! to see Thy face, --
Thy voice to hear --
To know Thy present love
For ever near --

To gaze upon Thyself
(So faithful known)
Long proved in secret help
With Thee alone --
To see that love content
On me flow forth;
For ever Thy delight,
Clothed with Thy worth!

O Lord! ‘twas sweet the thought
That Thou wast mine:
But brighter still the joy
That I am Thine!

Thine own, O Lord! the fruit,
The cherished fruit,
Of Thine all perfect love! --
No passing root

Of evil, e’er, will dim
Thy cloudless rays;
But a full heart pour forth
Thine endless praise!

Nor what is next Thy heart
Can we forget: --
Thy saints, O Lord, with Thee
In glory met

(Perfect in comeliness
Before Thy face --
Th’ eternal witness all
Of Thine Own grace),
Together then their songs
Of endless praise,
With one harmonious voice,
In joy shall raise!

O joy supreme and full!
Where sunless day
Sheds forth, with light Divine,
Its cloudless ray!
17. The Father's Love 36

Blest Father! infinite in grace!
Source of eternal joy!
Thou lead'st our hearts to that blest place
Where rest's without alloy.
There will Thy love find perfect rest,
Where all around is bliss;
Where, all in Thee supremely blest,
Thy praise their service is!
Eternal love their portion is,
Where love has found its rest;
And, filled with Thee, the constant mind
Eternally is blest!
There Christ, the center of the throng,
Shall in His glory shine;
But not an eye those hosts among
But sees that glory Thine!

Thy counsels too in all Thine own
Fulfilled by power Divine

36. (1.) Other manuscript readings of verse 2, given under one view, are as follows; --

“Thy love will find its perfect rest,
{Where all around is joy;
{Where all around is bliss;
Where, all in Thee supremely blest,
{Thou'llt all}
{Thou shalt} their powers employ.
{Thy love their portion is.”

(2.) Another form of this verse runs thus: --

“Adoring love its fulness finds
In Thee who that love art,
And, perfect there, our heavenly minds
Live in what fills the heart.”

(3.) v. 4. lines 1, 2, in Mr. Darby’s MS. book, read; --

“There Christ, the center of the throng,
Himself shall in it shine.”

(4.) In place of the two last verses given in the text, the following verse, with a variation, occurs in the manuscripts; --

“Yet more than all -- a Father’s love
{Doth deeper joy recall;
{Runs as one thrill through all;
And is, where all is bliss above,
The chiefest song of all!”
Spread wide the glory of Thy Throne --
   Where all in glory shine.
Yet deeper if a calmer joy
   The Father’s love shall raise;
And every heart find sweet employ
   In His eternal praise!
Nor is its sweetness now unknown --
   Well proved in what it’s done:
Our Father’s love, with joy, we own
   Revealed in Christ the Son!

18. The Father’s Grace  37  1879

Father! in Thine eternal power --
Thy grace -- and majesty Divine --
No soul, in this weak mortal hour,
Can grasp the glory that is Thine!
E’en in its thoughts of sovereign grace
It leaves us all far, far behind;
The love that gives with Christ a place
Surpasses our poor feeble mind!
And yet, that love is not unknown,
To those who have the Saviour seen;
Nor strange to those He calls His own --
Pilgrims in scenes where He has been.
In Him Thy perfect love, revealed,
Has led our hearts that love to trace
Where nothing of that love’s concealed,
But meets us in our lowly place!
But grace, the source of all our hope,
From Thine eternal Nature flows:
Could to our lost condition stoop,
And now through Christ no hindrance knows;
Has flowed, in fullest streams, below;
And opened to our hearts the place
Where, in its ripened fruits, we’ll know
The eternal blessings of that grace!

And here we walk, as sons through grace,
A Father’s love our present joy:
Sons, in the brightness of Thy face,

37. This Hymn was written for an invalid who was in great suffering.
Find rest no sorrows can destroy!
Nor is the comfort of Thy love,
In which we “Abba, Father” cry,
The only blessing that we prove;
Because that love is ever nigh --
A holy Father’s constant care
Keeps watch, with an unwearying eye, --
To see what fruits His children bear,
Fruits that may suit their calling high;
Takes ever knowledge of our state --
What dims communion with His love --
Might check our growth -- or separate
Our hearts from what’s revealed above.
Oh, wondrous Love! that ne’er forgets
The objects of its tender care:
May chasten still, while sin besets,
To warn and guard them where they are --
But ne’er forgets; but feeds them still
With tokens of His tender love;
Will keep, till, freed from every ill,
They find their rest with Him above!
Oh! wondrous, infinite, Divine!
Keep near, my soul, to that blest place,
Where all those heavenly glories shine
Which suit the brightness of His face!
O lowliness, how feebly known,
That meets the grace that gave the Son!
That waits, to serve Him as His own,
Till grace what grace began shall crown!
I’m waiting for the glory:
   Are your thoughts with me too?
It is the old, old story,
   But all most sweetly true.
I’m waiting for the glory:
   Jesus Himself is there;
He’s gone on high before me --
   Calls me with Him to share.
Jesus, the Lord, did love us --
   Will love us to the end;
And lifts our hearts above us,
   To love that will not end!
For the day is nearing, nearing,
   When we shall see His face;
Each step the way endearing,
   Which leads to that blest place.
For Jesus comes with power --
   To change these bodies vile,
Or raise them (in that hour)
   From where they rest awhile.
Then shall His soul’s deep travail
   Find its love-fraught reward;
Nor joy, nor promise shall fail,
   With Him, like Him, their Lord!
But who’s this all-glorious Lord,
   To whom each knee doth bow?
The Sorrower, once abhorred!
   The Lord in His glory now!
Art waiting for the glory?
   Thy thoughts go with me too!
Yes! ‘t is the old, old story
   But all most sweetly true!

38. Entitled, in Mr. Darby’s manuscript book, “Sonnet.”
20. **Love Divine** 39  1880

Father! Thy sovereign love has sought
Captives to sin, gone far from Thee:
The work that Thine Own Son hath wrought
Has brought us back -- in peace, and free!

And now, as sons before Thy face,
With joyful steps the path we tread,
Which leads us on to that blest place
Prepared for us by Christ, our Head.

Thou gav’st us in eternal love
To Him, to bring us home to Thee --
Suited to Thine Own thoughts above;
As sons, like Him, with Him to be

In Thine own house! There Love Divine
Fills the bright courts with cloudless joy;
But ‘tis the love that made us Thine
Fills all that house without alloy!

Oh, boundless grace! What fills with joy
Unmingled all that enter there --
God’s Nature, Love without alloy --
Our hearts are given e’en now to share!

God’s righteousness with glory bright,
Which with its radiance fills that sphere,
E’en Christ -- of God the power and light --
Our title is that light to share.

O Mind Divine! so must it be,
That glory, all, belongs to God!
O Love Divine! that did decree
We should be part, through Jesus’ blood!

Oh, keep us, Love Divine, near Thee, --
That we our nothingness may know;
And ever to Thy glory be
Walking in faith while here below.

---

39. Written at Pau, 1880.
21. *Hope* 1881

And shall we see Thy face!
And hear Thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace!
Well may our hearts rejoice.
With Thee, in garments white,
O Jesus! we shall walk;
And, spotless, in that heavenly light
Of all Thy sufferings talk.
Close to Thy trusted side,
In fellowship divine,
No cloud, no distance e’er shall hide
Glories, that there shall shine!
Fruit of Thy boundless love
That gave Thyself for us –
For ever we shall, with Thee, prove
That Thou still lov’st us thus!
And we love Thee, blest Lord!
E’en now, though feeble here,
Thy sorrows, and Thy cross record
What makes us know Thee near.
We wait to see Thee, Lord;
Yet now within our hearts
Thou dwell’st in love, that doth afford
The joy *that* love imparts.
Yet still we wait for Thee,
To see Thee as Thou art!
Be with Thee, like Thee, Lord! and free
To love with all our heart!

---

40. The manuscript is on the back of a letter sent to [by?] Mr. Darby in February, 1881.
41. Author’s italic; -- Ed.
22. *Unfoldings* 42 1881

O Lord! Thy glory we behold,  
Though not with mortal eyes:  
That glory on the Father’s throne,  
No human sight descries!

But though the world can see no more  
Him it cast out with scorn,  
The eye of fresh-born faith can soar  
Above -- where He is gone.

‘Tis not for human eye to see  
Nor human ear to hear,  
Nor heart conceive what it may be,  
Or bring the prospect near:

But God, in love, has freely given  
His Spirit, who reveals  
All He’s prepared for those, in heaven,  
Whom here on earth He seals.

‘Tis thence, now Christ is gone on high,  
Redemption’s work complete,  
The Spirit brings His glory nigh  
To those who for Him wait.

Blest gift! As sons we look above  
And see the Savior there;  
And, fruit of God’s now well-known love,  
We shall His glory share.

God has been glorified in Man;  
Man sits at God’s right hand:  
Obedient in the race He ran,  
Can now all power command!

In lowliness on earth, as Son,  
The Father He made known;  
And now in heaven, His work all done,  
He sits upon His throne.

And we our great Fore-runner see  
In His Own glory there;  
Yet not ashamed -- with such as we,  
As First-born, all to share.

---

42. Written, it is believed, in 1881.
For we, as sons through grace, are owned
And “Abba, Father,” cry;
Heirs too, so rich did grace abound,
Joint-heirs with Him on high!
The Father’s love, the source of all,
Sweeter than all it gives,
Shines on us now without recall,
And lasts while Jesus lives.
The new creation’s stainless joy
Gleams through the present gloom;
That world of bliss without alloy
The saint’s eternal home!

23. Love Displayed  

We’ll praise Thee, glorious Lord!
Who died to set us free:
No earthly songs can joy afford
Like heavenly melody!

Love, that no suffering stayed,
We’ll praise true love Divine;
Love, that for us atonement made;
Love, that has made us Thine.

Love, in Thy lonely life
Of sorrow, here below;
Thy words of grace, with mercy rife,
Make grateful praises flow!

Love, that on death’s dark vale
Its sweetest odours spread,
Where sin o’er all seemed to prevail
Redemption glory shed.

And now we see Thee risen
Who once for us hast died,
Seated above the highest heaven,
The Father’s glorified.

43. This Hymn was given by Mr. Darby to a sick friend, in March, 1881.
44. That is, Christ, the One whom the Father has glorified, according to John 17:5, and 13:31, 32. -- Ed.
Soon wilt Thou take Thy throne;
   Thy foes Thy footstool made:
And take us with Thee for Thine own
   In glory love displayed!
Jesus, we wait for Thee!
   With Thee to have our part:
What can full joy and blessing be
   But being where Thou art!

24. The Soul’s Desire 45  
I’m waiting for Thee, Lord;
Thyself then to see, Lord!
   I’m waiting for Thee,
     At Thy coming again:
Thy glory’ll be great, Lord,
In heavenly state, Lord,
   Thy glory’ll be great
     At Thy coming again!
Caught up in the air, Lord,
That glory we’ll share, Lord!
   Each saint will be there,
     At Thy coming again:
How glorious the grace, Lord,
That gave such a place, Lord;
   It’s nearing apace,
     At Thy coming again.
We’ll sit on Thy throne, Lord,
Confessed as Thine own, Lord;
   Of all to be known
     At Thy coming again!
But glory on high Lord,
Is not like being nigh, Lord,
   When all is gone by
     At Thy coming again!
The traits of that face, Lord,

45. This was sent by Mr. Darby to a friend, in November, 1881. In the letter accompanying it, he says; -- “I send a hymn, suggested by one you like: but that brought you down to being ‘often weary.’ This goes up to where there is no weariness. I don’t quite like it, – as there is a certain levity about the meter. But it is Christ!”

The manuscript is roughly written, on a very small piece of paper, in single triplets. Now that it has been arranged to correspond with the Hymn of which it is a paraphrase, an unfinished appearance is, thus, accidentally given to it. The Hymn, however, is complete.
Once marred through Thy grace, Lord,
Our joy’ll be to trace
At Thy coming again:

With Thee evermore, Lord,
Our hearts will adore, Lord;
Our sorrow’ll be o’er,
At Thy coming again.

But, better than all, Lord,
To rise, at Thy call, Lord!
Adoring to fall,
At Thy coming again:

With Thee, clothed in white, Lord,
To walk in the light, Lord,
Where all will be bright,
At Thy coming again.

For ever with Thee, Lord,
And like Thee to be, Lord
For ever with Thee,
At Thy coming again:

I’ll live in Thy grace, Lord,
I’ll gaze on Thy face, Lord!
When finished my race,
At Thy coming again.

I’ll talk of Thy love, Lord,
With Thee there above, Lord
Thy goodness still prove,
At Thy coming again.

25. A Child’s Enquiry 46

Jesus! canst Thou receive
A feeble child like me?
My little heart can scarce believe
That I may come to Thee!
With children I can go,
And all I think can say;
With those I’ve often seen, and know,
I do not fear to stay.

But Lord of heaven art Thou,
And dwell’st far off on high!

46. Entitled, in Mr. Darby’s manuscript, “Part of a Hymn.”
Though at Thy Name I’m taught to bow,
   Can I to Thee draw nigh?
That Name is far above
   My thoughts, howe’er I try:
How can I know Thou dost me love?
   Nor fear before Thine eye?

26. The Road

It is not with uncertain step
   That we tread our homeless way;
A well-known Voice has called us up
   To everlasting day!
The Voice of Him who, whilom, trod
   Alone the trackless way
(And marked the road that leads to God),
   Where we once, as lost, did stray:
Nor leaves us now alone, to trace
   Our path across the waste;
But leads us still, with living grace,
   To the home to which we haste.
See! open stands the heavenly door,
   Whence the glory shines below --
To light the path where He’s gone before,
   And the bliss, that awaits us, show!
In patience then we may tread the path,
   Marked out by His footsteps here,
Who has freed us from the coming wrath,
   Who has freed our hearts from fear;
May abide His will, for the longer road
   Where patience and faith are tried;
And count on a love which bears each load,
   And our hearts from trial may hide.
He will still be there, be it long or brief,
   Our strength in every need:
Himself our joy, our sure relief,
   Till from care, in His Presence, we’re freed!

27. Expectation

47. Entitled, in Mr. Darby’s manuscript, “To Georgie L.”
Lord Jesus! Source of every grace,
   Glorious in light Divine,
Soon shall we see Thee face to face,
   And in that glory shine;
Be ever with Thee; hear Thy voice;
   Unhindered then shall taste
The love which doth our hearts rejoice --
   Though absent in this waste.
In peaceful wonder we adore
   The thoughts of Love Divine,
Which in that world for evermore
   Our lot with Thine entwine!
Preface to
A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs
Selected 1856 for The Little Flock
Revised 1881 by J. N. Darby

A new edition of this Hymn Book being required, the present Editor was asked by the publisher to take charge of it. Of course the responsibility of its new contents and form must rest with him, but as it was meant for all, he took counsel with brethren in various places who came in his way, who he thought would be likely to aid in the work -- a work far more difficult than those imagine who have never undertaken it.

Three things are needed for a hymn book: a basis of truth and sound doctrine; something, at least, of the spirit of poetry, though not poetry itself, which is objectionable, as merely the spirit and imagination of man; and thirdly, the most difficult to find of all, that experimental acquaintance with truth in the affections which enables a person to make his hymn (if led of God to compose one) the vehicle, in sustained thought and language, of practical grace and truth which sets the soul in communion with Christ, and rises even to the Father, and yet this in such sort that it is not mere individual experience, which, for assembly worship, is out of place. In a word, the Father’s love, and Christ developed in the soul’s affections, rising in praise back again to its source. God alone can give this so as to meet the wants of an assembly. Like assembly prayer, it must not rise too completely beyond the state of the assembly, yet must reach up to God, and raise the assembly’s affections up to Him, so that what He is in grace developed in the affections of the soul should be jointly proclaimed. It is not mere wants -- that would be a hymn for a prayer meeting. A basis of truth has been spoken of, or, to speak more justly, the truth; this is evidently fundamentally necessary, but much more is. There is based on this truth a large sphere of scriptural thoughts, feelings, experiences, and hopes, in which the soul moves, which ought to be scriptural.

Now in a vast number of hymns there is real piety in the affections, but connected with statements which may not touch any great foundational truth, but are unscriptural, and thus the best affections are connected with unscriptural thoughts, and this is a very real injury to the soul. Thus, suppose uncertainty as to salvation, the absence of the spirit of adoption, a bright hope of being in glory when we die; these are merely taken as
instances, for it applies to very many points, and souls are quite angry at losing a hymn which their piety has enjoyed, but which has connected their hopes and affections with what is not scriptural. Many such have been eliminated heretofore from the collection, but there remained still something to do. Hymns should be simple, full of Christ, and the Father's love, unaffected, and in some measure elevated, so as not to be mere prose. The singer must be there, but the singer associated in his thoughts with God filled from on high; yet not individualize himself and leave the assembly behind him. Many most sweet hymns are too individual, too experimental, for an assembly. In this collection an Appendix is therefore added, where there may be as beautiful hymns, but the assembly has been less thought of. Where possible the hymns for the assembly are in the plural. There are hymns which suit prayer meetings, home devotion, even the gospel; though there the difficulty is very great. Abstractedly you are making people sing as having certain feelings, and then preaching to them because they have not.

But in actual Christendom things are not so sharply defined, and there are hidden souls and hidden wants which the hymn may give expression to, and set a soul free or make it apprehend God's love sometimes more effectually than the sermon; still there is very great danger of widespread delusion and loose apprehension of sin and grace, and the difficulty is very real. You may often find the loudest singers where the conscience is the least reached.

Only about fifteen hymns were at first excluded by the Editor, but others pruned with a far more unsparing hand -- they had not to get good ones to fill their places. Some forty or more have been struck out, but many of those that have not maintained their place in the first part will be found in the Appendix. Their places have been supplied from searching a great many collections, but which, for reasons stated above, furnished but few that could be introduced. A good number are original, from various quarters, these have been submitted to different brethren before being put in. Many authors may be comforted by knowing their hymns were sometimes very nice, but not suited to an assembly of saints; several have gone into the Appendix, not necessarily as inferior, but of a different character. Many hymns have been corrected on the principles referred to. These corrections were also shown to different brethren, but it is not expected that every one will be satisfied, certainly more might have been, and may be, done. The Editor has done the best he could, and, though none, unless he undertake it, can feel the difficulty, he believes the Lord has been with him. More may be added to the Appendix by further research, or original, but this will require time.

For convenience, the number of the hymns which remain are the same, new hymns having been substituted for the excluded ones, with the exception of 148 (now 341), and 84 (now 264).
Finally is added what perhaps should have come first: the great principle in selecting and correcting has been that there should be nothing in the hymns for the assembly but what was the expression of, or at least consistent with the Christian’s conscious place in Christ before the Father.

The reader will kindly remark that there are changes necessitated by putting “we” for “I,” which, but for that, there would have been no occasion for.

The book is commended to Him who alone can give songs in the night, trusting that a hymn book, already the best known to the Editor, may be still more useful to brethren; sure that the Spirit, who alone can indite a genuine hymn, can alone enable it to be sung aright.
NEARNESS TO CHRIST AND ITS EFFECTS

The pretensions and energy of man are strongly manifesting themselves.

But to learn, in a day of grace, to be still, and know that God is God, is completely above the education of the flesh.

The spirit of the age affects many Christians, who labor to restore old things for the service of God, instead of being broken before Him by the sense of their downfall.

To confess openly that which we are in the presence of that which God is, is always the way to peace and blessing. Even when only two or three are together be-fore God, if it be thus with them, there will be no disappointments nor deluded hopes.

The word for the remnant is, “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.” He is the only center of gathering.

The Holy Ghost does not gather saints around mere views, however true they may be, upon that which the church is, upon that which it has been, or that which it may be, on the earth, but He always gathers them around that blessed Person who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).

We need to be watchful against boasting, as people do in these days; we need to be still, in the presence of God. There is much independence and self-will almost everywhere.

If anyone speaks of separation from evil, without being humiliated, let
him take care lest his position becomes simply only that which at all times
has constituted sects, and produced doctrinal heresy. Nearness to Christ
would keep us from sectarianism, the most natural weed of the human
heart. (Sectarianism is getting an interest in a little circle round ourselves.)

Now I know, at the present time, of no service which is worthy of Him,
if it is not done in humiliation. This is not the time to speak of a place for
ourselves. If the church of God, so dear to Christ, is dishonored in this
world; if it is scattered, ignorant, afflicted, he who has the mind of Christ
will always take the lowest place. True service of love will seek to give
according to the need, and because of their need, he will never think of
slighting the objects of the Master’s love because of their necessity.

Men taught of God, for His service, go forth from a place of strength,
where they have learned their own weakness and their own nothingness.
They find that Jesus is everything in the presence of God, and Jesus is
everything for them in all things, and everywhere. Such men, in the hands
of the Holy Spirit, are real helps for the children of God, and they will not
contend for a place, or a distinction, or for authority, among the scattered
flock. The communion of a man with God about the church will show itself
in a willingness to be nothing in himself, and such an one will rejoice in his
heart to spend and to be spent.

Many thought of the church, but it was rather the church in power.
There is great instruction in the conduct of Zerubbabel, recounted in the
book of Ezra.

Heir of the place which Solomon had occupied in days of prosperity and
glory, he spoke not of his birth, nor of his rights. However, he is faithful
in all the path of separation, of sorrow, and of conflicts he is obliged to
pass through.

If we speak of our testimony upon the earth, it will soon be evident that
all is but weakness, and, like the seed lost upon the wayside, the testimony
will likewise end to our shame.

Neither the anger, nor the prudence, nor the pretensions of man can do
anything, in the state of confusion in which the church is now. I freely own
that I have no hope in the efforts which many make to assure themselves an
ecclesiastical position. When the house is ruined in its foundations by an
earthquake, it matters little how one tries to make it an agreeable dwelling
place. We shall do better to remain where the first discovery of the ruin of
things by man’s deed has placed us -- with our faces in the dust. Such is the
place which belongs to us by right, and, after all, it is the place of blessing.

I have read of a time when several were gathered together in such
sorrow of heart, that for a long time they could not utter a single word; but
the floor of the meeting room was wet with their tears. If the Lord would
grant us such meetings again, it would be our wisdom to frequent these
houses of tears. “They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy” (Psa. 126:5).

It is not only for the earthly remnant that this is true, it is also written
for us. I would willingly take a long journey to join these afflicted ones; but
I would not go a step further with the object of receiving from the hands of
most excellent men power to overturn all today, and reconstruct tomorrow.

We need to watch ourselves, lest, after having been preserved from the
corruption of the age by the very precious truths revealed to us in our
weakness, we should be taken in the net of presumption, or thrown into
insubordination.

These are things which God can never recognize or tolerate, since we
are called to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” {Eph. 4:3}.

A CALL TO GILGAL

1 Sam. 7:16; 10:8; 11:14.

Beloved Brethren:

I am thankful a resting place has been reached after the struggle against
evil and the assaults of the enemy. What I would seek now is, that as we
cannot expect a peace of long duration, we may individually test ourselves
as to the part we have taken in the matter, as to how far we have been using
carnal weapons in our warfare -- although our object has rightly been to
clear away evil from a holy place, and which was of such a character as
clearly to manifest that the enemy was making a serious assault upon
Christ, through the assembly, scattering his blinding influences broadcast,
obstructing in various ways the vision of saints in such a manner as to
hinder their seeing eye to eye.

Through God’s grace there was a decision to stand against the evil, and
then the enemy sought to turn the attention from the real point, to the
manner and ways of those who were acting. As in the old question as to the
Person of Christ some thirty years ago, \(^{50}\) so it is now; so much was made
of the way the thing was dealt with, those who made that a prominent point,
seeming to forget that in such struggles it is not surprising that the
weakness of the flesh should be seen; but what does it prove? Why, how
incapable we were to meet such an attack, and that during the interval,
between the former one and the present, there had not been “a redeeming

---

50. {This evidently refers to the Plymouth/Bethesda controversy.}
the time,” a “gathering up of strength so as to be ready,” a “being clad with the whole armor of God.” Has there been the attention to that part of the armor, “the breastplate of righteousness,” and have “the loins been girt about with truth”? Has there been that attitude of dependence which is shown by “praying always” and “watching thereunto”? Do not these circumstances exhibit failure in these respects? No real profit can accrue to us by dwelling on this or that failure, we get insensibly assimilated to it by so doing -- the spiritual eye discerns evil and failure by progressing in the knowledge of that which is holy and true; as in spirit John: the untrue is made apparent by the true: what is of darkness is understood in the light, and what is of Satan by what is of God.

I do not desire to show error by dissecting writings, etc. I believe and trust that God will in His grace enable all to do that for themselves in quiet converse with Himself. We never get into a struggle with the enemy, in which all who have been professedly on the Lord’s side are found of exactly the same mind. Again, there is a greater energy of faith in some than in others; and this will be, if some have been unmindful of that word in 2 Pet. 1:5; and if in that struggle brethren come into collision and quarreling begins, whoever is finally victorious is also vanquished to a certain extent, as a conflict among brethren is injurious to both, if the flesh is aroused, which is too frequently the case. Of all this the enemy takes advantage.

In the book of Judges {20} when it was deemed right to go against Benjamin for sin which that tribe had linked itself with by refusing to deliver up to judgment the sinners, they are both smitten in turn, and when those who had completely vanquished their brethren had settled down, they found that victory had sorrow for its accompaniment. There was one tribe lacking in Israel, and they had in their zeal “sworn in Mizpeh” about it {Judg. 21}. Now they get into God’s presence, and humble themselves for Benjamin their brother. When there is real love to the brethren, this must ever be -- that however we may have had to oppose a course, and God may have given us the victory, yet He repents Himself when He sees their trouble, and to have fellowship with Him, we must take the place of intercession -- in love -- for our brethren, for whatever mistakes we may make -- and we do make them -- we are not to be as the Gentile rulers, exercising lordship and dominion, but as brethren, knowing that what delighted His heart, is to have us in a right path and in the enjoyment of it, and for this He has labored; and even if He chastens it is for the same purpose. How readily He accepted confessions, though estimating fully its worth (Psa. 78:34-39).

How His ways are shown out in Hos. 14. How He lets them know where alone they will grow, namely, in His presence; they confess their sin
and their weakness -- He says, “I will be as the dew to Israel” -- then “he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive, and his smell as Lebanon.” May we be among the wise to understand these things and know them.

God has in His grace given a rest in the conflict, the enemy is not vanquished, but we have learned how powerless we were to cope with the difficulty -- how the flesh sought to enter into it, and how much it had to be restrained. May we be humbled about it all, yet thankful to our God that He has not allowed the enemy to crush us, weak though we are (Psa. 124:6).

And now leaving details of heated discussions, harsh, unkind, or unholy expressions whether real or imaginary, let us look to our armor, so as to be prepared for the next onslaught of Satan, for come it surely will. Was there not pride and haughtiness of spirit? or our God would not have allowed this. When He brought Israel out of Egypt, He led them not through the land of the Philistines, that they should not see war, but He led them another way. How different is Ex. 14:14, 15; they were then haughty in spirit, and He allowed them to learn their weakness in a struggle with His enemies. Abraham too -- after his great victory, doing with his handful what the five kings could not do -- had to learn who it was that enabled him to accomplish so much, only he learned it in a more blessed way. Melchizedec comes forth with refreshment, strength, and joy from the Most High God who had delivered his enemies into his hands -- Abraham owns it and worships. Then when the moment came that the enemy would puff him up and heap the rewards of nature upon him, he would answer as he had learned in secret, “I have lifted up my hands to the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth.” “No flesh shall glory in His presence,” and if this present conflict has taught us weakness in any way, or that we have been exalted with the idea that we are Philadelphia, or have set up anything as an “organization” here, as the true thing, however sad the way we have learned it, we can still bless God who has not failed us, but who will always allow us to learn our need of Himself and invariably for our own blessing and His glory. Let us not spend the time in foolish recrimination, but with desires for blessing and mutual growth in the things of God.

Where sin is manifested there must be no compromise with it, but in these days individuals have to bear in mind that if the assembly is unable to clear itself from evil, through fleshly hindrances and to act upon the word for it (1 Cor. 5:13), the same voice that speaks to the assembly, addresses the individual saint in 2 Tim. 2:19: “Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.” If the flesh in an assembly is such that evil cannot be put out, each individual is responsible to God for
himself -- the question of majorities or minorities will not come in there. I do not think God will allow His faithful to be long alone; others will be found equally faithful and true.

Rom. 16:17 is individual; v. 20 shows the character of God I’m to manifest in my separation or withdrawal, namely, “peace,” and He sees the root of the mischief and says He will “bruise Satan under our feet shortly,” and immediately follows with “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.” In quarreling I do not manifest the God of peace. If I can help others, well; I certainly can help no one by remaining in association with evil. My coming out may exercise souls, and so I go on in peace: to remain with sin I must not. The difficulty is to keep the motives clear; if we get into debates which as 2 Cor. 12:20 shows, we may end in tumult. To be with God in all these matters, the sole desire should be, the keeping each other in a right path, and bring back into it any who may have erred from it (James 5:19, 20).

(Printed 1885, but written 4 or 5 years previously; exact date not known.)

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON THE EPISTLES

We may remark that in Rom. 8:2, 3, we have the two parts of the Christian treated of. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus in v. 2, and sin in the flesh in v. 3; by the first which is a holy thing in power, I am free from the law of sin and death; it is the liberty of the new man perfect from God in itself but still sin in the flesh (of which I have learned however to say, not I) is there, but then it has been condemned when Christ was for sin. Hence freedom in the new man, perfect before God, and the old condemned in that by which I have a title to hold it dead. Further, I say, as a truth known in Christ has made me free. This is not expressive of myself but the truth for faith according to v. 6. The experience ought to follow. This is the moral ground of no condemnation. Forgiveness and justification and righteousness we have had before.

In Phil. 2, we have the twofold principles which lead to likeness to Christ as in v. 15; first, self abasement, giving up self, as Christ came from the divine glory to the cross. Love coming down to serve, secondly, and it applies specially to our case in the absence of manifested apostolic power, obedience in the seriousness of a conflict to which we have to make good the path and victory of faith ourselves, as contrasted with that power but that which is ever true and our sure and infallible strength, God working in us to will and to do. The result is the likeness to Christ of verse 16 and all gracious thoughtfulness of others -- not love of self.

In Heb. 5, is not v. 5 which does not institute priesthood, connected
with v. 4 and in contrast though He must be a man to be a priest, (for contrast is the character of the Hebrews) with verse 1 -- taken from amongst men? He does not glorify Himself, genethenai (to be made). But He who said, Thou art My Son, this day have I (emphatically) ego (I) begotten Thee. Though a man yet He is not simply taken from amongst men as such but God says of Him (even as a man) I have begotten Thee.

This qualified Him as to calling in contrast with glorifying Himself but also in contrast with mere human priests, then He is constituted and owned priest by God as in the 110th Psalm. This makes the fifth verse plain. Compare Heb. 7:28.

Note in 1 Thess. 5:8 we have the three great principles of Christian life -- faith, hope and love. Evidently these three were pretty settled and constantly in the Apostle’s mind; we have them in 1 Thess. 1:3. In 1 Thess. 5:8 it is hardly against enemies though it supposes them, but more in the way of their watchfulness, that is, a heart right with God as to its state than actual conflict with enemies.

In Ephesians we are in conflict with enemies and have to be such and such to succeed and wield the sword successfully. Hence the breastplate is practical righteousness, which we must have to contend effectually with Satan. In Eph. 6, after the whole subjective state is gone through before using the sword, we have the helmet of salvation -- a deliverance that belongs to us which we enjoy and enables us to use the sword, coming after the shield of faith -- entire confidence in God. In Thessalonians it is one of the elements of our life with God in its final result as a matter of hope, the active energy of the life with God in faith, love and hope in sobriety of walk in the midst of dangers or enemies down here.
JUSTIFICATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 1

The character of Rom. 1 comes out more distinctly than ever to me. First, the Person of Christ as the primary subject of the gospel, promise, fulfillment and power -- this last according to the Spirit of holiness, the witness of the divine nature, that is, morally. Then the righteousness of God is revealed in it. This is the general introduction but the reason for this last is in what follows, which I now note: God’s wrath from heaven is revealed. Not as often remarked governmental wrath on earth but what comes from His nature and will as impelled by evil as contrary to that nature, hence all unrighteous. God’s nature coming out against all that was contrary to itself. This gives a most spiritual and important character to Christianity. It is the full light and the absolute question between God and evil found in itself, God’s righteousness coming in, as the only answer to it.

Further righteousness through God’s righteousness is the basis of our justification, and alone can be now, our justification is according to it, is more than justification and other than it. To be justified supposes responsibility and a change in my state called in question (it may be my pretensions). Man is in question with God, really a sinner (for as formed of God nothing could be questioned by God), he is justified, that is, cleared from all charge according to the principle by which his state is judged, the righteous exigence of God toward him. He is cleared by the propitiation of Christ through faith in His blood. The value of that blood makes him clear from all guilt in God’s sight. God imputes no sin to him and in this sense imputes righteousness thus accounted to meet the exigency of what God requires -- of what His judgment requires. His judgment has nothing to say against him but has to say I am met and satisfied.

In the person, justification fully recognized and righteousness are the same. Righteousness in this sense -- righteousness imputed is consistency with the relationships in which we stand. Now we had natural relationships and failed in them and Christ’s precious blood justifies us, meets our failure in them. We are looked (at) as not having failed in any relationship through His obedience. Hence though justified from refers to charge and failure, yet it also amounts to righteousness because we are now held not to have failed in our relationships. But there is more. When really looked into there was no relationship remaining. Sin and banishment from Eden had broken all. The law supposed there was (yet even here founded on an external redemption) yet, as law, too, the ground of these relationships, and gave
the rule of them and helping in their maintenance but did not go beyond helping in the life in which the relationship subsisted. But God’s righteousness goes further.

Our relationship is founded on a new work -- a work in which God has been glorified and man set in a new position of acceptance according to God’s own presence and eternal righteousness. Man’s righteousness is according to this relationship now. He is made the righteousness of God in Christ. In a general way he is accounted righteous. God has nothing against him, only that justified supposes change and the question is raised in Rom. 8:33. Righteous is a present state without charge -- consistency with what God requires in the place we are in. But that and justified are the same; when we look into the real state of the case we find righteousness to be according to the full revelation of the divine character which Christ has as glorified -- made good in every way even unto death on the cross so as to bring us into God’s presence as His children (not Adam’s) according to the perfectness of that -- the fullest revelation of God’s character (the cross), what angels desire to look into, and which has set Christ as man at His Father’s right hand. He is our righteousness. God is revealed, wrath from heaven is revealed against all not consistent with His presence as so revealed, hence it is said, sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Note in the third chapter of Romans, God, though setting forth the propitiatory work in grace, is a judge to whom propitiation is offered by blood. In Rom. 4 He is a Savior active in power; He has raised up Christ from the dead after He had been delivered for our offenses; His the blood on the door posts, and the Red Sea.

I am confirmed in the conviction that Rom. 8:1 is the general resulting statement and stands by itself, that the gar (for) of v. 2 is not illative but the common gar (for) of bringing from farther off, a principle on which the result in his mind stands, as is in another way v. 3 which underlays the basis of the whole matter, and meeting in the Christian way the legalists’ objection.

Man’s probation history ended in the cross. He must meet the glory of God as revealed or cannot meet Him at all, but all have sinned and come short of that glory, and would be in themselves punished with everlasting destruction from the glory of His power. But then Christ has perfectly glorified God, John 13 and 17, and is entered as Man into God’s glory {John 17:5} -- redemption is complete and according to it, yea wrought out in it, and so man is in the glory and like Christ there. He has borne our sins and so justified us from all things the old man has done, glorifying God in it. But then, what God is has been glorified in it and righteousness now involves glory, because it is according to glory and this is more than
justifying. The new fact of justifying and accounting righteous is the same
but as I have said, the question on justifying being raised, but righteousness
now is according to the glory of God, is a righteousness according to that
glory. God’s consistency with Himself proved by setting Christ at His right
hand (John 16), proved as regards offenses and justifying by resurrection,
further than which on this point therefore Romans does not go, but going
on as a result with the glory into which He is entered. This bringing all into
the presence of God without a veil, in contrast with governmental wrath as
the Assyrian and Babylon, etc., and sin being measured and all wrath, by
the glory of God which can bear no ungodliness in His presence, is of the
utmost importance. But Christ has glorified God. It is not merely that we
are in the presence of the glory, and judgment of good and evil is according
to the glory but He has glorified so that, sovereign grace as regards us, yet
in righteousness is for us, our glory is a part of that righteousness as Christ
was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. Hence we are said to
be made the righteousness of God in Him. Our being in that state is a part
of that righteousness.

Hence also it is said as to the abstract principle of it in the Person of
Christ, that He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to
the Spirit of holiness {Rom. 1:4}. Power raised Him but it was not simply
power, that will raise the wicked, but will not declare them in any sense
sons of God, but this is according to the Spirit of holiness, according to the
nature and character of God, glorified in all Christ’s ways and sealed and
marked out in resurrection, the wholly new estate into which man is
brought into the presence of God according to divine holiness; to walk in
the light as He is in the light. (Cp. Rom. 6:4.) There is the power of
Christian life -- the resurrection from among the dead declares it but
declares it according to the Spirit of holiness -- God’s divine nature. This
is very blessed -- a divine place; the other part shows it is in righteousness.
After God, he says, in righteousness and true holiness, but then the life or
nature in us.
CHRISTIAN PLACE AND POWER

Romans 6

(Unrevised Notes of a Lecture by J. N. D.)

The more the Christian reads the Word of God the more assured he becomes of its Divine origin. I am not supposing that he has any doubts to remove, but its perfection unfolds itself as he learns its contents. He finds in it truth complete and fitted in all its parts; and in this perfection he sees the Master’s hand. The way the apostle takes up the question of sin here led me to these remarks. He does not enter upon Ephesian truth, but we find what is exactly fitted to the subject he is treating. He does not speak of being quickened together with Christ, or of being raised up and seated in Him in heavenly places, but he says, “If we are planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

He does not speak either of Christ dying for sin or of bearing our sins. What the apostle speaks of here is the power of sin met by the death of Christ. He died unto sin once. “Likewise reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” First, we are occupied with our sins, and these are met by the propitiation (Rom. 3); but after this he takes up sin, and this is a much larger and fuller word. It is our condition. And mark! we could not say, Christ was made sins. He bore sins, but He was made sin for us {2 Cor. 5:21}. “Once in the end of the world {consummation of the ages; i.e., of probation} He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” {Heb. 9:26} -- not merely sins, but He took up the whole condition and state of the world, of everything, and before God everything was changed. He was “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin [not sins] of the world.” Christ’s work took up this principle of total alienation from the life of God and totally did away with it.

All the dealings of God with the world proceeded upon this principle of sin, of man being away from God, for when sin came into the world man was turned out from God. He could have forgiven a particular act by the death of Christ, but the whole condition of sin He could not. He must condemn it and put it away. We could not speak of God forgiving the old nature, but of condemning it and putting it away. Now this condition of man under sin is the fact upon which God had hitherto always dealt, however varied His acts may have been. Why was the seed of the woman promised but because of sin being in the world? Again, a law given which prohibited lusts and supposes sin? In fact, all God’s dealings in the world, whether in mercy or in judgment, proceed on the fact of sin being the condition of man before God. Now the work of Christ has changed this
state of things altogether. I speak of what the work is to faith. The final result is not yet fulfilled, but through the cross the whole thing is changed, and there will be in result a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. By faith we anticipate this. It is not merely that our sins are put away, but the whole of God’s glory is concerned in it. The creation is ruined by sin. If an angel look on it, what is he to think of the world? or if a saint contemplates the world, what a scene of lusts, passions, sin! All is in confusion. How is God to be glorified in it? Here Christ comes in. God is glorified in all His perfect walk in His suffering; obedience in everything, in spite of Satan. And when we come to the cross we see that all that God was, was glorified in Christ made sin. My soul anticipates the great result of this obedience of Christ, in that new creation where sin can never enter.

Practically, in our souls we must go through all that sin is before getting into the full consciousness of the blessing of its being put away. It is not only the forgiveness of my sins which I want, but I must get the question concerning the root of these sins settled, and this we find in Rom. 5:12-21. The question treated of there is the sin of one man met by the obedience of another. By one man sin entered into the world. By one, death passed upon all men. Adam is looked upon here as the head of a race. It is not the question of your and my particular sins, but of the sin of one man; and as by one man death came, so by one Man came righteousness. We get the remarkable fact that by one man came in sin, and by one Man righteousness.

The law is introduced that the offence might abound. Mark, not sin, but the offence. But the law came in afterwards. Here the great fact is that by one man sin entered into the world. Each has to answer for his own sins, of course, but here it is sin come by one man. It is the condition into which I have been brought. And so also by one Man righteousness is come. In both cases it is an individual’s act which involves not only himself, but all connected with him. It does not deny my sins, but I am made righteous according to this work of Christ and by it; and I can anticipate the result by faith and say, I am the righteousness of God.

The flesh objects to this, and says, If it is entirely by the work of another that you are made righteous, and if it is all of grace, then you can continue in sin that grace may abound. The flesh always objects thus to sovereign grace. Not that the world is very careful about the matter, as if sin were really a trouble to it, but the objection is raised only to oppose the gospel, just as it was with those who brought the woman taken in adultery to Christ, simply to find fault with Him.

The apostle therefore raises this question of continuing in sin, and
shows it is an absurdity in itself. Sin is the condition in which I was. The question, then, is this, Am I to continue in that from which I am saved?

Two points are taken up as regards the condition of soul, and we shall see the apostle argues on each from different grounds. The first is, “Shall we continue in sin?”; and then in v. 15, “Shall we sin?” The first question takes up the condition of sin in which we were; the second with being under grace and not under law.

Now, as to continuing in sin, the apostle shows the thing is an impossibility and a contradiction, for no one can be alive and dead at the same time. If you have died with Christ you can’t talk of being alive in sin. When you were baptized what were you brought to? You had a part in Christ’s death, and you want to live in sin. In saying so you deny the whole thing. Christ has died to sin. Not that He ever had sin, but He was in circumstances where He had to meet temptations, and at last to be made sin upon the cross, though He never knew sin. But now He has died out of that whole condition. He died unto sin once. He once came into the midst of this evil scene, displaying righteousness and holiness in all His ways, and now He has died out of it. If you have been brought unto Christ you are dead, and are out of the other condition. The apostle speaks here of dying unto sin. We know from other scriptures that He also died for sin, and that He bore our sins; but here it is deliverance from sin, and not forgiveness that is spoken of.

Faith has judged this state of the flesh. It is not a question of the fruit being bad, but the tree itself is bad. It is the root of sin and not the fruit only.

God says, “What could I have done more in My vineyard than I have done in it?” And yet when He looked for fruit it brought forth sour grapes. He cared for His vineyard perfectly, but the tree was bad, and the culture only brought forth a larger crop of sour fruit. As we have often said, Man was lawless without law and a law-breaker under law. The tree was always the same. Its only expression has been that the mind of the flesh is enmity against God.

I come then to Christ, and with Him I have died to sin and out of that condition altogether, and get my life elsewhere, and that too by a work done for me. I say, seeing what the flesh is -- what I am -- I must die and take a life elsewhere. “Know ye not that as many as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized unto His death?” The apostle says you have taken your place with Him in death, so that you also should walk in newness of life.

He does not speak of our being quickened with Christ. He is bringing out here the source and power of the life. It brings out all the glory of the
Father -- this raising Christ from the dead. All that God was in His majesty, glory, righteousness, and love was, for faith, engaged in the raising of Christ. His love to Christ, His delight in His obedience, His righteousness and all that He was, was for faith involved in bringing Him up from the grave. Christ had devoted Himself, in blessed perfect obedience, unto death, to His Father; and so the Father must come in in power and take Christ out of the condition of death. Therefore I am to walk in newness of life -- not merely not to do wrong things, but to walk in newness of life. If I have died with Christ I shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. Faith gets hold of this place which Christ has taken, and that we live through Him.

All that I was in Adam, to faith, is annulled. I have died out of that condition. And mark! the apostle does not say here, We do live with Him, but “We shall live with Him.” We have not here our sitting in heavenly places in Him -- the apostle is pressing truth for practice. We are planted in the likeness of His death and shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.

Christ has died unto sin once. It is not a question of what He was morally, for the more He was tried the more His perfection came out. But He has died out of that condition in which He had to say to sin, and now He lives to God. There I take my ground; I reckon myself also “to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” I am alive unto God, and nothing else. If alive at all, I am alive through Christ unto God. He lived, it is true, to God when in this world, but He has gone out of that state altogether and now lives to God where sin is not. Glory will be by-and-by, but now I am to live to God.

He that is dead is free or justified from sin. When a man is dead I cannot charge him with the evil of his past life, for by death he is right out of it altogether. We are thus free from sin. Death is the starting-point for practice. Being set free as dead to sin, now, says the apostle, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” If you are alive with Christ don’t let sin reign as if you were still under its dominion. “Neither yield ye your members,” etc. I can say to sin now, I am no longer your slave, I belong to somebody else now; I’ve been set free from sin, and I have a life given me to yield to God. Here it is not that we are dead only, but we have been made alive in being set free from sin’s service.

What are we going to do in this new life? Unto what are you going to give yourself? I am going to yield my members as servants to righteousness and to God. I can do this, for I am set in true blessed liberty. I can yield myself up to God. I was a slave of sin, but I am set free and become a slave of righteousness.
The apostle says he uses the word “slave” to explain, speaking after the manner of men. We are to walk and speak now as those who are to be judged by the perfect law of liberty. We are bought with a price: we belong to God. And we have, as those who have died and are alive, the privilege to give ourselves to God and to yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God. As delivered by death from the power of sin, we have a life to yield. To whom, then, are we going to live? To God; and all our members, which were once yielded to sin, are now to be yielded as instruments of righteousness to God.

What a place the Christian has!

Law can never get the better of sin. But if we have now no law to call us to account about sin, are we to sin then? He does not say here, Shall we continue in sin? He answered that by showing we were dead, and therefore could not go on as if we were alive in sin. But now he is looking upon us as free men. It is, then, a question where our hearts go. “Ye were slaves of sin”; ye are now slaves of righteousness. Once we were no servants of righteousness, for when following sin we were far from God. What fruit had we then? None: the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, we have become servants to God, and we have our fruit unto holiness.

There is positive fruit in the path of righteousness. As with Moses, when God revealed His grace to him he said, “Lord, show me Thy way, that I may know Thee, and that I may find grace in Thy sight.” If I am in Thy favor Thou must show me Thy own way through the wilderness. When in the path of obedience and the will is not at work, thus walking in God’s way I know what delights Him and I get practically separate from evil. I get fruit. It is the way to grow up into the knowledge of God. As in John 14, “If a man love Me he will keep My words,” etc. Thus we have fruit in following Christ. The soul grows up into God’s revelation of what Christ is. Alas! we are often dull and need to get our senses exercised to discern good and evil.

But, dear friends, it is important to see where the grace of God has placed us by the work of Christ. You have by faith as entirely done with the world for fellowship as Christ has in fact. You are set free to live to God, and you will be judged according to the perfect law of liberty. If my will is to go just where God’s will is for me, that is liberty. This is more than obedience to a command by which I surrender my will. If my child wanted to go to the city, and I forbade it, and the child obeyed, that would be the law of restraint. But suppose the next day I told my child I wished it to go to the city, that would be the law of liberty to it, because it wished to go there.
Now the Lord has set us free and He is saying to us, Where are you going to walk? In that which God has freed you from? It is not merely doing right, but obedience to God and fruit unto holiness in a more thorough acquaintance with God and an understanding of what Christ is in God’s thoughts -- our delight His delight.

Before the great results of this work of Christ are produced in the world, it is given to us to anticipate these results and to walk in the power of the new place into which we are brought. We are alive to God, and our privilege is not to give up only our time and money to Him, but to give up ourselves.

WILLIAM ST., January 18th, 1866.

THE VAIL

(Translated from the French)

(1) THE VAIL ON MOSES’ FACE

2 Cor. 3

The excellency of the ministry of the gospel consists in its simplicity. The main difficulty, both for the servant of the gospel and the hearers, lies in keeping this simplicity in view, for the ministry is generally looked upon as capable to be served only by the learned, and Christianity is for most but a tradition. “Seeing, then,” says the apostle, “that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.” The excellency of the ministry consists on the one hand in the truth which it presents, and on the other in the saving grace of God which can meet the sinner, who had nothing to expect but His righteous judgment. As to the true condition of man in the presence of God, every distinction disappears before this truth:

There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:22, 23).

Once this truth is established there is no hindrance to the presentation of the word of the ministry in its power and adaptability to the lost sinner. That there is no difference in the light of the glory of God must be accepted by every servant of the new covenant. To deny the lost and ruined condition of man is, in fact, to make the death of Christ of none effect, and to rob the ministry of the new covenant of all its excellency, bringing it down to a mere system of morals. It may be allowed to be better than other systems, still it would be but one of the many resources for the moral development of man, not the sole “power of God unto salvation.”

It is, therefore, of all importance to have a clear conception of the
gospel. It may make it more difficult to use great plainness of speech, but not more so than in the time of Paul. He had succeeded when he had put on the same platform the pious Jew and the idolatrous Gentile, the learned Greek with the uneducated Scythian. In the present day it is just as difficult to convince Christians by birth that they must perish in their sins if they do not give up traditional Christendom for Christ, as it was for Paul to convince the Jews that they were no better than the Gentiles.

And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.

The apostle contrasts the simplicity and boldness of his ministry -- both as regards the hopeless ruin of man and the abounding grace of God -- with the dimness in which both these points were seen through the vail of Moses. This dimness had its necessary place for that time. Although God had made known His ways to Moses personally and shown him the mystery of His grace, the public ministry of Moses was that of law and not of grace.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

The people had thoughtlessly entered into a covenant with God when they said,

All that the Lord hath spoken we will do (Ex. 19:8).

But when the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die (Ex. 20:18, 19).

There was terror, but no dimness; Moses had no covering over his face when he descended from the mountain after his first stay of forty days (Ex. 32). The sins of the people caused him to come down.

And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides . . . and the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables (Ex. 32:15, 16).

Here was the covenant in the hands of the mediator; all was plain and concise.

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount (Ex. 32:19).

This action was full of meaning: the people had broken the covenant, and the mediator of the covenant bore testimony to it, and judgment follows. No vail
was necessary on that occasion; the mediator had testified that the covenant was broken.

Afterwards he intercedes for the people, and Jehovah proposes to send an angel to bring them into the land Canaan which He had promised them (Ex. 32:30, 34, and 33:1-3). But this could not satisfy the heart of Moses; he is troubled, and asks Jehovah to show him His way and Himself to go with them.

If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And Jehovah said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found favor in My sight, and I know thee by name.

Moses encouraged, and anticipating the word of Him to whom he testified -- unto him that hath shall be given -- continues his intercession and says,

I beseech thee, show me Thy glory (Ex. 33:15-18).

Moses had seen the glory of God in a wonderful way when the law was given, but in the tent of the congregation erected outside the camp Jehovah had spoken with Moses face to face, “as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Ex. 33:11), and he now seeks a more excellent glory than that of the law. For behind the law -- the end of the law -- a way of God and a glory of God remained, and the glory of the law served only to prepare and introduce these. It was that glory which Moses had to hide, because the time of its manifestation according to the counsels of God had not yet come.

This glory revealed to Moses is in reality the glory of God in the face (i.e. in the person) of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). It was thus proclaimed:

I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy (Ex. 33:19).

The sovereignty of God in grace is an essential part of His glory. Israel had destroyed itself, and their only resource remained in Jehovah Himself. (Hos. 13:9). When all is lost, then is the time for grace to show itself, but the glory of this grace must be seen from a suitable standpoint. Moses was to be put in the cleft of the rock that he might see the glory. For this purpose Moses, after he had hewn two tables of stone like the first two which were broken, ascends the mount Sinai a second time.

And Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah (Ex. 34:5).

After having passed forty days and forty nights upon the mount (Deut. 10:10), Moses descended from the mount Sinai with the two tables of
testimony in his hand, and he knew not

that the skin of his face shone while he talked with God
(Ex. 34:28, 29).

There is a transforming power inherent in grace. Forty days of intimate intercourse with God had exerted a wonderful influence upon Moses. On the one hand he had learnt, through the experience of his own heart, the blessing of the grace with which he had communed; on the other he remained perfectly unconscious of the visible result which was the outcome of this intercourse. Blessed are we if we know the secret of communion with divine grace. The heart is refreshed, while the believer is kept in an humble path wondering that anyone should look at him. In fact, we may be sure that we shall never be used in the service of God till we have come to count ourselves as nothing. When God makes our face to shine for others, we ought to be the very last to know it.

The people fear the glory in the face of Moses more than the two tables in his hands. Such is man! He is quite ready to promise obedience to the law for his whole life, but the nearer God seeks to approach man in grace, the further he draws back. Distance from God is the natural element of man, and gladly does he remain at this distance, even when it is proclaimed that the cross has removed all hindrances, so that a sinner may approach God. Jehovah bore with a people which was under the curse of a broken law, and Moses had thus learned the way of Jehovah. But it was just this glory which he was obliged to vail,

because the children of Israel could not steadfastly look on the end of that which is abolished (2 Cor. 3:13).

For Moses the question of human righteousness on the principle of law was settled. He could look on the end,

for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth (Rom. 10:4).

But the majority in Israel could not look beyond the law, but sought for righteousness through it, while all the time they were under the curse. “For His own sake,” not on account of their righteousness, God did bring Israel temporarily into the land, but as regards individual dealings He acted as He said to Moses, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.” Everyone, therefore, who was quickened by His grace could, according to this principle, look beyond the law and see the glory in the face of Moses.

As long as the vail remained on the face of Moses, grace was necessarily hidden. But now, says the apostle, no darkness exists. The ministry is the ministry of the glad tidings of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2; Acts 20:24), the glad tidings of the “glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4), the glad tidings of the blessed God (1 Tim. 1:11). It
reveals fully the glory of this grace whose rays illuminated the face of Moses, and the tables of the law in his hand could not dim it.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

Is the proclamation of the “gospel of the grace of God” characterized in our day by this great “plainness of speech” as it was with Paul?

Is not rather the modern preaching of the gospel to be compared to Moses with the two tables of the law in his hand and with the vail hiding the glory of the grace on his face?

The present time resembles much that of the apostles as regards the acceptance of the testimony of God’s free grace. Paul, writing to the faithful of the nations, speaks of the vail on Moses’ face. Legal righteousness, ceremonial holiness, philosophical wisdom form equally great hindrances to the acceptance and understanding of the grace of God. Modern Christendom in its main characteristics makes the vain attempt to unite the principles of law and grace. The upshot is a conventional righteousness, for grace and formality result only in obedience to traditions and commandments of men and in self-willed ministry, just as grace and wisdom result in philosophy and vain deceit. (Compare Gal. 5 and Col. 2) All these are but reproductions of Moses with the two tables of the law in his hand and the vail on his face. This is manifest in a remarkable way when we think what importance is given to the tables of the law in the chief religious systems. The doctrine of grace may be expressed with much clearness and conciseness in so-called articles of faith, and may be preached with full understanding from the pulpits. But all this clearness of exposition is much darkened through a ritual which establishes legal righteousness and ascribes a certain efficacy to sacraments. There are many true servants of God who proclaim solemnly that man must be born again to see or enter into the kingdom of God, and who testify to the cross of Christ as the sole power of salvation for sinners. Yet when they minister the sacrament, they are like Moses with the vail on his face, and the precious grace which they had preached with great joy and to the edification of many must be kept in the background.

May the Lord give grace to all His servants who labor in the ministry, that they may always be and remain in the position where they may be able to use great plainness of speech.

(2) THE VAIL DONE AWAY IN CHRIST

We cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of God who has given us a detailed history of Israel, for it is written especially “for our admonition.” It shows clearly and distinctly that man is unable to preserve his position
before God when he is put under responsibility. Yet the whole history cannot produce this conviction in the conscience; only the quickening power of the Spirit of God can show man his hopeless ruin brought about through sin. But once truly convicted of sin, he is able to profit by the teaching of the history of Israel as to the fruitlessness of the law.

He that is spiritual judgeth all things (1 Cor. 2:15).

But their history teaches us yet more. It shows us in an especial manner the blinding power of traditional religion, even where it is connected with an originally divinely-appointed organization. Such a system tends only to blind man as to his position before God.

Their minds are blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament (2 Cor. 3:14).

Their own history in the desert, the song of Moses in testimony against them (Deut. 32), the testimony of Samuel against the evil of the priesthood, the ministry of the prophets bringing low their pride (Hos. 6), while strengthening the saints for the fight through His gracious promises, the captivity of Babylon and the deliverance, the renewal of the word of the Lord through John the Baptist (Luke 3:2), and that after a sad silence of 400 years, the ministry of the Lord Himself, and later that of His apostles with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, all was unavailing to remove the vail from the face of Moses.

Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart (2 Cor. 3:15).

The vail can be taken off the face of Moses only under one condition. Moses and Elias appeared with Jesus at His transfiguration on the holy mount, but disappeared at these solemn words, “This is My beloved Son: hear Him” (Luke 9:28-36). Taught of God, we come to Jesus, and then learn to look back upon Moses. We must do this before we can look from Moses to Christ with intelligence and profit. If we know the Lord, the vail drops from the face of Moses, “which is done away in Christ” (2 Cor. 3:14). After the disciples had seen the Lord risen from the dead, He opened their understanding that they might know the Scriptures.

And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me (Luke 24:44).

The conversion of Paul the Pharisee to the faith of Jesus presents us with a remarkable example of the removal of the vail in Christ. From the moment that the Lord appeared to him on the way, and that he saw that the Jesus of Nazareth, against whom he verily thought that he ought to do many things (Acts 26:9), was in truth the Lord of glory, from that moment the
vail was removed from the face of Moses as well as from his own heart. The same man, who was more zealous than all his contemporaries for the religion of his fathers, was made especially competent, after he had in his own heart learned the reality (the body of Col. 2:17), to show others the danger of keeping to the shadow when the body had been revealed. He too could clearly see the glorious end which previously had been proclaimed in the shadows of the law, viz.,

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth (Rom. 10:4),

for the law and the prophets prophesied until John.

The vail was taken off in Christ in such a way that Paul could show the Jews through the history of the people of Israel the sovereign grace of God towards them as a nation, and at the same time prove that as a nation they never could hope to stand before God under the law, as they had imagined in their foolishness. Likewise, the apostle could throw down from their lofty station those who said, “We know that God spake unto Moses” (John 9:19), and show that they had as little claim to the glory of God as the sinner of the Gentiles.

For He saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion (Rom. 9:15).

The true character of Moses’ ministry as the mediator of the old covenant could only be known by a man in Christ after the vail had been removed from the face of Moses. A man who thus is under grace can not only see the glory of this grace under the vail on the face of Moses, but also understand, through the removal of this vail, the true character of the law as the ministration of death and judgment.

Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law (Rom. 3:31).

The man in Christ fully owns the authority of the law; he owns that for the man in the flesh the law can only mean death and judgment, and thus establishes the authority of the law.

The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good (Rom. 7:12).

For the man in Christ the law has been established, because Christ has magnified it both in life and death.

Jehovah is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honorable (Isa. 42:21).

Christ was “made under law, to redeem them that were under law” (Gal. 4:4, 5). The introduction into the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free -- the liberty of worship -- gives us a true insight into the bondage from
which they had been set free, and into the curse from which they had been redeemed. Those who know these things would not like to frustrate the grace of God, nor make the death of Christ of none effect by going back to the law for help, for they have learned that nothing but the fullest grace could meet their needs. The vail has been removed from the face of Moses, and now grace shines out in clear, bright rays.

To the man in Christ the removal of the vail from the face of Moses is of special importance, because that which was before an insupportable yoke becomes thereby a living reality. See how Peter speaks of it:

Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they (Acts 15:10, 11).

When Peter knew the Lord this whole system, with its heavy yoke of carnal ordinance, was imbued with living power. The moment the vail fell from the face of Moses all the solemn commandments about sacrifices, priesthood, order, fat, etc., became “living oracles”; they all spoke of Christ. The law itself was a prophecy. The shadow received -- now that the body, Christ, had appeared -- a meaning and an interest, while by itself it had been uninteresting and insupportable. The shadows can now with profit be used to show the reality, i.e., the manifold riches of the graces of Christ, for “the body is of Christ” (Col. 2:17). But to impose them again as duties would be to deny Christ, or to imitate them as examples would be to put those far off again who “were made nigh through the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

In Christ, the true Rock cleft for us, the glory of God is manifested and His name proclaimed, “if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord, is gracious” (1 Pet. 2:3); and here is this grace,

I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious (Ex. 33:19, 22).

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4, 5).

This is the easy yoke and the light burden which Jesus lays upon those who follow Him, and this is their true honor and glory. They are justified,

51. “Pure law,” so to speak, came down to the camp where Israel was worshiping the golden calf. It was another God -- and thus the law was broken, and Moses broke the two tables. JND’s remarks refer to the second giving of the law which was accompanied by the mediation of Moses, and with which the sacrificial system was connected so that God might go on with Israel.
sanctified, and a royal priesthood, therefore able to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them “out of darkness into His marvelous light.” Every dimness regarding Moses is gone; the law is now apprehended as that which only ministers condemnation; and instead of making it of none effect by accommodating it to man, it is now seen to reveal the total ruin of man.

The prophetic character of the law is not only made plain, but also rejoices the heart, showing us in beautiful types “the good things to come” which we already enjoy in Christ. Yet the types remain far behind the reality; they are only shadows, not the things themselves, just as a portrait representing a beautiful scene remains far inferior to the scene itself. The vail is done away in Christ, and Moses shows himself as the herald of grace—grace in electing love, grace which quickens the sinner dead in trespasses and sins, grace which opens the eyes to see the glory of Christ in His Person and in His work, grace which is the way of God bearing the misery of the people, in short,

grace which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:21).

There are two things of deepest importance for us. We read: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). A man thus quickened feels the power and knows the blessing of the commandment: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved” (Isa. 45:22). He that is born of God finds alone rest by looking away from himself to Christ. For him Jesus the crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God. But when led on through the Holy Spirit in the teaching of the cross, he understands too the truth about the substitution of Christ, viz., that God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21), then is the one who is born of the Spirit capable of viewing the thing from another standpoint. He can then turn his looks back from Christ to himself, from that which grace has made him in Christ to that which he finds himself to be through painful experience. Christ becomes for him the true light, and he himself “light in the Lord.” The man, new born, is thus able to solve the contradictions which he finds in himself, and to justify God in His ways of grace.

(3) THE VAIL ON THE HEART OF ISRAEL

The people of Israel, in spite of their vaunted veneration of Moses, did not in reality receive him as the messenger of God. They rejected him in Egypt, saying, “Who made thee a prince or a judge over us?” (Ex. 2:14). And
afterwards, when, sent of God, he presented himself again with the manifest tokens of the reality of his mission, they murmured against him again and again. At the close too he bears testimony to them,

Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you (Deut. 9:24).

For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death? (Deut. 31:27).

But when Jesus, “the true and faithful witness,” “the true light,” came, the Jews rejected His claims by putting forth those of Moses. This is one of the traits of the evil heart and perverted will of man. He refuses constantly to own the rights of God. Despisers of His grace in Christ, they pretend to own His rights in the law, and use the law to reject Christ. But Jesus would not admit the pretended submission of the Jews to Moses:

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe My words? (John 5:45-47).

The vail was upon their hearts when they read Moses.

The gospel of the grace of God is the revelation of the glory of God in the person and the work of His Son Jesus Christ. It is the perfect expression of that name which God had proclaimed to Moses (Ex. 34:6). The word, “true and worthy of all acceptance,” is, “that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). The only ground on which God addresses man in the ministry of reconciliation is that he is a lost sinner. Peter told Israel as a people,

Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities (Acts 3:26).

But in spite of the clearness of the testimony the vail remained upon their heart; they looked constantly to Moses. They confirmed their national crime when they rejected the Holy Ghost who spoke to them through Stephen, and killed him, as they had before denied and killed the Son.

When the apostle of the Gentiles was called, he testified of the perfect glory of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:38, 39).

But the vail remained on their hearts.
It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46).

Let us turn now our attention to a truth which is much represented in our days,

Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts (Zech. 4:6).

It is possible to preach the gospel of the grace of God in a very full and clear manner; but while it is opened to those “that find knowledge” (Prov. 8:9), it remains as to its true meaning hid without the quickening power of the Spirit, and the grace is not apprehended. In the same manner we may be forced through the clearness of the exposition to accept with the understanding the doctrine of the grace, and all the time the heart remain unconscious of its own needs, and show soon that it rejects the grace of God, and that independence instead of boast in Christ is its sole principle. When the Lord said to the Jews who had been attracted by His miracles,

Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed,

what did they answer?

What shall we do that we might work the works of God? (John 6:27, 28).

Man with the vail upon his heart is ready to do, but refuses a God who gives. He is ready to labor honestly and diligently to establish his own righteousness, but refuses to submit himself to the righteousness of God. To submit is to own God’s grace, i.e. that God of His own free gift, for His own sake, can give to man what he did not deserve, and what he had no right to demand of God. The vail must be taken from his heart to see these things, and then the vail drops at the same time both from his heart and from the face of Moses.

Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away (2 Cor. 3:16).

There is only one power which can turn the evil heart of Israel to the Lord; miracles are for this powerless. The history of that people was full of miracles from the beginning; nevertheless they were “a perverted and crooked generation.” When Jesus in His great condescension invited them to come to Him, He adds, “but I said unto you, that ye also have seen Me, and believe not” (John 6:36). Although Jesus had spoken to them “as never

52. {“It” means the nation of Israel, as such. See Rom. 11:25-32.}
man spake,” the servants who testified this of Him were interrupted angrily by the religious leaders, “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?” (John 7:46-49). They had been eye witnesses of His miracles, “but though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him” (John 12:37). And when the Holy Ghost came down from heaven as witness of the glory of Him whom they had crucified, enabling uneducated and ignorant men to testify of Him with such clearness and boldness, they are reminded of the word,

Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye (Acts 7:51).

What more could God do for Israel that He had not done? They are without excuse and righteously afflicted with blindness till this day.

But though the Lord could do no more for Israel, He can for His own sake do the wonderful work in them of turning their hearts to Himself. And this will happen.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you (Ezek. 36:25, 26).

I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name’s sake (v. 22).

Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel (v. 32).

The Spirit quickens. God alone has life in Himself; He alone can communicate life. The Spirit, where He works for salvation for this ministry, opens the eyes to see and the ears to hear, and then the vail is removed from the heart and the heart is won for the Lord.

But is it only a question of Israel, or are not the words of the apostle also addressed to us and meant for our instruction? Often we learn our position best when we see it mirrored in that of others. Surely not without a purpose does the apostle, through the Holy Spirit, refer to the future conversion of Israel when writing to the converted of the nations. The Corinthians might easily think that a cultivated civilization could only be advantageous to the cause of the gospel. But Paul refuses such an auxiliary from the outset. His testimony among them was

not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Cor. 2:4, 5).

Those wise Greeks had drawn the line of civilisation, and considered those barbarians who stood outside of this line. But their wisdom was linked with
the grossest superstition.

In distinction to the wise Greek is the pious Jew who testified to the oneness of the Godhead. But the testimony of Paul was the same to both, although they stood opposed to one another,

to the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness
(1 Cor. 1:23).

The vail was on the heart of the latter as well as of the former; they were equally opposed to the doctrines of grace. The apostle counted solely upon the power of God to remove the vail and to open the way for the reception of His testimony. When the Lord Jesus was on the point of leaving His disciples, He gave them the promise,

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning (John 15:26, 27).

This double testimony is equally necessary, viz., the testimony of the servants of God and the quickening testimony of the Spirit. The clearest exposition and the most pointed proofs are unavailing without the quickening power of the Spirit. And because He is the Spirit of truth, He bears testimony in the soul which is quickened by Him, “because the Spirit is truth” (1 John 5:6-10).

Although there may be individual cases in which God sends a “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” {2 Thess. 2:11} it cannot yet be said that the great mass of nominal Christians has {yet} been given over to delusion in the judgment of God as Israel has been. Yet morally an equally dense vail rests upon the hearts of the great bulk of those who call themselves Christians, as regards the true gospel, as on the heart of Israel in respect of the coming Messiah. Leaving out popery, which has evidently an anti-Christian character, how does it stand with the great number of Protestants by birth and tradition, even with those who read the New Testament, if it is really read at all? The Holy Scriptures are read by the light of tradition, i.e., with a mirror, which alone is sufficient to make the Word of God void and of none effect. They are read like the writings of any human author, whereas this Word comes to man with divine authority, representing God’s thoughts and demanding the obedience of faith; or else one looks in the Holy Scriptures for accounts, annals, histories, without heeding in the least the truths connected with the facts, i.e. the teaching of the gospel. Therefore they may be read without the living power of the Spirit being in the least felt -- a power which speaks to sinners or disciples now as directly as in the first days of the Church, when this Word issued from the lips of the Lord or of His apostles (Heb. 2:3). And thus the word
becomes true: “The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life” (2 Cor. 3:6).

Christianity exists, the presence of the Church is owned; but these two facts only help to keep the vail on the heart when the New Testament is read. To hold fast Christianity as known, to confess one or other of its many forms of worship, is generally considered sufficient to make a Christian. But there is little desire to know God as revealed in Christ. The foundation principles of the gospel are dimmed or made powerless through human additions. The strife between Protestants and Catholics is more regarding the senselessness of the Catholic faith than regarding the vital question of saving faith as it was at the time of the Reformation. Unto this day the vail is upon the mass of the Protestants when they read the Holy Scriptures. They stumble at the threshold:

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3).

Allowing the fullest value to sound criticism, recognizing all the light which the discoveries of recent travelers have thrown on Holy Scriptures, and accepting thankfully the many helps which are offered to the student of Scripture, yet we maintain that all these things by themselves are powerless to remove the vail from the heart. The law could not give life, and these things can do it just as little. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth” (John 6:63).

In this, as in many other cases, the Lord is above men: “Now the Lord is that Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17). God allows man to bring out all his resources to make evident the distance which exists between man and God. Thus in this particular case, where the gift of life is in question, the line of separation is drawn very clearly. “I am the life,” says Jesus; “I am [not shall be] the resurrection and the life.” “The Son quickeneth whom He will.” “The last Adam is a quickening spirit.” “The life is the light of men.” The quickened soul sees in the Lord Jesus the salvation of God.

When the Lord spake with Nicodemus the subject was, so to speak, “man.”

Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast-day, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man. But there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which Thou doest except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 2:23-25; 3:1-3).

Nicodemus is presented to us as an honest man who values the miracles of
the Lord rightly and owns that they confirm His divine mission. Nicodemus was “ruler of the Jews,” one of the religious authorities of that day; yet at the very outset he meets with a statement which confounds him. The vail was on his heart, and he hesitates (an instance of the curious inconsistency of man) to accept a doctrine, although presented by One whom he owns “a teacher come from God,” because this doctrine silenced his understanding. It is therefore possible to accept the mission of Jesus, supported as it is by glorious, incontestable proofs; but without the quickening power of the Holy Ghost it is impossible to accept the doctrine. Only he who is born again can see and believe that the same Person can be teacher and doctrine at the same time.

CHRIST DWELLING IN THE HEART

(Unrevised Notes of Lecture by J. N. D. on Eph. 3:14-21)

In the former part of this chapter we have the unsearchable riches of Christ contrasted with all that had been previously revealed. In all the Old Testament scriptures there had been nothing of the mystery as we get it here. There had been glimpses now and then, but nothing more. What strikes the apostle’s mind is that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. It was outside all the promises. True, it had been written, “Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people,” but here it is sovereign grace coming in outside all that had been previously thought of.

The gospel came to the Jews first because God had promised it; but they rejected it. Paul was the strongest proof that the Jews would not have Christ. We find him persecuting the Church and consenting to Stephen’s death. He is met in grace from the very place where Stephen, looking up, sees the end of his testimony, and, as he says, he was made “a pattern to all who should hereafter believe.” When the enmity of man had been brought to the highest pitch, then God could come in in sovereign grace, in His own personal will above all that man had done to prevent Him. Paul calls himself the chief of sinners, and justly so too; but we find God rising above him, and hence he goes to people who, like himself, had no title. It is astonishing how the two apostles, Peter and Paul, are both fitted for their several parts -- Peter cursing and swearing ere he was converted and could strengthen his brethren, and Paul breathing out threatenings and slaughters. As we have seen, flesh must be put down. It is only an empty vessel that the Lord can use, that no flesh should glory in His presence; it is very humbling that we should need it, but we do need it. This fits him for preaching to Gentiles who had no promise, and we now find God revealing Himself in all the fulness of that love in which He could bless those who had nothing to say to God. Flesh was judged in the cross of Christ, and it
was not now merely a question of promises, but of having Christ. I first
find out what God is through the Son, but now I find the divine affections
all centered in Christ -- “the Father loveth the Son,” then “the unsearchable
riches,” everything put into Christ’s hands as Heir of all things, and this as
man, as we get in Psal. 8. In Prov. 8:31, I find Him delighting in man. He
passes by the angels -- blessed, doubtless, in their places; but He passes by
them, and takes man’s nature upon Him. People keep Christmas, but the
world’s estimate of Christ when He came is shown by the fact that it could
find no better place for Him than a manger. When Christ came the angels
sang 53 God’s good pleasure in man; but man would not have Him in his
life, and so He must die, because if not, like a corn of wheat, He must
abide alone. But His desire is to get outside of all man’s rejection and to
have man notwithstanding. If man would not have Him in life, because man
was dead, He must die and take man up in death, to make him partaker of
a new and risen life. This was perfect, infinite love, not merely kindness
(we get His goodness every day); but His love in coming to take a sinner’s
place? God’s truth is brought out in this. He has taken man clean out of the
position in which he was, and the consequence is that now I see man
entering into a new position altogether, in the Second Man, who has gone
into sin and death and borne the judgment, and now is in the glory of God
as a Man, and I with Him. This is unsearchable riches, far more than
promise, and the apostle’s heart was here opening out to this.

In the first chapter we find his prayer is to the God of our Lord Jesus
Christ; we have Christ as Man, and God in power, making the revelation
of the inheritance, etc. But in this third chapter he bows his knees to the
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is seen here in His own personal
relationship as Son. Mark, it is our Lord, not the Lord. Thus saints are
brought into closer relationship than any other created intelligence, and
angels, instead of being jealous, are delighted at it. The poorest saint knows
his union with Christ, and knows it by the Holy Ghost. We own Him as
Lord, but He is not ashamed to call us brethren. I am brought into Christ’s
place, and, as Paul says, it is all by grace, it is all of God.

Christ identifies Himself with the Church -- “Why persecutest thou
Me?” It is all association with Himself. The apostle asks here that the saints
may enter into the fulness of communion; not as in the first chapter, that
they might know it outwardly, but that being strengthened by His Spirit in
the inner man, Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith -- Christ Himself
in your own souls, that He may be the center of your hearts by the Holy

53. {Actually, there is no Scripture evidence that angels sing, unless a poetic phrase in Job be
taken literally regarding the morning stars.}
Ghost, a consciousness that Christ fills you, not merely with knowledge, but that you may be rooted and grounded in love. The love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost should flow in your hearts; then you would rise above everything -- trial, tribulation, the result of all is love. This is the way the Holy Ghost reasons, not the way man reasons. God’s love was shown in giving the nearest thing to Him for that which was farthest from Him. Solomon was large of heart, but if I could have such a large heart, God must be the center of it, or else I should find only sorrow and vanity, as Solomon did.

“That ye may be able to comprehend,” etc. If I am walking in self, I cannot see beyond the petty things of this world; but when I get beyond the region of self I am able to judge about sin, sinners, to have a true judgment about everything; and I am able to understand the breadth and length and depth and height. He does not say of what, that has to be filled in; but in order to make all practical I must “know the love of Christ.” If I were going into the Queen’s presence, how glad I should be if someone would tell me what to do! Well, this knowledge of the love of Christ is the very thing that calms my heart when I think of the immensity of the glory that is to be revealed in me. Christ is next me. I have known Him intimately down here and as risen too; for He is just the same as when He said, “Children, have ye any meat?” When I read that the glory of God doth lighten the city, is that too dazzling, too much for my eye? The next words that I read are that “the Lamb is the light thereof.” You see, the heart gets into a condition where it is at home, and therefore the poorest, simplest saint is quite easy in all this glory, because Christ is in it all, and Christ is in his heart. I may be a poor earthen vessel, but then I have got the treasure inside. By faith in my heart He speaks to me; He manifests Himself to me as He does not to the world. It is a wonderful thing for me to say that I know Christ’s love, at the same time that I can also say it passeth knowledge. And now the apostle, having shown the saints the exalted position, rises up to it, and says it is “that ye might be filled into all the fulness of God.” Wondrous place! wondrous purpose of love to have brought me here! Now how shall I look on tribulation? Oh, I can glory in it! I can joy in God, not merely joy amid the circumstances, but joy in God Himself.

“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think” -- this is often wrongly put forth as though it said, “able to do for us” (quite true, of course, in its place, because He is able and does do for us); but it is not the thought here; it is “able to do in us” -- “according to the power that worketh in us” (v. 20). The Church has been looked at as all that we have been speaking of, in order that Christ may be glorified in us. “He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired
in all them that believe in that day,” although the apostle is not here looking at what it will be in the future, but what it is now by faith. Moses reflected in his face the glory of God when he came down from the mount; so should the Church now. The angels are looking on; there is wisdom in the Church, although very feeble. The angels ought to see in the saints the glory of God; but how little, beloved friends, how terribly little, can be seen! How everything has failed that has been put into the hand of man, as far as man is concerned -- the law, the Son of David, Nebuchadnezzar, the Church! Man has spoiled everything, as far as he had the power. And, dear friends, would that you knew you were weak, then you would be better able to say, “Now unto Him be glory,” etc. When Paul said, “I was with you in much weakness,” we learn God had “much people in that city.” There must be weakness in the vessel. The object known is Christ; the place, our hearts. God is looking for Christ being known by us, and God glorified in us, not merely Christ dwelling in us by the Holy Ghost, but in our hearts -- my heart; my thoughts, my feelings, the same as Christ’s. The Lord give us to know how God has treated us, that we may know the heart’s obligation to love, and that obligation not a legal one.

December 26th, 1861.

TO LIVE -- CHRIST

(Unrevised Notes of a Lecture by J. N. D.)

This Epistle to the Philippians leads into a very peculiar apprehension of the Christian path. Its object is not doctrine, but Christian experience, and it is well for our souls to look it in the face and see how far our spirit and thought and mind answer to it day by day.

In this epistle salvation is always put at the end of the path as a thing to be attained -- “that I may win Christ.” This is an important principle for our souls. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” always looking to the end; and we have first to see that we are set in the place of redemption to run to the end of our course.

At the same time you will see a power brought in that supposes that in running we shall always be glorifying Christ, and above the circumstances.

I will say here that there is always an exercise of soul which goes on before we know redemption, and there is a distinct and definite responsibility under which we lie as Christians -- not the responsibility of the first man, which inevitably ends in judgment. Our responsibility as sinners refers to acceptance, but that is settled completely: we are accepted in the Beloved. Now the responsibilities are ours as Christians, and duties always flow from the place in which we are already set.
As to man’s condition, we get the truth that we are all lost, but souls individually go through a process shorter or longer before owning this, before submitting themselves to the righteousness of God. It may be learnt suddenly, or it may be a long time about, but the soul has to recognize this, that the flesh is utterly corrupt. “In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not... And when I would do good evil is present with me.”

As regards our standing in Adam as sinners, we are redeemed out of it into Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and the believer is in a standing and condition which is made for him in Christ. “At that day” (the Lord said) “ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” Now, that is the only true Christian peace. The angels see us in Christ up there; Christ is in us down here. Do those around us see it, and does the world see it?

The exercises of soul which precede this are all most valuable and useful to thoroughly teach us that our standing is not in the flesh, and we then get settled peace by knowing it. We put our seal to the truth of God in the judgment He passed upon us, and our souls now having divine light say, “In me is no good thing.” Not only as a doctrine of Scripture, but in the presence of God we have to own that we cannot stand a moment in His sight. And here we get another thing, that the sins of the flesh were borne by Christ on the cross and put away for ever.

Again, Christ glorified God, and is as man on high sending the Comforter down to dwell in us, so that I can say my standing is no more in the flesh, in the first Adam at all, but in the second Adam.

Well, now there is a responsibility that flows from that condition. You find in this epistle the effect produced by the Spirit of God in the Christian when he is in the place, and we have to judge whether we are using this true liberty as those who are alive to God from among the dead.

Sin is never mentioned in this epistle {Phil.}. It is not that the flesh is altered in Paul or made better -- it never grows better. In many things we all offend, and Paul had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, to keep the flesh down. But this epistle shows us that a power has come in and dwells in us, which leaves us always without excuse if there is a thought that is contrary to the Spirit of God.

It is not always at the given moment we have the power to resist, but why not? Because I do not put my armor on. But whose fault is that?

There may be liberty of heart with God and confidence in Him to say I am a child of God through Christ Jesus. I have got my place, a place which is the riches of God’s mercy, but is there found growth? “Growing up into Him in all things which is the Head.” He has given me a place with His Son. He has given me to be in His Son, that He may unfold His glory through the
countless ages of eternity -- now through the Holy Ghost, and hereafter in glory. We have to enjoy this in Him. Our place is in the last Adam in righteousness. He has redeemed us out of the condition we were in. I am in Christ, and He is in the presence of God for me, and I am in the world for Him. That is where God has set us. The old man is reckoned dead. “Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.”

And yet as a matter of fact we have the flesh to contend with, and we have to go through a scene where everything is temptation; consequently the character we take is that of overcoming and realizing the presence of God in the midst of evil. Uniform, constant, unvarying superiority over the evil is the striking characteristic of the apostle’s path in this epistle.

Now look at your own hearts, and you will find that in the course of this very day, in many things, looking within, it has not been the life of Christ. You could not say as to them, “To me to live is Christ.” I assume that it is the purpose of your heart to do so, but from hour to hour during the day there have perhaps been heaps of things traveling over the road of your soul that Christ never let in there and that the Spirit of God could not approve.

The leper in the Old Testament was first cleansed by water, and then the blood was put on the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot, afterwards being anointed by the oil put upon the blood. This is a beautiful type -- every avenue of the soul guarded, all under the watchful care of the Spirit. But in looking within ourselves we shall find there is that which had passed the blood. We had forgotten “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.”

There is such an occupation of heart with Christ, such a fear of God, and such a walking in the practical guardianship of the Spirit, that a man is able to say, like the apostle, “For me to live is Christ.” There is the power of the Spirit of God to lead the Christian through the race, that he may apprehend that for which he is also apprehended of Christ Jesus. Now in every respect you are called upon to have the mind which was in Christ Jesus, always willing to go down -- humble -- for it is graciousness, the grace of Christ, we get here.

In the first chapter he is determined that Christ shall be magnified in his body; in the second chapter there is the humility; in the third chapter, energy; in the fourth chapter, superiority to circumstances.

The apostle never mentions sin. Christ has run the race, and is set down to show us where the course leads to, that we may have the eye and heart where He is -- on the end. That is what we are called to. “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” {John 17:19}. Christ has set Himself apart in the glory, and the Spirit of God takes Him and unfolds Him to us, that we may be like Him, expressing the same
mind which was in Him.

There is positive progress growing up in Him, but no such thing as growing meetness for heaven. Growth is pressed upon us, but you will never find Scripture mingling the two things, meetness and growth. The thief on the cross was as meet for heaven as Paul was. Not that God will overlook Paul’s labors. No! but it is that in Christ we are always meet for the glory of God.

We have to get the perception that we are taken clean out of the place we were in. Christ is our life and Christ is our righteousness. We are called to walk (with the blood on the ear) with Him, watching against every inconsistent thing. “He which hath begun a good work in you shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” It is not merely that we are perfect in Christ, but He has begun a work; and the moment it speaks of the path to the glory, the wilderness path, there are “ifs” of every kind. You get the wanderings, the failures, the murmurings, but with these the faithfulness of God.

The armor is there for us, the strength is there also, to lead us to the end. We want that armor, we want that strength; there is danger, and yet I have the consciousness of being in Christ and Christ in me. It is not the path I have to run, but the dangers I have to meet. God says, You must be dependent on Me. You will need to be kept, but do not mix up the two things, and because you have conflict in Canaan say that you are still in Egypt. There was no conflict in Egypt. God suits Himself so blessedly to His people. In Egypt, in their bondage, He comes as their Deliverer. In the wilderness He is with them to guide them night and day by the fiery cloudy pillar, and feed them with manna when they longed for the fleshpots of Egypt. When they have to turn back on the borders of the promised land, through want of faith to enter it, God turns back with them and dwells in a tabernacle. After forty years, when they get to the land and are to have conflict, there is the angel with the drawn sword; and when they are settled in the land He builds a house like one of the palaces of the great ones of the earth.

When I think of redemption it is no question of conflict, it is a delivering God who can completely deliver us out of the place we were in, but He will go through the wilderness with you, He will humble you, He will prove you; you will have to learn what you are, but also prove what He is. That is a different thing from redemption. If we have passed the Red Sea we have done with Egypt; and if I do not see this it may be with me as with Israel, who said, “Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou brought us to die in the wilderness?” But God said, “I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.” Have you not found the need of grace? He feeds with manna; He provides the garments that wax not old. He meets the need, and He carried the children of Israel through the wilderness for the double purpose, so to speak, to learn what they were and to learn what He was. He was always faithful. There is the discovery of what we are (with correction of course),
but always the blessed discovery of what He is. I shall find conflict, and I shall have to go back to Gilgal, where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away, for that is the true circumcision of the flesh {Col. 2:11}. Thus we learn in this way, whether in the wilderness or in conflict, what we are and what God is.

While we are going through the path here we have all the infirmity of the flesh, the dangers and the temptations, but we have the power of God. We get heaps of warnings and “ifs” when it is a question of our getting to the end, but never such a word as “if” applied to the faithfulness of God: “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” The very process is to take us off ourselves back practically to absolute dependence upon absolute faithfulness, so that there is growth.

Paul was not perfect; no one is. He had been four years in prison, chained to a soldier, but he was making request for the Philippians, with joy and with the confident sense that they had him on their heart, acknowledging the love that led them to send help to him a thousand miles away, and he was persuaded that God would accomplish His work in them.

All this humbles us and shows us what the world is. We may learn it slowly or quickly; if slowly we shall learn self, but if we walk with God we learn to trust Him. If we walk with self we learn ourselves and our need of Him, but we do not learn to trust Him. Like a careless child feeling the need of his father, but not knowing or trusting him. If I live with my friend I get to know what he is as my friend.

As regards the path we get every kind of warning and “ifs” on our side, but on God’s side there are no “ifs.” “He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Surely what blessedness to say we are walking in the light because Christ has rent the veil, and as children of light we ought to be able to know in a higher sense than Israel that wherever we go He will be “a little sanctuary” to us. Is He to us a sanctuary? We look out on the world, what is it? Instead of its being between me and God I have got God between the world and me. We have the secret of the Lord, and go on through the world with the light that He gives. It is a comfort if we are walking with God, to be leaning on One who never leaves me. He restores my soul in failure and leads me in the paths of righteousness. If the heart is getting cold, not walking freely and simply with Him as it should do, remember there is Divine power and Divine grace. Recollect this, “He restoreth my soul.” He will bring me back to Himself in the light and joy of His presence.

We get in this epistle {Phil.} a lively recollection of all the good that is in the saints -- he enters into all the details of it. There is the power of individualizing which grace gives. Now, where the soul is with God these are constantly kept fresh; it is filled with the recollection of the grace that is in the saints. “It is meet,” he writes, “to think this of you all, because you have
me in your heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye are all partakers of my grace.” This is the external means used by the Spirit of God to link the Church together. Instead of the wretched flesh jostling one against another, there is the lively recollection of all that is good, and a knitting together of the hearts by these means. It wakes up the grace that produces the kindness -- not merely the kindness. And another thing we see, he is not afraid to express his praise of them or the feelings of his own heart towards them -- a thing which I often find most difficult. He has true liberty to speak, being with the Lord in spirit and simple before Him. “God is my record, how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ,” etc.

It is this, in a great measure, made me take up this chapter: “That your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.” Is that the idea we have before us? He expects not only the love and desire on their part, but that there should be also *spiritual intelligence*. If I were perfectly spiritual I should know what to do in all things. And this is set before us. We are set to be witnesses of Christ, and we are the epistle of Christ, not we ought to be. And just as men read in the children of Israel the law and the ten commandments, so ought men now to read Christ in us -- Christ engraved, as it were, in you. It does not say you ought to be what He was then, but you ought to walk as He walked. How impossible, if I am walking with Christ, realizing Him, is it that I shall not know the mind of God as to everything! Did not He walk with Him without a cloud? We should be yielding our bodies as living sacrifices to Him.

This is not merely that I will not do wrong, but that which is the perfect will of God. It is the knowledge of Christ and of the mind of God proving what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. If He does not expect this of us, why then does He put it? He *does* expect it of us, that we should have this knowledge of Him, and walk as He walked down here (vv. 9, 10). It is not saying, That is wrong; or, There is no harm in that; but it is knowing the perfect will of God.

He that is holy, He that is true, is the character that Christ takes in addressing the Church of Philadelphia; and in these last days nothing is more important than to see Him thus, if you care to be kept out of that terrible day of sifting. He says, I am holy, I am true; you must walk with Me like that. He to whom Christ is all will say, Well, I am not to deny His Name outwardly, nor in anything; I am knit to Him. It requires patience, a broken will, and it requires a sense of our own nothingness; but it is a path of unmixed blessing and of nearness to Christ, and it is the power of hope. He is leading me on in my path, and whatever removes the film from my eyes to see my path clear removes the film from my eye to see Him clearly. When you have the responsibility of the world or the Church, you are referred to the day of Christ. When you get the privileges of the Christian, you have the
rapture of the Church -- that is, the fruit of completed redemption. We shall be like Christ, and Paul cannot be better than that. But when responsibility comes in we get the reward of labor: and what He looks for is that we should be sincere and without offence. Can we say “without offence” through this past week? You have a nature which has the desires; you have the life of Christ and the faithfulness of God to keep you; now how far can you say with all that, I am walking sincerely and without offence? Paul was no better than others as to flesh or nature -- the tree is bad; but there was nothing that soiled his conscience. He had not indeed already attained, neither was already perfect, but he followed after. It is not the mere existence of flesh that gives me a bad conscience, but the letting it act. It is like a mischievous madman in a house. I must keep him locked up or he will do mischief.

We have to be sincere and without offence “according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I may be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death.” It always had been his hope and always would be. Oh, if we could say this -- Christ magnified! The Lord give us to have the eye upon Him, discerning things (that differ) that are excellent, that we may walk so as to glorify Him in our bodies. Would it not make your heart happy to say, “Always so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body?” Well, I say, is there watchfulness to make it so? You are called to walk with that blessed object before you; is there not power in Him? You can’t say, No!

It is a thing there will be no opportunity for in heaven. It is here He expects His people to be the living witnesses in the world of what He is to them. Would that our hearts may believe there is power in Him for that. My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness. But we have to remember that the strength is in Him, not in us. May the living earnest desire of our hearts be to glorify Christ, and from moment to moment carrying Christ in our hearts, to do our duties to Christ and for Christ, so that His life may be manifested in our mortal bodies.
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF BRETHREN
AT GUELPH, ONTARIO

1 John 3:4

Wednesday, September 29, 1869

Everyone that practices sin practices lawlessness. The gold of the gospel is in the Epistle of John; the germ of truth is there for it sets forth in such blessed, rich fullness God’s standard of holiness and the working it out in detailed power, giving us to know the precious from the vile, and grace and wisdom to separate it and then you get a clean vessel meet for the Master’s use, being filled with all the fullness of the knowledge of God -- as a vessel hollowed out and as the gold of the sanctuary, sanctified unto every good word and work.

Where man in his sinful state has done his worst, God shines out most in all the resplendent characters of His perfect holiness. The world with all its wisdom and moral boasting power of doing good, pressed Christ out and murdered Him, and it will put the believer outside too, if he will walk with that blessed One as He walked. It is only they who will live godly in Christ Jesus that have the promise of suffering persecution and reproach for Christ.

There is nothing that tends to keep the soul of a saint in such a healthy condition as he ought to be in order to manifest Christ, but trouble of some kind or other. It is the sphere alone in which he can be kept happy, therefore Paul says, “I take pleasure in necessities, in infirmities, tribulations,” etc. “These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor Me” (John 16:3). They also took up stones to cast at Him but He went through the midst of them and so passed by.

Beloved brethren, can you and I so walk before Him and in the power of that new nature even as He walked? The hating of the Son of God is bearing upon the fact (not man’s morality) of the contrast of God’s holiness. See what manner of love is from God in His Son and towards the sinner -- not in him until he has received Christ Jesus the Lord.

God so loved the world -- not loves the world -- that He gave His Son. The holiness and righteousness of God in this present dispensation calls for condemnation upon the sinner out of Christ now—and the only remedy for the sinner that God has provided is not the receiving of the love of God, but receiving Christ alone, and as soon as he does that he receives the love of God and can say, “We love Him because He first loved us.” Hence it is very unscriptural to say, God bore your sins away on His Son, because they, the unconverted, have not believed but as soon as they have believed that Jesus
is the Christ, then it is true of them. The children out of communion have had their sins put away, but sins are still imputed on account of their ungodly walk. See 2 Cor. 5:21, “He hath made Him to be sin for us” so consequently we have the standing of the righteousness of God, and God’s claim upon us is that we should walk according to the measure and state of that condition in which God has placed us. So God has only wrath for the unconverted, the correlative (or opposite) of love is wrath. (See John 3:36.)

A divine righteousness and divine love has been shown towards this world and now divine wrath is about to be poured out on all those who are rejecters of God’s righteousness. God could not possibly give any greater proof of His love than putting the sinner’s sins on His own dear Son in whom was all His delight (or, were all His delights). The very nature of God is love, not derived from any other source, as we get it, but He Himself is the Author of it. 1 Corinthians and Ephesians 1 are the attributes of God having their reflection on the saint towards those in fellowship.

But, on the other hand, how can I in the light of God’s presence tell poor hardened unconverted sinners that God’s love is on them (not towards them) when I know that God’s wrath is hanging over their heads pending its execution. If he will not believe and accept God’s remedy for sin, there is nothing left him but eternal banishment into hell. The eternal wrath of God is as true and scriptural doctrine as eternal salvation. Rom. 5:6 is a broad, general statement. It is the blessed aspect of Christ presented to God in sacrifice for the world while dead in trespasses and sins. The commending of God’s love in the gift of His Son does not keep the soul of a sinner from a sense of his condemnation in rejecting Christ, but enhances the reality of the inevitable consequence if he does so, showing him God’s way of deliverance—the only door. Every blasphemer on earth is an object of God’s goodness, but not a recipient of His grace. In 2 Cor. 5 we get Christ’s work complete, but man’s responsibility brought out. Also, v. 19, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” Superficial belief is of no use. Evangelists are very apt to accept this sort of faith, but it is only the deep-rooted seed that God accepts, and that which brings forth fruit. Mr. Stanley was once, as he thought, very much encouraged, but he found they turned out stony ground hearers. He discovered too that Calvinistic preaching would not do.

It is a pure gospel that must be preached with the whosoever will receive it. Paul says, “Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11). Yet the salvation of the believer is totally whole -- standing and state -- complete in Christ, yet he is told to go on with it all the time (1 John 2:6).
Propitiation for our sins, but for the world, \textsuperscript{54} it is not sins, but sin (\{i.e., in\} 2 Cor. 5:14, 15). Personal substitution is a responsibility of each individual; \{there is in propitiation\} a broad aspect towards all, but only upon all them that believe \{Rom. 3:22\}. Atonement and substitution is God’s positive satisfaction. Righteousness is met in Lev. 16 in the Lord’s lot and the people’s lot. The Lord’s lot is the blood being taken inside the veil. The people’s lot is the sin confessed on the scape goat; the one was killed, the other taken away in the wilderness. What a beautiful type of the gospel of God.

There was a poor blind man in Liverpool who was sitting by the wayside reading his raised-letter Bible. When he came upon that verse in John 3, “God so loved the world,” etc., he stopped at the word “whosoever.” When a little boy was passing, he called him and said, “Little boy, can you tell me who whosoever is?” “Why yes, to be sure I can,” he said; “it means you and me and everybody else.”

“Well,” said the dear old man, “if it’s for me, I believe it,” and that moment he received peace with God.

Faith does not belong to sinners in the aggregate because of their unbelief. Thus God manifests Himself. In contrast with what man is, He shows forth His righteousness and His holiness, and then, grace, mercy and peace towards poor fallen man, in the gift of His Son. All is presented to man and he is held responsible for receiving or rejecting it. Christ fulfilled the law and has shown what man ought to have been. Man could not be justified by the law; it merely shows how far he was from God. In Israel the lamb was kept up until the fourteenth day, but God’s spotless Lamb -- expression of God’s divine righteousness -- is what God has revealed in Himself, a cooperative and coequal working of God and His Son apart from all man’s knowledge.

Wednesday afternoon: 1 John 3.

Judaism had this particular feature; it could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. It was not that perfect work of Christ, but it was a type of it which gave the conscience rest for the time being; there was, in short, uncertainty, but the technical term here in John is “We know,” being manifested wherever it appears with that blessed hope constantly before us, that, “When He shall appear we shall be like Him.” It is not enough for us to be like Him yesterday or a week or three years or any time, but always with unbroken, undimmed delight, enjoying the assurance

\textsuperscript{54} \{Propitiation is for the sins of the believer, but not for the sins of the world. There is a propitiation for the world that allows the sinner to approach.\}
of His return; yea, longing to behold Him, and yet going on carefully, prayerfully, and patiently, until it is His good time and pleasure to call us out of this scene where He Himself has trod before us. It has been and is the constant stimulating hope of every saint in communion with Him that He is to come, and that ought to be enough for us under all the varied circumstances through which He has called His own dear blood-bought ones to pass. Like Stephen, when we are the nearest to the Lord, the more His divine image and His glory shine into our hearts and shine upon our faces morally, the more we shall be like Him now.

Brother Stoney said to Dr. Wolston, “You may think it is a very little thing to look at Christ in glory, but let you or any saint try it, and he is sure, unconsciously, to be growing more and more like Him.” Peter and Paul talk about the grave and death, but John in his epistle never speaks of death. The Lord had said of him, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.” What a sad thing it is to hear of the saints talking as they are on the way to the Lord’s table, as if they were fully sure they were coming away again, whereas God has given us not a vestige of room to expect that such will really be the case. If such a thought is on the mind of any of God’s children they are not in the full, unhindered enjoyment of the place of blessing, and guidance of the Holy Ghost.

The gathering of the Lord’s saints to meet Him at His table {Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 10:21} should always be with the blessed thought accompanying that He will come {1 Cor. 11:26}, and so never speak certainly of returning from that spot. Instead of feasting with Him in unshackled blessing, we seem to be keeping our difficulties, sorrows and trials hanging on us like heavy death palls while we should be free from every thought and be in the full liberty which His blessed presence demands of us. He Himself bids us to have His own joy, that He may have our joy.

Here is another thought too, worth the consideration of every poor failing child of God -- which we all are such more or less -- that more than half the sorrows of man are made up of anticipated sorrow that never comes at all. The joy of the Lord is our strength. The hope of His speedily coming keeps me looking upward and onward, and if He should tarry, I still find He is holding fast to His own promised word. I have His joy and hope which fills my heart with gladness that He has ratified His own word to me thus far and told me by His Spirit that “All things are yours,” and He bids us unitedly by the Holy Ghost to comfort one another with these words. The proper, normal Christian’s sphere is to be abounding in hope.

Brother Cecil asks, “How do you purify yourself?” By just remaining constantly in the light of His blessed presence who has eyes as a flame of fire, and His feet as fine brass, so that my every thought, word and deed is measured by the standard of Himself, and His claims of holiness. As an
illustration, the husband asks *the wife* when he leaves in the morning to get something done *by the wife* before he returns. Would then a wife who really knew the desire of her husband wait till nearly evening before that thing was carried out? I need not answer; every sincere, affectionate wife would disdain such a thought. She seizes the first opportunity of putting everything exactly according to her husband’s wish so that, come when he will, she may not feel the smart of a glance of his eye. Now for the comparison: have you and I got everything in our spiritual testimony ready for the Lord’s return? So, practical holy walk in any child cannot be maintained except there is the constant expectation of *His return*, and what is so indicative of the Lord’s being near at hand as the present outside and inside testimony that professional Christendom is now giving -- quarreling and drinking is the picture of Cain’s religion of the world.

Mary at the grave on that notable morning of the resurrection, and John in his epistle to the saints have the conscious closeness of the Lord’s presence, that they do not even name Him, Christ of God, but it is He and He alone, as if there was nobody else to speak of. “When *He* shall appear, *we* shall be like *Him*.” In John 17:19 how precious to find He sanctifies Himself for our sakes that we might be sanctified through *the truth -- set apart for God*. What a wonderful thought! How our souls should pause and in solemn, silent meditation in His presence ask ourselves how much we each individually for ourselves understand and realize this wondrous fact. In James 4:8 it was needful to warn, for the spiritual condition of the saints had become so corrupted: “Purify your hearts, ye double minded.” It is the moral power of purifying my soul in His presence for His glory; for God’s standard of holiness is the state and measure in which Christ is, in all His perfect purity in glory. He never knew anything else but companionship with God, except when sin was imputed to Him on the cross which is not necessary to say. It was His voluntary act to bring guilty man’s case in God’s presence and settle it by laying down His own life’s blood; but in the believer’s walk, God sets forth a glorified Christ as His standard of purity and we -- every believer -- are to purify ourselves even as He is *pure*. A wonderful thought -- a man on earth and a Man in glory, even Christ Jesus; to know ourselves united! And the proof of my knowing myself united with Him is effective of producing holiness.

How then can a saved sinner take up the law as his rule of life? Sin is lawlessness; it is a violation of God’s will, which, if I deny or sin against, proves at once that the fact that I am crucified with Christ has not had its proper place in my soul; and more, a creature has no right to a will. The *Creator* alone has an unlimited, indisputable right to a will. Man was pronounced dead on the cross in the Person of Christ, and it is true because He was there, though perfectly *sinless*, yet was my substitute and God has
declared that man is dead as to his nature, dead as to practice and dead as to avoiding results. Nothing but the grace of God in providing the blessed Lord Jesus could meet his case. Whether under law or without law (Rom. 2) -- no law or lawlessness -- it makes no difference as to what man is as he stands before God. Consequently, no man will be in hell without a conscience; for the cross and He who hung upon it has been the evidence to God and to man as to his real enmity toward God Himself. So the Lord could truly say: “hated Me and My Father.” John 5 is again a blessed testimony. He (Christ) was manifested to take away our sin, and in Him was no sin.

How often does one meet with some who would try to maintain the idea that Christ could be tempted, 55 but reasoning upon the same ground as the theologians, it infers He must have been the same as Adam. But there was no sin stained scene when Adam fell; and Adam stood in innocence. But the Lord Jesus came right into the midst of evil and banished it on every hand; the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached, and more -- “blessed is he whosoever is not offended in Me.” And He alone could say too, “The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me.” The second Man stands in the midst of ruin, untouched; and that is where we are if we are abiding in Him. Man cannot bring a clean thing out of unclean thing; but God can, for He by the Angel, said to the virgin, “That Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). Christ had not a mortal body; but He had a human body! What sorrow and difficulty often comes in through entertaining a wrong conception of the incarnation of Jesus as the Son of God, taking human nature (1 John 3:6). The devil is a liar from the beginning. But the practical walk of the believer abideth in Him, sinneth not -- is quite another thing. His seed (Christ's) remaineth in him, for it is based on what Christ is and in unbroken communion with Him, is never anticipated by God the Father, Son or Holy Ghost to lose a sense of what Christ has been and is to him.

In John 15 the vine is a figure of the good effects of abiding in Christ. My mind, heart and body should be perfectly under His control, the Holy Ghost directing that new nature to which everything should be subordinate, for He, Christ, is my life. “Sinneth not” is the negative side. The fruit bearing in John 15 is a positive thing -- the fruit of the fact that eternal life is in me now, down here. It has nothing at all to do with the Church; it is individual responsibility. How could God admit sin when He gave His Son to put it away? Can He then in the smallest degree allow it in me? Salvation is one thing; holiness is another. A man may have salvation and not have

55. {That is, that Christ could be tempted to sin -- which He could not be. He was impeccable, not merely able not to sin, but the truth is that He was not able to sin. He is the God-man.}
holiness. The Lord has provided it for him and offers it to him (1 John 3:7). “Let no man deceive you” (1 John 3:7). “His seed remaineth in him” (v. 9). What is it that manifests the claims of their nature? Their behavior. Abel proved his claim by offering a lamb; Cain his estimate in a broad abstract by offering (not life, but) death, his own righteousness, so that on either side, the walking or doing gives evidence of the standing, and sadly true it is that calling each other “Brother” now has been terribly misapplied and misunderstood. Verse 14 accepts exclusively brethren in Christ. The character of Cain in unrighteousness and self-will -- just the character of the world now, in this present day of professing Christendom, which will enable a person to get on best in this world -- is the one that will get the most patronized. Rom. 7 is the walking of a bad nature, but this is the devil forcing into effect that nature which is corrupt and condemned of God. “No flesh can glory in His presence.” The greatest opponent to Christ was a Jew under all his privileges, not Cain. Gentile power was taken up in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and has been allowed more or less by God in His sovereignty to hold the government of the world since.

1 John 3:16. We can only know and show love according to the measure by which we know Him, instead of taking the lives of God’s children, as the Roman Catholics and Protestants did some time back because of what they did not believe in or did not know about the Church. The Word of God is that we should lay down our lives for the brethren. There is no negative work, but positive good, or positive evil must necessarily be the inevitable development of the believer, or of the infidel or professor. Let us then be more in His blessed presence within the veil that the light of His presence may have such a divine effect upon our souls, learning alone of Him what was that love of Him who laid down *His life for us*, and gaze into that blessed One’s face while going out in His service, that He Himself may so absorb our souls, so that no other object may take our attention. He and His glory are indeed worth all our love, and His Person alone is worth gazing upon. May our good Lord thus keep us and bless us for His precious name’s sake.

**COPY OF NOTES FROM**

**A NOTEBOOK OF J. N. DARBY**

**1 John 4**

7. Born of God (for love is of God) and (so) knows God (v. 8), for God is love.
9. Love manifested in giving life through the Son.
10. Love manifested in sending the Son to be propitiation (not law but grace).
11. We ought to love one another.
12. God dwells in us, and so love is perfected in us.
13. We know we dwell in Him, and He in us by the Spirit given. Our present state inferring duty.
14. Seen and testify that the Father sent the Son, Savior of the world.
15. God dwells in every one who confesses Jesus Son of God, and He in God.
16. We have known and believed the love (that He) hath to us—God is love. He that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.
17. Love perfected with us in being as He is, in this world.
18. No fear in love -- perfect love casts it out.
19. We love (not we ought to) Him because He first loved us (Here first, love to Him).
20, 21. Tests of love, and obedience called for. We have the nature (then the work in grace which proves it) the dwelling of God in us. The perfectness of testified love in that we are His and so boldness in (the) day of judgment -- our relative, not our essential state.
NOTES ON REVELATION

Note the incense altar is found in Revelation only in ch. 8, and the censer or incense vessel, *libanotos*; this not in ch. 4 where power and judgment -- government is presented to us. Nor have the elders any censers, *libanoton*, in ch. 5. This belonged to Him who was at the altar of incense. They might be given *thumiamata* (incense) for their bowls or saucers, but they had no *libanoton* (censer) or altar of incense. They are priests and offer the prayers, but they offer no prayer, no incense of their own. They add nothing and give efficacy to nothing. The angel in ch. 8 *do* (give) to the prayers of the saints. There the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints, *tais p.t.a.* (to the prayers of the saints).

The action of the angel in ch. 8 is quite a different thing. Further it would seem as if the sea being of glass marked that there was no more cleansing with water. Would it not show that though essentially holiness must be the same, namely consecration and separation to God, yet that it had formally a different character? This is separation to God while Christ is hidden and while it is His being all Himself for His own sake. It is not forcing out by excess and growth of wickedness but in the power of the Spirit because good is good. Hence when the last plagues are coming out they stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire. They have part in the necessary witness of the place but it is through the application of tribulation to them.

Judgment has the place of the secret separation of the Spirit in making Christ all within, through the result He produced (original priestly washing was not in the laver; that was when they were priests). In ch. 4 the holiness of heaven was fixed and stable as a result. It was not there washing for (or) in the wilderness yet according to the sanctuary. In ch. 4 the elders are settled in their place around the throne according to that. In chapter 15 it is only made good (as men say) by the tribulation. They have come through the fire and are there. The 24 elders peacefully there, as their place through grace. They had taken death as their portion, pilgrims and strangers on the earth. The 144,000 of ch. 14 come in as an additional chapter. They have not millennial quietness as their life but having suffered like (not with) Christ on earth they are with Him in His earthly glory wherever He goes.

Note in Rev. 9 the first woe applies to the body of unrepentant Israel, not the servants of God. Compare Rev. 9:4 and 7:3. The second woe applies to the Roman earth as I suppose, that is, the third part of men. The first: Satan’s direct power and false prophecy; the second: more external but the false prophecy also. They are killed, not tormented merely as in the first woe. Idolatry and wickedness characterize the second class -- inhabitants of
the earth, apply to both, the unrepentant Jew and the idolatrous wicked
dweller upon a Christless earth -- the earth where Rome had its influence.

A FEW HELPFUL REMARKS
FOR THE PRESENT TIMES

This is the time of trial for the beloved brethren gathered to the name, and
for the name, of the Lord Jesus, because the pretensions and energy of man
are strongly manifesting themselves. It is not an easy thing to content
ourselves with being simply that which we are in reality before God. Times
of “revival” make manifest the thoughts of many hearts; but to learn, in a
day of grace, to be still, and know that God is God, is completely above the
education of the flesh.

The spirit of the age affects many Christians, who labor to restore old
things for the service of God, instead of being broken before Him by the
sense of their downfall. I do not at all doubt their sincerity, but I fear that
they have not judged themselves and they do not know the true state of ruin
surrounding them; so that they cannot have an adequate confidence in the
living God alone, as the God of all resources, in the midst of a scene where
man has failed everywhere and in everything. We ought never to be afraid
of the whole truth. To confess openly that which we are in the presence of
that which God is, is always the way to peace and blessing. Even when only
two or three are together before God, if it be thus with them there will be no
disappointments nor deluded hopes. If the wells dug in Abraham’s days have
been filled and stopped up by earth, we have to do with a God who can bring
water out of the stricken rock, and make it flow in the dry desert, to refresh

56. Printed by Bible Truth Publishers and used here by permission.
His thirsty, weary people. I do not envy the labor of those who dig channels in the sand for water-courses which, after all, may take another direction.

God’s ways of acting, in all times of blessing, consist in reproducing the glories and the work of the Lord Jesus. The darker becomes the long night of apostasy, the more distinctly the Light of Life makes itself seen. The word for the remnant is, “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.” He is the only center of gathering. Men may make confederations amongst themselves, having many things for their object or aim, but the communion of saints cannot be known unless each line converges towards this living Center. The Holy Ghost does not gather saints around mere views, however true they may be, upon that which the church is, upon that which it has been, or that which it may be, on the earth, but He always gathers them around that blessed Person, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20).

One may be certain that Satan and the flesh will seek to resist this work and this path of the Lord, or seek to overturn them.

We need to be watchful against boasting, as people do in these days; need to be still in the presence of God. There is much independence and self-will almost everywhere. “We shall do great things” is the most inappropriate cry we can hear just at this time, when the light has shown how little we have done. God would have us know His truth as that which delivers us.

You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32).

This liberty is not that of the flesh, because it penetrates our hearts with all the reality of a separation well known to God, who is holy. We enter, unhinderedly into this position, with hearts broken and humiliated. If any one speaks of separation from evil, without being humiliated, let him take care lest his position becomes simply only that which at all times has constituted sects, and produced, doctrinal heresy.

As to our service we have seen our precious Lord and Master, in profound self-abasement, wash the feet of His disciples, making Himself an example -- for whom? For us, surely. Now I know, at the present time, of no service which is worthy of Him, or agreeable to Him, if it is not done in humiliation. This is not the time to speak of a place for ourselves. If the church of God, so dear to Christ, is dishonored in this world; if it is scattered, ignorant, afflicted, he who has the mind of Christ will always take the lowest place. True service of love will seek to give according to the need, and because of their need, he will never think of slighting the objects of the Master’s love because of their necessity. Men taught of God, for His
service, go forth from a place of strength, where they have learnt their own weakness and their own nothingness. They find that Jesus is everything in the presence of God, and Jesus is everything for them in all things, and everywhere. Such men, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, are real helps for the children of God, and they will not contend for a place, or a distinction, or for authority, amongst the scattered flock. The communion of a man with God about the church will show itself in a willingness to be nothing in himself, and such a one will rejoice in his heart to spend and to be spent.

In our personal recollections we have lessons to learn with fear and trembling. May the thought of power never occupy our hearts too much. “Power belongeth unto God.” Nearly twenty years ago there was a time of great excitement; everywhere people sought power, and would have crossed the seas to find it. Many thought of the church, but it was rather the church in power. Feeling that power was lost, they said: How are we to regain it? Thenceforth they again occupied themselves with earthly things, as if they could work deliverance on this earth. Many remember how, at that time, Satan was able to bring man forward; the result has been the same everywhere.

Whatever was the form that such efforts adopted, they were followed by deceptions and invariably it was agreed to renounce them (for all failed of their end), and nothing but sects was the result. There were deadly marks of hostility against the Lord Jesus; or else, if His name was left without spot, the path was prepared for another terrible result, namely, to annul the presence of the Holy Spirit who alone can glorify Jesus.

The great Shepherd will not forget the work done in His name, with a willing heart, for His beloved sheep, so poor and needy. Abundant praise and an unfading crown of glory, in the day of His appearing, will be the portion of those who act thus. God will remember all He can remember, and nothing will lose its reward. I am not surprised at the disappointments which have followed all the efforts people have made in the church to introduce some formal system of ministry, authority or government. God cannot permit us to enlarge the ground upon which, in these days, He is pleased to find and to bless His saints. We know well what is the way of the flesh which has never concerned itself at all about the fall of the church: it is to seek to occupy a position among men in the place where God has never granted it.

There is great instruction in the conduct of Zerubbabel, recounted in the book of Ezra. The son and heir of David takes his place with the remnant returned from the captivity; he is content to labor at Jerusalem, without throne or crown. Building the altar of the Lord and the house of God, he served God and his generation in all simplicity. Heir of the place which Solomon had occupied in days of prosperity and glory, he spoke not of his
birth, nor of his rights. However, he is faithful in all the path of separation, of sorrow, and of conflicts he is obliged to pass through.

May the Lord give us to be more and more confident in Himself, in these days of trial. “When I am weak, then am I strong” {2 Cor. 12:10}, is a lesson Paul had to learn by a very humiliating process. If we speak of our testimony upon the earth, it will soon be evident that all is but weakness, and, like the seed lost upon the wayside, the testimony will likewise end to our shame. But if the living God has by us a testimony to His own glory upon the earth, then the sense of weakness will only bring us more directly into the place of His power. An apostle with a thorn in the flesh learnt the sufficiency of the grace of Christ. A little remnant is re-united and gathered, having nothing wherein it can glory in the flesh; but it is thus that it is ready to remain faithful to the name of Jesus, when that which seemed to be something before men has failed.

Neither the anger, nor the prudence, nor the pretensions of man can do anything, in the state of confusion in which the church is now. I freely own that I have no hope in the efforts which many make to assure themselves an ecclesiastical position. When the house is ruined in its foundations by an earthquake it matters little how one tries to make it an agreeable dwelling-place. We shall do better to remain where the first discovery of the ruin of things by man’s deed has placed us -- with our faces in the dust. Such is the place which belongs to us by right, and, after all, it is the place of blessing. In Revelation, it is in falling at the feet of Christ that John learns the actual state of the churches. Afterwards he was taken to heaven {Rev. 4:1}, that from thence he might see the judgments coming subsequently upon the earth; but the evil in the church cannot be well known, unless one is humbled at the feet of Jesus.

I have read of a time when several were gathered together in such sorrow of heart, that for a long time they could not utter a single word; but the floor of the meeting-room was wet with their tears. If the Lord would grant us such meetings again, it would be our wisdom to frequent these houses of tears. “They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy” (Psa. 126:5). It is not only for the earthly remnant that this is true, it is also written for us. I would willingly take a long journey to join these afflicted ones; but I would not go a step with the object of receiving from the hands of most excellent men power to overturn all today, and reconstruct tomorrow.

All we can do is to walk watchfully, but quietly thinking of the interests of the Lord Jesus, and having nothing for ourselves, nothing to gain, and nothing to lose. The path of peace, the place of testimony, is in seeking to please God. We need to watch over ourselves, lest, after having been preserved from the corruption of the age by the very precious truths revealed to us in our weakness, we should be taken in the net of presumption, or
thrown into *insubordination*. These are things which God can never recognize or tolerate, since we are called to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” {Eph. 4:3}.

The word of God remains the same today as always. Nothing which has happened has changed His purpose, which is to glorify the Lord Jesus. If we are humble before Him, all that which is for the glory of Christ will be of the greatest importance to us. What would we more?

* * * * *

I have no doubt that if we kept close to Christ, His Spirit would guide us in our intercourse with others. We are not always conscious of divine guidance even when it is there; but the word comes from Christ to the souls we have to say to, even if rejected . . . But our part is to keep close to Christ, so that it should be “not I, but Christ liveth in me” {Gal. 2:20}, and thus He acts in our thoughts and ways without our, at the moment, thinking of Him directly; but we always have the consciousness of speaking for Him, and of His presence.

The Spirit and the word cannot be separated without falling into fanaticism on the one hand, or into rationalism on the other -- without putting oneself outside the place of dependence upon God and of His guidance.

THE GLORIES OF THE CROSS

If God be righteous, and judges sin, can He exercise love to us in all its fullness -- towards us who are sinners? Now here it is the death and atonement of Christ come in. The blessed Lord willingly undertook this task, to glorify God perfectly, and prove infinite love to us, and yet maintain God’s perfect righteousness. He bore our sins -- was made sin for us. He drank the bitter cup of death and judgment which our sins had filled. He gave Himself for us, and was bruised for our iniquities, and wounded for our transgressions. Was not this love? Oh! reader, was it not? Yet there God’s righteous judgment against sin was fully maintained, so that what I see there was not the least allowance of it. What could show it like the death of the Son of God when He was made sin for us? Could He not be spared? How then can any, persevering in rejecting mercy through Him? Was it possible this cup could pass unless He drank it? It could not. For whom then shall it, if not drunk by Him?

And see how the notion of mere dying under the hands of wicked men destroys all the glory of the cross. I read, Christ gave Himself, offered up Himself. Here I find the holy perfectness of His own soul in a way that nothing else shows. What love! What devotedness! What giving Himself up
to the Father’s glory! “No man taketh it from me,” says He, “but I lay it down of myself” (John 10:18).

The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do (John 14:30, 31).

You will say, How could this glorify His Father -- to give Himself up to a cruel death and wrath? Because of your sins: they made it necessary. If love was to be shown to you, it must be in this way; God’s holiness must be maintained -- the impossibility of allowing sin. You (if indeed through grace you believe) are not to be taken away from before Him, because of your sins and defilement. Instead of that, as they could not be allowed, they were taken away, that you might be in peace before Him and know this God of love.

God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

And see how the cross glorifies God in everything. If I look at it as a sacrifice for sin, as Christ giving Himself up, that God may be fully glorified. And how glorious Christ Himself is there, by His doing it! For, remember, if it was indeed a bitter cup, yet Christ never was so glorified as there. Never was His glorious perfection so shown out; so that, though it may seem a hard task to impose on Him, yet it really was, as to His work, His greatest glory: as He says,

Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him (John 13:31).

For it was a glorious thing to Him who accomplished it, that, so to speak, God should be debtor for His glory to Him who thus gave Himself. For indeed it was a common counsel between the Father and the Son, God’s will was He should come, and His will was to come. “Lo, I come to do thy will.”

But see how He was glorified in it. Is God righteous in judgment against sin? The cross has fully shown it forth. Is God perfect love to the poor sinner? The cross has shown it forth. Did the majesty of God require that it should be vindicated against rebellious sin? The cross has done it; yet the sinner is spared. Is God truth, and has said that death should follow sin, the devil saying, as he yet does, it should not? Where such a witness that it must, as when the blessed Son of God died as man on the cross? Yet He has obtained for us life by it, beyond all the power of death and judgment. Were our sins pressing upon us, so that we did not dare look up? They are gone. I can see God in the light without fear: He has proved His love, and I can enjoy His love. And just when man showed his hatred to God in slaying His Son, God has shown His love to man in giving Him to put away the sin shown in slaying Him. Where was obedience shown as on the cross? He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8).

Where love to us? Where the desire to glorify His Father? Thus the Son of
man was glorified, and God, in every part of His nature, glorified in Him: His love, His righteousness, His truth, His majesty, all displayed.

And what is the consequence? The power and fear of death are gone, for the believer. It is but the entrance into paradise for him. The sins that he feared, as bringing judgment, are taken away and blotted out. He knows God loves him -- so loves him that He has not spared His own Son to save him; he knows that He has nothing to impute to him, for Christ has borne all. God is faithful and just to forgive him his sins.

And yet, is sin a light thing to one who has this perfect peace with the God of love? It has cost the death of the Son of God. True, it is put away; he is justified; he has perfect peace with God. But how? By that which makes sin the most frightful thing, to his soul, that possibly could be; and knits his heart to Jesus, who was willing to suffer thus to put it away.

Whether we think of God’s glory, or Christ’s glory, or the practical effect on our hearts, it is Christ’s cross, as being a real sacrifice for sin, that is really efficacious. It glorifies God, infinitely, honors Christ, and perfectly blesses man; telling him he is the object of God’s infinite love, and yet maintaining righteousness in his heart. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh; and, as to His Person, supremely glorious in dignity. This indeed enabled Him to do such a work; but never, as to His work and service, was He so glorious as He was upon the cross. I speak to you feebly, beloved reader; but is it not the truth -- words, as Paul says, of truth and soberness? And this thing was not done in a corner.

And now mark too the blessed efficacy of it for me, a poor sinner. There stood sin, death, judgment, just wrath, in my way. My conscience told me it was so, and God’s word plainly declares it. Satan’s power bound it down, so to speak, upon my soul; while his temptations encouraged me to go on in what led to it. God’s law, even, did but make the matter worse for me, if I pretended to meddle with it; for its holiness condemned my transgressions. And now, for him that believes, all is taken out of the way. Sin gone, death gone as the terrible thing I awaited (Christ has turned it into a gain) -- I shall be with Christ; judgment, Christ has borne it; wrath, there is none for me: I am assured of perfect love. Christ, in making me partaker of the efficacy of His death, has set me beyond all these things in the light, as God is in the light (having loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood, and made me a king and priest to God and His Father {Rev. 1}). In rising, He has shown me this new place into which He has brought me; though as yet, of course, I have it only by faith and participation in that life, in the power of which He has risen. Yes, dear reader, the believer is saved, he has eternal life, he is justified; he waits, no doubt, to be glorified, but he knows Him who has obtained it all for him, and that He is able to keep that which he has committed unto Him until that day.
There is a judgment (terrible it will be to them that have despised mercy and rejected the Savior); but to those who, as poor sinners, have submitted to God’s righteousness, believing in His love,

Christ will appear the second time, without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28).

That is, having quite put sin away for them the first time, He will come the second time without having anything to say to it as to them, for their full possession of the glorious result. As He said Himself,

I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:2, 3).

That is a judgment, if such you will call it, which shall be the everlasting and infinite joy of them that share in it.

Weigh that passage I quoted just now. Christ has appeared once in the end of the world . . . to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment --

there is the natural portion of the sinner --

so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:26-28).

The first time He came, He bore the sins; the second, He comes apart from that for the full salvation of them that look for Him.

Reader, are you prepared to give up all this for the notion that He fell a victim to self-seeking men who put Him to a violent death? Did He not offer Himself up as a sacrifice to put away sin? Did not the Lord bruise Him? Did He not say,

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matt. 26:46).

Does not your soul need to have sin put away? Is not the love of God shown in the way you need it, by Christ’s being thus given? Has He not glorified God in it? Has He not been glorified in it and by it, bitter as it was? Is it not peace to know He has done it, and put away sin for us by it? Does not the word so present it to us? The Lord give you to believe it in truth. It has given me peace, perfect, yet increasing peace, these five-and-twenty years, while He has all the glory; and I know God is love, who has purged my conscience from sin. May you, dear reader, be enabled so to know it, and with as much joy! If you do, you know what I say is true. May the grace of God make Him, who has wrought it for us, more precious to us both! It is a blessing and a joy to think we shall have an eternity in which to praise Him for it.

Even if I think of the way good and evil were brought out by it, there is nothing like the cross. Everything moral is there brought to a glorious center,
from which it flows down on every poor believing heart, in the proof that evil has been met and put away, and that good has triumphed. Where has death been shown in its terrible power as in the cross? Where has sin, in all its terrible character and effects? Where do I see man’s hatred against goodness itself, and the Son of God bearing sin before God, yet where was eternal life obtained for us, such as death can never touch? Where were goodness and love displayed as there? Where were righteousness and obedience accomplished in spite of all? Where was sin brought so immediately under God’s eye and punished, as there? Yet where was it put away, and His perfect delight in absolute obedience at all cost, so drawn out? Where was the bowing in weakness under death shown as in Him whose soul was melted like wax in the midst of His bowels? Yet where the divine strength which carried Him through all that weakness, death, man’s hatred, Satan’s power, and God’s wrath, could accumulate on His head who drank that bitter cup? All this is told us in scripture.

He was crucified through weakness (2 Cor. 13:4).

This is your hour and the power of darkness, said the Lord (Luke 22:53).

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death (Matt. 26:38).

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matt. 27:46).

In a word, would I know what sin is? I look there; righteousness? I look there; hatred without a cause? I look there; love without bounds? I look there; judgment and condemnation of sin? I look there; deliverance and peace? I look there; divine wrath against evil? I look there; perfect divine favor and delight in what infinitely glorified God? I look there. Weakness and death, though willingly bowing under it? It is there; strength, divine, which has met and removed evil? It is there; peace and wrath? It is there also: the world under Satan’s power rising up, to get finally rid of a God of love; and God, by this very act, delivering the world and making peace by the blood of His own Son. As it is said,

That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14, 15).

As I have said, good and evil in all their extremes and forms meet there for the triumph of love in once suffering the evil, that good may have its full force.

Do you ask, reader, Why then are we in such a world still? I will tell you. Scripture tells us, God in grace is still leading souls to profit by and enjoy this. It is a world of misery, and sorrow, and oppression. Did God interfere to change it, He must come in judgment and close the time of mercy; and that He does not do, while yet any have ears to hear. He allows,
therefore, the evil which He will judge, to go on meanwhile. And we, though we may thus have to suffer awhile in the world, ought in this sense to rejoice that it is yet allowed; because it is still a time of mercy extended to others. The end will be everlasting joy in a much better world. Christ is gone to prepare a place for us, and He will come again and take us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also {John 14:1-3}. Thus Peter says,

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

Finally, my reader, you may not have, in peace of soul, been able to contemplate all the glory of the cross. You have a blessed portion yet before you; but remember, it is presented to you, just as you are, for your need in all the grace of it towards a poor sinner. It meets you in your sins, if it infinitely glorifies God. A Jesus dying on the cross for the vilest meets the wants and burdens of the vilest -- comes home through grace to his heart. If his sins are a burden to him, he may see Christ bearing them, that he may be free and have peace.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

And by him, all that believe are justified from all things (Acts 13:39).

Were his “sins as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isa. 1:18). If you are heavy laden, come to Him who came in love to give you rest, and has died in love for you.

The Lord’s peace be with you, dear reader -- be with you, whoever you may be. May you be washed in that blood which cleanses from all sin, and the Lord will preserve you for His heavenly kingdom.
A LETTER ON ATONEMENT

Beloved Brother -- In John 14:9, the Son presents Himself as the display of the Father. Fundamental truth! which every believer receives and rejoices in. Without doubt he who rejects it denies the glory of Him who came to effect atonement, and undermines the atonement itself. It is the dignity of the person which gave divine capacity for the work, and infinite efficacy to the work when accomplished.

But atonement demanded far more than either the divine rights of the Lord, or the sinner’s appropriation of Him and His work by faith apart from works. Hence reasoning from the words of the Lord, which do not touch the question, can only mislead. What does Scripture say of the atonement? Does it not make it depend on the cross of Christ? On His blood shed for the remission of our sins? On His suffering once for sins, Just for unjust, that He might bring us to God? Here is an ample array of clear New Testament testimonies: Rom. 3:25, 4:25, 5:9, 10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4, 3:16; Eph. 1:7, 2:13, 4:32, 5:2; Col. 1:14, 20; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3, 2:9, 14, 9:12, 14, 15, 24-28, 10:5-10, 12-19, 12:24, 13:12, 20; 1 Pet. 1:2, 18-21, 2:24, 3:18; 1 John 1:7, 2:2, 4:10; Rev. 1:5, 5:9, 7:14, etc. Need one add the anticipatory words in the Gospels, Matt. 20:28, 26:28; John 1:29, or other such scriptures?

Yet it may be well to notice briefly a few indisputable types in the Old Testament. The blood of the slain lamb on the paschal night was sprinkled without, not within; on the lintel and door-posts, not for Israel to see, but for God. “When I see the blood, I will pass over” {Ex. 12}. So in the sacrifices the blood was put on the horns of God’s altar, presented to God, never to man. In certain cases men (lepers, priests, etc.) were sprinkled with blood that they might be cleansed, that is, {typically} judicially clean before God. Thus on the greatest of all occasions it was carried in, and put before the mercy-seat, on atonement-day {Lev. 16:14}; but it only the more establishes the principle, that it was for man before God, and not a mere token of God’s love to man. In the New Testament application Christ is declared to have entered in by His own blood. To have come down and died in love to man is equally true, but quite distinct.

There is no doubt, then, of love in God more than in Christ; Scripture is explicit. The Father sent the Son; God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten. But it is equally true that the Son of Man must be lifted up; and that necessity was not merely man’s evil, but God’s word and righteous character and holy nature and majesty which must be vindicated in order to a righteous forgiveness. The cross of Christ meets all this, and much more. He was forsaken of God because of sin (Psa. 22). It was no
question here of the Jews or Gentiles, of Herod or Pontius Pilate, save as guilty persecutors. God too was at the cross, and made Christ sin for us, that we might become His righteousness in Christ. He had suffered for righteousness and holiness and grace before. He suffered for sins then. This is atonement, the sole ground of expiating the guilt of the believer. Nor was this a novel expectation, though a new fact. He was wounded for our transgressions, said the prince of prophets; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

For the transgression of my people was he stricken \{Isa. 53:8\}.

It pleased Jehovah to bruise him: he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, etc. \{Isa. 53:10\}.

He shall bear their iniquities. He bare the sin of many \{Isa. 53:12\}.

Thus law, psalms, and prophets agree; Old and New Testaments alike proclaim Christ’s suffering from God, and before God, because of our sins. The Lord announced it; the apostles -- Paul especially -- are full of it; and not least the beloved disciple, who most presses God’s love which is really enhanced by it, of which the depth and strength are only there known where Christ’s drinking this cup from the Father is owned. Divine love is not all the truth, nor man’s hatred, nor Satan’s power; but deeper than all is Christ’s offering Himself to God as a sacrifice for sins. Love indeed is enfeebled incalculably by not seeing the truth that Christ bore the judgment of our sins at God’s hand. Rather is love degraded into indifference to man’s sins, and disregard of God’s holiness and majesty, and of such warnings as are in Deut. 27:26; Rom. 2:9; Heb. 10:31. The scriptures cited prove, on the contrary, that expiation was essential for God’s honor if He would save guilty man, even though he believed. Judgment was born by Christ that grace might flow out to the sinner. It is therefore now God’s righteousness as well as His grace.

When it is argued, then, that all theology is false which makes the image of the Son different from that of the Father, is it denied that God bruised Christ, and that Christ was forsaken by God? that Christ died in expiation of our guilt before God, who raised Him from the dead? If so, this is abusing one truth to contradict another no less momentous. Justification is by faith, not works; but did Christ accomplish the work typified by the sacrifices for sin on atonement-day? Isa. 53 predicts, and Matthew and Mark record, our Lord’s suffering, as He says, by God’s abandonment of Him, the bitterest of all punishment for our sins. Is God’s punishing, and Christ’s enduring, the same image? I should have thought them the greatest contrast; yet the counsel of peace was between Them both \{Zech. 6:13\}. What has been used,
therefore, is only a misuse of John 14:9, which in truth regards Christ’s person and not His work. To apply it to the cross, so as to get rid of the Lord’s suffering from God for our sins, is really to explain away the Scripture truth and Christian foundation of atonement. If this be not the meaning of the argument, what is?

Further, it is assumed that righteousness in God must be the same thing as in Jesus, and that the assertion of a good quality in the Father, which the Son lacks, in effect denies that the latter is God, or like Him. But this is quite a mistake. Righteousness is, as always, consistency with the relationship in which each stands. Evidently, therefore, as among men it is modified in the servant as compared with the master, in the child with the parent, in the wife with the husband, in the subject with the sovereign, so it is with Him who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking a bondsman’s form, become in the likeness of men, and found in figure as a man, humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death of the cross: wherefore also God exalted Him exceedingly {Phil. 2:5-11}. As man therefore the Son, far from lacking what is the Father’s morally, has what the Father has not and could not have, as He never became incarnate. The righteousness which directs or commands is one thing, that which obeys is another.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

It was His act; yet was it obedience of His Father (John 10:17, 18). The mystery of His person finds its answer in His death. To reason from one aspect of it exclusively, whether divine or human, is to divide the person, to neutralize the work, and to lose the truth. “No one knoweth the Son but the Father.” We must be subject to His word, but to it all, and not to a part only. Jesus is the Son, who is not like God merely (Scripture never saying so), for He really is God, and as fully God as are the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Moreover all the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him does dwell in Him bodily {Col. 2:9}; yet, while the persons in the Godhead have not only unity of nature but one mind and counsel and purpose, so they act distinctly in manifesting it, as we see, e.g., in Matt. 3:16, 17, for they are three as well as one. And though Jesus were Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered {Heb. 5:8}. There could not but be therefore qualities, perfect in their kind, in Him which were not in the Father, nor in Him (the Son) till He took the place of servant as man on earth. Still more is this true of Him on the cross, where He entered on a new work, unique in its character, and infinite in its consequences of grace and glory everlasting, as the sufferings in which it was wrought. This in no way compromises the
Godhead of Christ, any more than it impeaches His manifestation of the Father or expression of God. And the refusal to see distinctness of action in the Father and the Son throughout His course on earth, and, above all, in the cross, tends not indeed to Romanism, but to what is yet worse -- Sabellianism, and thus far more at issue with holy Scripture than with the doctrine of Anselm, which is to me of little or no account.

We must not with the theologians confound purchase with redemption. All the world, all mankind, even the wicked, are bought by Christ’s blood; but none save believers have redemption (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins though the ἀντίλυτρον be περὶ πάντων. Purchase makes all to be His property or slaves; by redemption we are freed from Satan, Christ’s freedmen, to serve God in liberty. Is it seriously questioned by the figure of the King dying in victory for His army, that the blood of Christ shed as a sacrifice for sin was not presented to God as well as for man? It is in vain to reason on God’s loving the world, and so loving it as to send His Son to give the believer eternal life {John 10:10}; but this is distinct from the other truth, that He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself {see John 1:29}. Now sacrifice in Scripture is to God, and never to the creature, which is heathenism, as the negation of sacrifice is infidelity. And assuredly the work of redemption, the forgiveness of sins, is by blood, by suffering atoningly on the cross, not by all authority in heaven and earth conferred on the Risen Man by God. And it is important to see that when all is made subject by Christ, and He hands back the kingdom, it is that not the Father but God (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) should be all in all {1 Cor. 15:25-27}.

Yours ever in Christ,

* * * * *

Pride is the greatest of all evils that beset us, and of all our enemies it is that which dies the slowest and hardest.

. . . God hates pride above all things, because it gives to man the place that belongs to Him who is above, exalted over all. Pride intercepts communion with God, and draws down His chastisement, for “God resists the proud.”
NOTES OF READINGS

Luke 15

We sometimes think we ought to be this, or we ought to be that. This is the pride of man’s heart.

There is sovereign grace for the vilest. It is all true we have sinned, we know that we do not love our neighbor as ourselves. The law was no sooner given, than the golden calf was made, and it was broken.

You may talk of politics, of anything, everything, in any kind of society, but bring in Christ -- “there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Man showed the climax of his wickedness when he crucified Christ. God has shown His love where we showed our hatred. I say, “My sins brought Him there.” Here I get righteousness against sin, and love to man. I find Man in all His perfectness on the cross.

The third parable is most important to unite them all. The first two, God seeking sinners; in the last, the grace that receives them -- love and goodness triumphant over all. Who is the happy person in the first? “The shepherd.” And who in the second? “The woman”; and in the third, “the father.” We do not get the value of the third parable without the first two.

The shepherd shows love and care for the sheep, he puts it on his shoulders. I have no doubt the shepherd is a type of Christ, the second parable, of the work of the Holy Ghost; the third, “reception” by the Father. We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. We find the Lord constantly laboring to persuade the disciples of it. Do we believe the Father loves us as He loves Jesus?

The first two parables are the grace and love that sought. But, beloved, who put it into God’s heart? There is not a joy in heaven that we have not got now. I know I have got Christ, and that I have the Holy Spirit. We have been washed from our sins. Everything a poor feeble thing wants, we have got -- the Father’s love, the Son’s love. “Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

There is nothing in heaven that is not the portion of the believer now -- nothing that the heart of God can give, but what we have. Nothing can go beyond “the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.”

Whenever God is pleased to reveal Himself, we get two things -- light and love. Man loved darkness rather than light. When God reveals Himself in Christ, it awakens the conscience, and there is a sense of His goodness -- it was so with Peter when he got a net full of fishes, and he prostrates himself before Christ. The prodigal starts off, but there is as yet no real revelation of God; he is going to say, “make me one of thy hired servants.” He is right so
far, but he does not know God. When he does come, he confesses his sins: “I have sinned,” &c., but the very first thing before he is received in the house, the father is on his neck, kissing him, and he has not even confessed to the father yet. Now he says, “I am no more worthy to be called thy son.” The father answers, “Bring forth the best robe.” That is salvation; I have got an absolute proof of God’s love to me. “God commendeth his love towards us.” He has given His blessed Son, a token of His infinite love. Is the Person that bore my sins still on the cross? No; He is at the right hand of God. The work that saves me was done outside me; I find I had no part in it. “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” {Heb. 10:14}.

He finished the question of salvation the first time He came. The more we think of the cross, the more we shall find that there is nothing like it through all eternity.

Everything in good and evil was brought to an issue there.

In the first two parables, there is the grace that seeks; and in the third, the grace that receives. It is a very different thing to be converted, and to be saved. Conversion is the conscience awakened, but not purged. The prodigal was converted when he thought of going to his father, but he was still in the far country, starving; even when the father met him, he was in his rags. When the best robe was put on him, he was saved; he was not fit for the house till then, could not have gone in till he had the best robe -- Christ.

Conversion is, that I see goodness in God, and sin in myself; I see that He is good, but that I am not fit for Him. Like Peter, when he says, “Depart from me.”

The prodigal son was converted when in famine. He said, “I will arise,” but he has not an idea of the love that was in his father’s heart till he met him. Then we hear no more about the prodigal son, except what was done for him.

There is not a joy in heaven that we have not got now, except the glorified body. We hear no more of the prodigal’s thoughts or feelings, once he gets to the father. After that, all we get is the expression of the father’s love, and his joy. Of course, the prodigal had joy too, but we do not hear about it.

The eldest son, the self-righteous man, has no part in the joy, he would not go in, although the father entreated him; thoroughly selfish, he had not a thought about his brother. It is the Jew, the one who had the promise. In that sense all was his, but he only wanted to make merry with his friends -- no heart to enter into the father’s joy over the restored one.
NOTES OF READINGS

John 14

In the previous chapter the Lord tells them He was going away; here He tells them what would be their comfort -- He went to prepare a place for them -- He would bring them to the same place as Himself -- He would come for them Himself, not send for them. To be conformed to the image of His Son, that is the end of all knowledge. God’s purpose was to give me a place with the Son: He is the first born among many brethren. He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one -- one set -- that is the key of all blessings.

Q. Verse 7. How does He mean “they would have known the Father” -- not in relationship?

A. No, not in relationship till the Holy Ghost came; but He was then the revelation of the Father; purity, holiness, love, all that the Father is, was manifested in Him; and He was going to the Father, so they knew where, and they knew the way, for He was the way. The moment the Son was there, the name of the Father was revealed. God has come out in Christ; when God does come out, it is the Father revealed in the Son.

There are four names by which God revealed Himself. To Abraham it was “God Almighty”; to Israel as “Jehovah”; “Most High” in the millennium; to us, “the Father” revealed in the Son.

“This is the hidden wisdom ordained before the world unto our glory,” not revealed before, but God has revealed it unto us by His Spirit. The revelation is by the Holy Ghost -- the words by which the revelation is communicated -- and it is still the Holy Ghost who works to make me know it.

You do not get the Father in Hebrews; you get the priesthood, we do not get all the privileges, but you can go in, no hindrance to your going (Heb. 9:8, 10:19); but it is God’s throne, not the Father’s.

John 17:21, 22. The world will know it when we appear in glory, but we know it now, though the treasure is in a poor earthen vessel.

Q. But our apprehension of it does not depend on natural intelligence?

A. No, it is spiritually discerned.

Q. Then, as it is by divine power, there is no limit to what we may have, or to what we may enter into?

A. No, only we do not get it all at once, but what we learn makes us capable of getting more.

Q. When He says (John 14:18), “I will come to you,” does He mean by
the Spirit?

A. No, that is Christ Himself (v. 20). He does not say here, “the Father in me”; that had been while He was on earth, but in that day which was coming, they should know another thing -- “I in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” The Father had been revealed in Him -- they were dull -- but the thing was there for them. They never once understood what He said, never on any occasion; when they said they did (John 16), they only proved they did not; they said, “Now speakest thou plainly . . . by this we believe that thou camest out from God”; but they dropped “the Father”: the Lord responds, “Do ye now believe?”

We have the Spirit to enable us to understand -- I in the Father, not He revealed in me. When the Spirit is come, I know that Christ is in me and I in Him; and that gives me everything.

Q. Is there an intended difference between “abide in” and being “in”?

A. It is as a consequence of v. 16 that it is said, “He in me.” We get in Acts 1, 2 what was a great comfort to me; that the Holy Ghost was in Christ after His resurrection -- we shall have the Holy Ghost for ever in us. He is always working. We find Him so working in creation. “By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens”; and there is a remarkable verse in Hag. 2:5 -- in Christ’s miracles, and always.

Q. Is not the Holy Ghost’s work now to bring us (the church) to Christ?

A. The Holy Ghost is like a steamship, with a power to surmount hindrances; not dependent on the wind like a sailing vessel. There are difficulties and hindrances by the way, which He has to surmount; but when He has brought us to heaven, there is nothing to do, but to unfold to us what is there.

Christ never glorified Himself; He says, “Father, glorify thou me.” He even gets the Holy Ghost for us “from the Father.”

“Ye in me” brings us into all that He has received. “Not as the world giveth”; the world gives and consequently possesses no longer, but Christ gives by bringing us into all that He has as Man.

“That I am in my Father” introduces me to heavenly things; they ought to have known the Father in Him down here, but now we know Him in the Father. I am then a son as He is. When on earth, He always spoke of God as “My Father”; when made sin it is “My God”; afterwards it is as God and Father, but it is also, “My God and your God, my Father and your Father.”

In the epistles we get constantly “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father” {Gal. 4:6}: we have the Father’s love and
Christ’s; but, besides, we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son {Rom. 8:29}.

Q. And that is true Christianity?

A. Yes, Christianity is heavenly; everything will be gathered up under one Head, in heaven and on earth {Eph. 1:10}. We have the heavenly place -- “blessed in heavenly places.”

Q. How few have really got that?

A. They have not got into it {practically}, but it is theirs. Many stop at being clear from the first Adam -- the debt paid -- but they do not get hold of being put into the second Adam.

Every one brought into glory is glory to Christ, and I have to rejoice in His glory, not merely that I am glorified.

The love of the Father is the spring and center of the new creation.

The spirit of the world is opposed to the spirit of Christ. I have one thing to desire -- to please Christ here, to walk as He walked.

Another thing we get is God’s rest. He would have us enjoying it; you do not find rest here. If you find a very happy meeting, you may be sure the devil will try and spoil it -- there is no rest here.

Q. How do you understand John 14:23?

A. If we get into their abode, they make us their abode. “If a man love me,” &c.; all in this part of John is conditional. We ought to realize these things. It is from the lack of obedience there is lack of joy.

There are two things in John 14:21; He that “hath” and “keepeth.” Having His commandments is one mark of the obedient child; a careless child will not know them. It is a wonderful thing to know we are in Christ and Christ in us now.

Knowing what He has brought me into is another thing from knowing what He has brought me out of.

Further on we get another thing -- peace; not merely peace of conscience, though we get that, but Christ’s peace, the peace He had when walking through the world.

Q. Would that be the same as the “peace of God” in Phil. 4?

A. No, the peace of God is another thing; nothing can trouble God’s peace, but the thought here is that Christ’s peace fills my heart, walking through a scene where disturbing things are.

And how the blessed Lord reckons on our hearts entering into His joy! “If ye loved me, ye would rejoice.” If you are thinking of yourselves, you will not, but He counts on our hearts.
“At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I
in you.” We are one with Him. If I am in Christ, then Christ is in me. He
appears in the presence of God for you; you ought to appear in the presence
of the world for Him.

It does not say, You “shall be” the epistle of Christ, but, Ye “are”; that
is our responsibility, but it is not connected with our acceptance.

You cannot make yourself my child, though you may be ever so child-
like, you must be in the place first. We are the epistles of Christ.

The Lord give us to know our obligation to the One who loved us in the
common things of life.

THE FATHER’S HOUSE

John 14

This chapter presents an object before our souls so as to give us our portion
in Christ -- a portion in the Father’s house; and secondly how we get into
this place. It wonderfully brings before us our place now that He is absent
from us (though in one sense He is never absent), what the comfort of the
Christian is, and the place into which God has brought him. This is no fresh
truth, but showing where the heart of the Christian is when he really has
Christ before him and the Holy Ghost working in him.

Christ was going away and it was natural that they should be troubled.
At the end of the chapter He says to them in a touching way, “If you thought
of me you would be glad that I am going back to my Father, and out of this
scene of sin and sorrow.” Still, it seemed to them that they were going to
lose Him, and it was natural they should grieve; and so He gives them what
is to be their comfort when He is gone.

Besides this, there is His coming again brought in. “I cannot stay with
you here,” He says, “but I will take you where I am going.” The whole state
of the world was unfit for Him to remain on the earth. He could not rest
here. He could stay for a time and serve, but could not rest. Even long
before, in the Old Testament, it is said, “This is not your rest, for it is
polluted”; but this only led to the blessed truth that He was going to give us
a rest where He could rest, with the Father, and that His work was so
perfect and so effectual that He could give us a place there. We have got a
portion where He has all His glory, all His rest, the fruit of the travail of His
soul.

“In my Father’s house are many mansions {abodes} . . . I go to prepare
a place for you.” Mark this, it was in His Father’s house, the place that He
had as Son, where He was at home, there He was going to prepare my place.
That is unspeakable blessing! It was a comfort, a joy to have Christ with them in the world, but that was by the way. He was going to prepare a place where He was at home. Think what the home of such a heart as His must be! Where all His divine affections would flow out, the divine Son, and yet a Man, and to think that this is the place where He is going to take us. What a wonderful thing! What a home must that be!

“I will come again and receive you unto myself.” Not call you up, that would not do; not send for you, that would not do: but “I will come.” How touching! Though gone into glory and sitting on His Father’s throne, He would leave it to come and fetch us into His Father’s house. His affections are so set on us that He is not satisfied without coming Himself for us; He would not send. It is not only the blessedness to us of His coming Himself for us, but it is the expression of Christ’s heart. He wants it, wants to have us. It is His own interest in us, His love to us. When we know that, then the heart is drawn out to Himself. No doubt it is an unspeakable blessing to us, but it is the revelation of Christ Himself. The one only blessed hope of the Church is that He would come again and fetch us. Confidence is sure that when we are unclothed we shall be with the Lord, “Absent from the body, present with the Lord” {2 Cor. 5:8}. Yet that is not the hope; the hope is that He will come and fetch us. It is on His heart and should be on ours. They went out to meet the bridegroom; that was the condition of the Church at the first. Converted to wait for His Son from heaven, they all went to sleep, wise as well as foolish, and had to be waked by the midnight cry {Matt. 25:6}. It was “My Lord delayeth His coming” {Matt. 24:48}, that brought deadness into the Church, that led to the eating and drinking and drunkenness, beating the men-servants and maid-servants.

This is no truth that may or may not be held. It is essential to the daily life of the Christian. If I am daily expecting Christ I shall not like to be in any place where I would not like Him to find me, and whatever would not please Him I should put off, whatever it is. We are looking for One who loves us. His heart wants us, and He is going to satisfy His heart. It is not prophecy; prophecy has to do with God’s government of this world, and it is very interesting in its place, but it has nothing to do with our hope.

Now comes in another thing. If I am sending my son, or orphan, if you please -- though in one sense we are not left orphans -- to a strange place, the grand point would be for him to know what sort of person it was that I was going to send him to live with. Heaven is a very vague place if I have not got a Person in it. If there were no one there -- if we were to dwell in a holy place by ourselves -- it would not do. We should have no object there before our souls. There would be an immense gap. Of course, it is not possible that it should be so. And so He tells us that we have known the Father if we have known Him, that it is the Father’s house He is going to,
and going to take us to. So the grand point for us is how we can know the Father and perfect satisfaction. It is not like this poor empty world, which, our hearts being made for God, is too small ever to fill them. This object is too big for our hearts. I press this, how close the Father has been brought to us. They had seen Him and so had seen the Father; and when they ask the way, He says, “I am the way.”

“Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father.” They had got the full blessedness, but their poor hearts did not know it. Could He say to us, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me?” Or can we say that our souls have so seen the Father in the Person of the Son, that we can say, “I have found it all, I have got it.” It is that that forms the heart as to its affections. If we have followed Christ in His path down here -- followed Him in the Gospels -- have we learnt the Father’s ways in the Son? He passed all on that He enjoys of the Father to the disciples that they might enjoy it with Him. How much have we learnt of this favor and blessedness which He reveals? I cannot learn anything of it that is not mine, “that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” All things are mine.

The Lord presses this upon them, that “no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” {John 1:18}. It is a wrong thought that He left the Father’s bosom. He never did; He left the Father’s house. You get in Christ the full revelation of what the Father is. The only begotten Son, all the Father’s delight centers in Him, in the bosom of the Father, that is in the full enjoyment of it, He declares the Father. I see He is infinite, and I adore Him, but I see He is the revelation of the Father’s love to me, as I go over His life down here.

It is not merely saying, I am a lost sinner and have been saved, but it is the Holy Ghost dwelling in me, occupying me with Christ, having fellowship with the Father and the Son, that is my portion. When I say I have fellowship with any one down here, I mean I have the same thoughts, the same joys, the same ways. Is that true of us with the Father and the Son? It gives holiness of thoughts of course, and it gives piety of thoughts; that is you get affections according to the relationship you are in, suitable to that which is before your soul.

Supposing my soul is dwelling on the blessed obedience of Christ -- His obedience unto death -- and I am adoringly sitting and contemplating Christ so, does not the Father contemplate it too? Do not I know the Father’s delight in it too? “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life,” and that is why I love Him because He has laid down His Life, in my poor feeble measure, of course, but it is having the same object.
Do not rest satisfied if you do not know what it is to enjoy the Father’s favor in the Son, and to know the Father revealed in all the ways of Christ, that the Son of God is come into the world to reveal the Father. How much have your hearts learnt what He came down to let you know, the love of the Father and the Son?

Now He goes on to the other Comforter. The world ought to have recognized Christ, for He did among them the works that none other man did, but the world has nothing to do with the Holy Ghost. When the Holy Ghost comes there is no personal manifestation of Him to the world. “Whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not neither knoweth Him.” They ought to see His fruits in the disciples of course, but they cannot see Him. But ye know Him for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you. Christ could not abide. It was necessary that He should put Man in heaven and send the Holy Ghost down. It is now not merely the revelation of the Father and the Son, but it is the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. Christ dwelt with, but not in His disciples, the Holy Ghost dwells in us.

Now I get another thing, that being sprinkled by the blood of Jesus Christ and perfectly clean the Holy Ghost can take up His abode in us. It was not simply that a man was born again -- being born again is not righteousness before God. There is a mixture, my poor flesh is there. I may hate the evil, hate myself for it, but it does not cleanse the conscience, but when I get the work of Christ outside myself, then it is according to the value God has of the blood of Christ that I am clean in His sight. In virtue of Christ being at the right hand of God my righteousness, the Spirit of God can come and take up his abode in me. Now He abides, now we get the power in us. Our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost. What a thought! Who that thought of it could use his body for sin, who that thought of it could deck it out with vanities? We forget it or we never could, this wonderful thought that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost! If we just think of that what servants of Christ we should be in everything. We should be so careful not to grieve the Spirit. God dwelling in us as a Guest, what a thought! See the effect of that when I receive the Holy Ghost. “In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father.” He does not add here, “and the Father in Me.” The world was the place where they needed to know that. When they wanted to know about the Father, then it was, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” But now it was to know that this Man -- this “carpenter’s son,” whose visage was marred more than any man’s, who was treated as a malefactor, who underwent the outrages of man -- that He is in the Father, and one with the Father. It brings God to us, and us to God.

And now mark what follows “Ye in Me,” “Ye shall know this.” I do not want this simply as a truth, but do you know, are you living in the consciousness that you are in Christ and Christ in you? Are you living day
by day in that consciousness? Is that your life? It is our whole place now; we are in Christ, and in the presence of God. It is not only that He is in the presence of God between God and us to intercede for us, but we are in Him there, and the favor that rests on Him rests on us. I am in Christ Himself before God, and, moreover, Christ is in me. Now I get the standard of walk. He is before God for me and I in Him, and I am before the world for Him and He in Me. This gives us the measure of our walk down here. If it is true that you are in Christ, Christ is in you, and now let me see Him. I look to see nothing in your walk, or ways, or manner, or anything about you that is not Christ. Do you manifest Christ in everything? In your walk, and ways, and dress and everything?

The heart sees Him now. All that made God delight in Him we are called to esteem and to apprehend by the Holy Ghost, “because I live ye shall live also.” If Christ is my life, He must die before I can die. If I look up to God, divine favor rests upon me. I am in Christ. If I want to know how to walk, Christ is in me and I am to show Him.

Then He closes this chapter in a way that is wondrously touching. I am to be concerned about His happiness. The place He has set us in is His own, as sons with the Father, the righteousness of God in Him. He is our life, and then, having put us in His own place, He leaves us His path. I ask you where your heart’s time is spent? Is it spent in Christ or in tittle-tattle or what not? What springs up when we meet one another, is it Christ or what is in Christ? Or is it the tittle-tattle of the world? I am not talking of evil, I am supposing you know Him and are not going on in sin. But when the pressure of what you have to do is taken off, does Christ come forth?

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” The way that Christ gives is to bring us into the enjoyment of all that He enjoys Himself. “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” He leaves us His own path.

There is such a wonderful expression here of how He identifies Himself with us and expects us to identify ourselves with Him: expects our affections to be occupied with Him. I know no such expression, showing how near he has come to us, how near He has brought us to Himself, as this. “If you are thinking of yourselves,” He says, “you will be sorry that I am going to leave you. If you are thinking of Me you will be glad that I am going back to my Father’s house.”

The Lord give us to have our eye resting on Him, on the fulness of grace in Him, so that knowing what He is going to take us into, we may know Him in us now; in Christ and Christ in me; and know His strength to go on, showing Him forth.
AN ADDRESS ON JOHN 14

It is remarkable the pains the Lord takes to give us the sense of the way He has associated Himself with us and us with Himself; and how His heart goes out that our hearts may believe in His love, that He is interested in us and in our being with Him. In His rejection His heart would not rest and be satisfied unless He felt they had the consciousness of being associated with Himself.

The history of the Gospels is the history of His Person passing through this world, that would not have Him if He was that Person. Then He labors to persuade His own that He cares perfectly and completely for them -- that He labors for them, and cannot be satisfied without having them with Himself.

When they came to Peter and said, “Doth not your Master pay tribute?” as a good Jew, Peter says “Yes.” Jesus says, “Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?” Peter says, “Of strangers.” Jesus replies, “Then are the children free. Notwithstanding lest we should offend them... take and give unto them, for Me and thee.” We get the Lord showing Divine knowledge and Divine power, yet putting Peter along with Him. His own Person is always guarded but they were both children (Matt. 17:24-27).

So at John’s baptism; in the first step of the remnant, the Lord takes it with them, and man’s place is shown in the one Man, upon whom consequent upon what He was in Himself, heaven must open. It is the first time you get the whole Trinity brought out, the moment He has taken His place as man amongst men.

Then man has to overcome Satan and He says, “I must go there too” (Matt. 4:1-10).

Then you get man’s place shown out in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elias are in the glory talking familiarly together. There again His Person is guarded -- they disappear. “This is my beloved Son, hear Him.” You get Him being this Divine Person whether in the lowliest place, or in the heavenly glory, but always bringing His disciples into the same.

So in John 20, who was it that was told the highest position that can be thought of? Who was the vessel of the revelation to minister it? Not the Apostles, but Mary Magdalene. Attached to Christ’s grave she cannot leave it. If she had not Him, she had nothing. She gets the revelation and communicates it to the Apostles. You will find always through Scripture, that where there are those who cling to His Person, there divinely given knowledge is found. If you want to know keep close to Christ. It was not in
order to know that John was so close to Him (John 13): he was there before.

Divine affections are connected with the work of the Lord, who had been thus drawing out their hearts to cling to Himself, and was now going away. They were troubled. The thing that He takes up still is their having to part with Him. He was going to the Father. “Very well, I cannot give you up -- I must make you fit to be with Me.”

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet.

“If I cannot be with you, you must be with Me, and I cannot have a spot in heaven.” They were clean “through the word I have spoken unto you.” But He cannot have them picking up dirt on the road, He must wash them. He became a Servant when He became a Man. Having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end, that is out and out -- right through. He will gird Himself and make them sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them even in glory. He makes Himself Minister of the blessing. His heart is not colder there than here, and this makes it doubly blessed to us. If my mother gives me a trifle I would not part with it for the world. There is not a joy we shall have in heavenly things that Christ will not give. He never ceases to be a Man nor to have Divine love in His heart.

In the first three Gospels Christ is presented to the world to be received, but this is not so with John. In John 1 the world knew Him not -- His own received Him not. Therefore you find electing grace in John. John 8 is the rejection of His word; John 9 of His work: John 10, “I will have my sheep in spite of all.” Having been finally rejected in word and work you get Him owned in all the characters He was entitled to. John 11, as Son of God in the resurrection of Lazarus: John 12, riding on an ass into Jerusalem as a testimony that He was Son of David. God took care that He should have that. Then Greeks come up desiring to see Him, and He says, “The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified.” But if He takes this larger, fuller place He must die. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone” {John 12:24}.

In John 14, it is what He tells them for their comfort while He is away. First, He is coming back again. Ye believe in God as an object of faith, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house there are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come to receive you to Myself. I cannot stay with you, but I am not going to be alone up there; there are many mansions, I will come to receive you.

In consequence of that you get two quite distinct things. First the object before the disciples -- what they ought to have known then: second what they
could not know until later. He does not leave us ignorant of the blessedness He is going to bring us into. “I am going to the Father.” They say “whither goest Thou, we do not know the way.” “Why I am going to the Father, and you have seen the Father in Me!” If I am sending my child anywhere, the great point is what the person is there. So the Father was where He was going.

“Show us the Father.” “You have seen the Father in Me and you have got it all.” They knew where He was going because they had seen the Father in Him. They knew the way because they had found the Father through Him.

We know Christ shall see of the fruit and travail of His soul; that is an immense joy. What does He desire for the saint now? To be as like Him as possible. Then there will not be a thing in us to jar with Christ’s heart. Still the essence of the blessedness is that it is the Father’s house and we know Who is there. They had seen the Father revealed in Him that they might know where He was going. It shows the immense importance of the Person of the Lord Jesus. When the Christian sees Him he knows the blessedness of where He is going quite well.

Thus we get the object already before them, and if they really loved Him they would prove it by keeping His commandments.

He then goes to the second part of the Christian blessedness (John 14:16). As I have got the object in the revelation of the Father and the Son, I now get the Comforter from the Father to give me this association with Christ, “at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” It is not merely the Father and the Son as in the first part, but now they learn another thing, that He who is gone to Heaven is in the Father, and that the Father has sent the Comforter to make them know that they are in Him and He in them. Thus I get the Christian’s state consequent on the coming of the Holy Ghost. Thus I get sure blessedness -- divinely given certainty of our place in Christ. I know that I am in Christ who is there, and I know Christ is in me here. It is not a question of hope, but the Holy Ghost is dwelling in us.

There is no thought of the world receiving the Holy Ghost. The world ought to have received Christ. The world did see Christ and ought to have known Him. The Holy Ghost is not in the world to be received as Christ was. The world cannot receive Him; it never says they cannot receive Christ. The Holy Ghost comes and is the seal of believers called out of the world to be a peculiar people. He belongs to and is known of believers only. He is not like the first Comforter. Christ was there and could not be in them. He was with them but had to go away. The Holy Ghost is in us, and stays with us. Christ was amongst them here, but not in them. He was absolutely alone in that sense -- most accessible, affable, but alone. This other
Comforter stays here, abides with us and in us. It is a thing that is only known by having it; but the effect of having it is that I know I am in Christ. He gives the consciousness of being in Christ. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. On the other side we know Christ is in us. Thus we get our full complete blessedness before God on one side, and the measure of our practical responsibility down here on the other. I am accepted in the Beloved; I have got a new place -- not in the flesh at all. Responsibility as a child of Adam is completely and entirely over -- not as a Christian, but as a man. There is none righteous no not one. I do not want the day of judgment to tell me what I am. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost. It is not a state of probation. Man has plenty of debts and not a farthing. You come and tell me how to conduct myself, but I have nothing to live on. My standing and responsibility is that of a child of God, in Christ not in the flesh. Christ has answered for my sins not in the first man but in the second; the debts are all cleared. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. There is the blessed place I am in. The sealing of the Holy Ghost comes at the recognition of the grace of the forgiveness of sins. There we are white as snow. The Holy Ghost says “I will dwell in that man.” God cannot seal an unbeliever, He seals a believer. It is a blessed place, high above angels. When once I believe that the Son of God became a Man and died for me, glory is only a natural consequence. Nothing is too good for us; all the rest is easy to believe.

The other side of that is where Christian responsibility begins. Saved, in Christ, sealed with the Holy Ghost, there is no responsibility; I could not get into a better place in heaven. But if that is true another thing is true: if I am in Christ, Christ is in me down here, and I say, now let Him be seen. Conflict is consequent upon that. The Lord does not enter into conflict with Satan for us, till He takes His place. My place is settled in Christ and my duties are settled by Christ being in me. It is not a question of what I am doing, but of Christ being in me. I am to manifest the life of Jesus and nothing else: it requires watchfulness and diligence. I ought to walk as He walked. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ. What is the obedience of Christ? He never had a will of His own. The Father’s will was the source of all He did. In Matt. 4 Satan said, “If thou be the Son of God command.” “Nay, I came to obey and serve -- not to command -- I have no word out of God’s mouth.” The obedience of Christ was having God’s will as the origin and motive of all He did, not only the rule. “If I am a Son I do not depart from the place of a servant.” That is the way Satan was perfectly silenced. There is no harm in eating when hungry. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” He can do nothing without that word, and Satan can do nothing.

It is Christ who is our life dwelling in us, that life living “by every word
that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” If I had a direction telling me all I ought to do, it would not do. I want to know His will to test my state. If God has not a will I am to do nothing. But it needs spirituality to discern His will -- “filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” When I am uncertain, there is something that hinders, and I detect it. If the eye is single the whole body is full of light. As I get then the full blessedness of being in Christ, so I get Christ in me. That brings on the present dealing and government of God with us in this path.

If ye love me keep my commandments.

He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me . . . and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

We get the positive enjoyment of the place; and that does depend upon the conduct -- the place does not. “Grieve not the Spirit of God.” If I grieve Him He grieves me, and the effect of the Spirit’s presence in me is to make me unhappy -- conscious of having grieved Him if in disobedience. Some people are afraid of commandments; I am not. If I did everything right, and it was not obedience, I should have done nothing right. Commandment brings in authority and therefore I like it. He adds,

If a man love me He will keep my words.

There must be obedience. He leads me in the path.

All responsibility comes from the place I am in. The relationship that exists is the ground and measure of the duty. Every responsibility in conduct flows from the place a man is in. Am I child for ever; does that take away my duty? On the contrary it makes it for ever.

Two things remain in the chapter.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

See the manner of Christ’s giving. “My” -- that gives it its character. It is not the way the world gives. It sometimes gives generously, but it gives away. Christ brings us into the same place with Himself. What He gives He does not give away, but with Himself.

The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.

These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you.

He brings us into all blessedness in Himself.

There is one other thing -- the most wonderful thing in the Scripture, because it shows how He looks for the heart to cling to Him.

If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father.

It is as though He said, “You will be thinking of my happiness.” What a place to put us into! What a thing to be expecting from us! Have your hearts that thought of Christ, so bringing us into enjoyment of all He has Himself,
and expecting us to be interested in His happiness? Do you believe this?

What I feel is that if you get the consciousness of the blessed privilege of being in Christ before God, that cannot be true without His being in you.

* * * * *

There is no strength but in Christ. I have none at any time except as my soul is in secret communion with Him . . . Now the direct power of Satan is towards this point, to keep our souls from living on Christ.

One great thing we have to seek is that communion with Christ be as strong as all the doctrines we hold or teach. Without that the doctrine itself will have no force: besides, we ourselves shall not be with God in it, and, after all, that is all.
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

ACTS 1

We shall find that “The Acts” follows Luke’s Gospel: it speaks of a “former treatise,” which is the Gospel, but it follows it in its tone and character.

Is the style of the Greek the same?

Yes, there is no question with anyone that it came from Luke’s pen. The only thing, and an astonishing thing too, is the thorough mastery of shipping Luke shows in Acts 28.

Had not Luke sailed more than once with Paul?

Yes; and he may have been to sea otherwise, as to that. But as to teaching, the Gospel closes with “repentance and remission of sins,” to be “preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”; and “tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.” Both those you get taken up again in the Acts. And you will find Luke’s commission taken up too in all the sermons in the Acts, whether by Peter or by Paul. In Acts 2:38, Peter says,

Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, &c.

In Acts 13,

Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, &c.

And in Acts 13 you will find the same thing again:

through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, &c.

Why does it say “among all nations beginning at Jerusalem,” as though Jerusalem were among the nations?

Because the message comes from heaven, and therefore Jerusalem does come in as one of the nations, though as Paul says, “to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

One thing struck me a long while ago in the beginning of this chapter, and that is, that Christ acted by the Holy Ghost as a risen Man, as well as when He was a Man on earth. This shows, if you reflect on it, that we shall not lose the Holy Ghost hereafter. There is this to be remembered also, that the power of the Holy Ghost here is necessarily spent very much in making us go on, but there will be none of that above; then, all His power will be

57. {About 1860/1861, i.e., 30 years after speaking with Edward Irving.}
our capacity for enjoyment. I refer to the second verse.

Would the word “began” in the first verse imply that the Lord continued
His ministry through the Holy Ghost?

Yes, His ministry is looked at as going on.

Both before and after His resurrection?

Yes, “all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which
he was taken up.” We shall not want the power of the Spirit to keep flesh
down when we are raised -- “changed.” That gives a great idea of the power
of the enjoyment -- the divine enjoyment -- which we shall have; what the
capacity of it is.

Then the second verse is connected with resurrection but not with
ascension?

No; it is clear if you read on in v. 3,

to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many
infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the
things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Then there is the coming of Christ to the earth, and the restoring of the
kingdom to Israel, and the power of the Holy Ghost meanwhile; but there is
nothing about the rapture here.

This too answers to Luke’s Gospel; in Luke 24:51,

He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven,

and in our verse (9),

while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of
their sight.

Does that word “until” in v. 2 exclude the idea of any private ascension
before the public one?

Well, I do not know of any ground for such an ascension. “The day that
he was taken up” is evidently His ascension.

Is there no ground in scripture for any intermediate ascension?

No. It has been held by some, I am aware, because of the expression in
the garden to Mary, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my
Father” {John 20:17}, while afterwards He tells Thomas to touch Him; but
that is simply a misapprehension of the Lord’s meaning.

Would you explain a little the difference between His saying to Mary,
“Touch me not,” and the women touching His feet in Matthew?

Touching His feet was merely in a spirit of deference, a kind of worship,
whereas the other has a deeper meaning. Mary thought she had got Him back
again as Messiah in this world, and the Lord says, No, I am not going to be
bodily present here, you must not touch me, but go to my brethren, and say unto them,

I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God {John 20:17}.

And there He associates His disciples with Himself as gone up on high; while Mary was made the vessel of the communication of this heavenly character in so calling them His brethren.

“I ascend,” would not that be a present thing?

Yes; in the form of statement, but clearly not as saying, I am doing it now.

Is not the word “touch,” handle me not, do not detain me?

The word is ἔπατομαι, used thirty-six times in the New Testament, and always rendered “touch” in the Authorized Version.

But He would receive homage as one risen?

Yes. And He was putting the disciples in their place with Himself as One gone up but not yet gone -- not taking the kingdom to be bodily present here yet. Then another ground has been given which I do not think anything of, though there is no heresy in it that I know of, His saying, “Peace be unto you,” but He could not make peace (so it is said) until He had gone up and presented His blood to God. Now in Col. 1:20, it says, He “made peace through the blood of his cross”; and He says, “Go in peace” to the poor woman in His life, Luke 7:50, and again in Luke 8:48.

Would either of those salutations in John 20:19-21, mean more than, “be kept in peace?”

Well, perhaps so, but that is a great thing. But peace was made only by the blood of His cross.

Still the perfection of the work in Heb. 10 is connected with the Lord’s having entered in by His blood, and so having perfected the work; could we say it was perfected until He had sat down?

Ah! I could not say that. By His “one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” You get not merely the clearing of what I am, as walking down here, but perfected forever so as to go up there, as well as having no more conscience of sins; and all by His one offering. That is just what the so-called evangelical church does not get at all, when it is talking of forgiving past sins, and getting into perplexity about sins to be committed afterwards; and, some, like the boasted primitive church, even wondering whether they can be forgiven at all. And then come in absolution and the sacraments, and that is the way they get forgiveness. But Heb. 10 puts the believer absolutely perfect before God, so that he has no more conscience of sins, but is brought into the holiest into the presence of God.
But is the work perfected before His ascension?

The work was perfected before, that was perfected on the cross; the resurrection puts God’s seal upon it, and then for us to enter into the holiest, He has gone up to heaven.

But until the Lord had sat down, the work had not come to an end?

Had it not? The point the apostle insists on is, that the Lord is not standing, because the work had been finished.

When Stephen went in it was finished, but the Lord was standing then. After all, you see, “standing” is a formal thing, I believe, to express that till the Jews had rejected the testimony to a glorified Christ the door of repentance was open. (See Acts 3.) He was not sat down till then. The work was finished on the cross, and God puts His seal upon it by resurrection, and then the full result follows.

And that carries us a great deal further than forgiveness and cleansing, looked at as regards this world. Here am I, a responsible being on earth, of course I want cleansing and justifying, and I get it; but I really get a great deal more. I have often said when speaking of the gospel, a man may have all his debts paid, and not have a penny himself to buy a morsel of bread with; paying his debts is a very different thing from starting him afresh with capital, and so on, after the debts are paid. We too are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places.

Take the Jews in the millennium, they will be forgiven through the work of Christ, but they will not be in the heavenly places. You must not confound the effect and application of the work, as regards the forgiveness of sins, with its full efficacy. We do get the forgiveness, of course, or we could not stand before God at all; we are cleansed and we are justified.

Could the disciples enter the holiest before the ascension?

I do not think they knew anything about it; the title to enter was fully there, but it was not brought out yet.

In the Hebrews Christ is said to be the forerunner, and so there was no such thing as worship until He had entered?

No; but the veil was rent from top to bottom the moment He died, and now we are talking of the application of that. The whole thing, in short, was done upon the cross, even the resurrection was the effect of that (though of course Christ could not be holden by death), God in it putting His seal upon the work.

And on that ground peace could be proclaimed fully?
Yes, and the Lord could tell it beforehand. Peace was made by the blood of His cross, but I hardly see anybody that gives full value to the death of
Christ. I do not mean as to the forgiveness of sins, but as to the whole question of good and evil, which has all been brought to an issue, in every respect, in the cross. I know I come by my sins, and ought to come, and cannot come in any other way in truth, but when the soul has got peace and can contemplate it, then it can see the whole power of good and evil brought to a point and culminating in the cross. There I see man in absolute enmity against God, and that when God is displayed in goodness; and I see a Man, perfect in His love to God, and perfect in His obedience to God, on that same cross. I get all the power of Satan, with all the malice of man, and all the righteousness of God against sin, and all the love of God to the sinner, all united in the cross; and therefore I find there the foundation of the new heavens and of the new earth -- of God's glory, in short; and all the consequences of blessing flow out. But then the application is varied so that everything in heaven and earth will be reconciled by it ultimately. I get the forgiveness of all my sins as a sinner, I am reconciled to God, and I get glory like Christ. The Jews will be restored in the millennium by virtue of it; but these are all effects.

Is the peace that the Lord spoke of in John 14 one of them?

Yes, prospectively, and He does not say “Peace be unto you” until after His resurrection. The two cases we mentioned in Luke 7, 8 have a special character. Neither did He call them brethren before; but then that was the fulfilment of Psa. 22, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren.”

What ought to be the measure of the effect and application of the cross to us now?

Why, full. We are called and predestinated to be conformed to the image of God’s Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly {1 Cor. 15:49}.

With regard to our chapter once more, you were mentioning the Holy Ghost, could the writer have said that second verse before the Lord had risen?

No. That is when He has risen, and that is what I was noting; I get that a risen man has the Holy Ghost; it is not only he has a kind of help down here in the place of our infirmity, but after he has risen he has the Holy Ghost.

What is the difference between this and the outpouring in Acts 2?

Christ received the Holy Ghost a second time for the second of Acts {to take place}. He was sealed and anointed in His own person, the Holy Ghost came down in a bodily shape like a dove and rested upon Him {Luke 3:22}, but He came a second time for us {Acts 2:32, 33}. 
But He gave commandments through the Holy Ghost when on earth?

Yes, but what I get here is, it is still so when He is risen. He acted through life by the Holy Ghost; He says, “If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils”;
He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, and again He says, “the Father that dwelleth in me He doeth the works” {John 14:10}. The moment Christ takes His place as a man, the whole Trinity is revealed; He publicly takes His place with the godly remnant at His baptism; the Holy Ghost comes down, the Son was there, and the Father owns Him; and that is when Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed together. Then it is written of Him, “and him hath God the Father sealed” {John 6:27}; and John says specifically, “upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost” {John 1:33}. And now He was going to baptize with the Holy Ghost {cp. 1 Cor. 12:13}, founded upon His own blood-shedding, because we could not receive the Holy Ghost until redemption was finished.

But could Peter understand Psa. 109. as he uses it in Acts 1:20, before he had received the Holy Ghost?

Ah, there you get the value of “he opened their understanding to understand the scriptures.” That is what enabled him; and that is one of the points we have to notice, the difference between intelligence and power; there was power when the Holy Ghost came down, but they received intelligence before they got power. In Luke 24:44, it says,

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them [this is after the resurrection], Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you.

Now He had opened their understanding, and Peter could explain Psa. 109, but they had not got power, and therefore they go on in their old way, casting lots.

But could He say He gave commandments by the Holy Spirit while He was down here?

I do not know why He should not; He worked miracles by the Holy Ghost.

But could they receive them?

That is another thing; their capacity. The capacity to give, and the
capacity to receive, are very different. The Lord attributes to them the
capacity to receive, He says to them, “he that hath seen me hath seen the
Father,” He attributed to them what belonged to them in the position they
were in, though they had never found it out. There is all the difference
between His speaking to them in the Spirit, and their capacity to receive
what He said. He gave commandments by the Spirit, but they had not the
Holy Ghost. He comes down in Acts 2.

In our second verse it does not seem to be at all a question of the state of
the disciples, but the great truth of the Lord Himself risen and acting by the
Holy Ghost?

Just so.

Then do you believe that they had seen the Father?

They had seen the Father in Christ. God Himself dwells in “light, which
no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see.”

Would that passage “he now liveth by the power of God” be connected
with His giving commandments?

That is His resurrection, but He raised Himself from the dead too. Divine power was always in Him.

A risen state is a new thing, more new in one sense than ascension; a
risen man is a totally new thing. Having passed death, and passed judgment,
and passed Satan’s power, and passed sin, and everything, when you get the
man raised, then is the grand change; resurrection is the grand new thing.
It is not ascension that we are justified by, you will never find that, but He
is “raised again for our justification.”

The point in the state of the disciples here is that they had not power, but
had understanding, though that did not take them out of Jewish
apprehensions; they had no guidance by the Holy Ghost, but they go and
draw lots. Probably the Lord directed them in that, I do not doubt it, and
Matthias was numbered with the twelve.

Then they had intelligence?

Yes. They had capacity to understand but not to display power.

I suppose their referring to the Lord in the matter of the lot was definite
in that way?

Yes. I know people call Paul the twelfth, that thought is old enough, but
I think he was a totally distinct thing.

It is said of all of them that He opened their understandings; in Luke, is
it not?

Yes, quite so, it was when He was eating the fish with them.

Matthias, would he be there, because it says, he continued with them?
Yes.

“I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now, howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth”; what is that?

That is fresh revelations, not the understanding of the scriptures, but things the Lord could not tell them then.

There is the breathing on them?

Breathing on them would imply the communication of the Spirit as to intelligence {John 20:22}.

Would it be too the communication of risen life?

Yes, I suppose so, as God breathed into Adam at first the breath of life. It is connected also with

whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained (John 20:23).

“Ordained” in Acts 1:22, is not altogether warranted, I suppose?

Is “bishoprick?”

Well, “bishoprick” is all very well, but “ordained” is all wrong, it is not even a wrong translation, but it is added, and put in; it is simply “must one become a witness?”

What is the connection between “Receive ye the Holy Ghost, and “whose soever sins ye remit,” &c.?

They were then spiritually competent. You see administration on earth is a most important thing. It is a fact that whoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is forgiven all his sins for ever and ever; you cannot be too clear about that, but the administration {of forgiveness} in this world is very important too.

Then who administers the forgiveness?

The church of God does. “To whom ye forgive anything, I also” {2 Cor. 2:10}.

Is there any sense in which the assembly forgives in receiving to the {Lord’s} table?

Not exactly, it merely recognizes; but it might happen so, if a person is only then brought to the Lord it may take of that character.

What is the connection of resurrection life with the forgiveness of sins?

There was no forgiveness of sins before it, in this way, for there was no assembly.

How would you regard Psa. 32, “and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin”?
I will tell you how that came about: David sinned, and a prophet went and told him of it, which now, I do not want {i.e., need}. Nathan went to him and told him -- that is just what I do not need. It required a prophet then to get it, and it does not require a prophet now.

The Lord could say to the woman, “Thy sins be forgiven thee”?

And that was administrative too on earth. “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.”

In James, “if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him,” is that administrative then?

To be sure, that is just what it is.

Is the breathing on them a collective thing? {John 20:22}.

Well, they were all there, that is all that is stated.

In John 8 He tells the woman to go and sin no more?

Well, there was no forgiveness in that.

What do you mean by the church of God administering forgiveness?

It is all administered. They were not to go and preach without people getting it. “Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins,” that was what Peter declared to them.

Was not that exhortation?

But as people acted on it; that was what they got.

Where is the difference between that and priestly absolution?

The one is the priest and the other is the church. Paul says, “to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also.”

Do you mean sins against other Christians, or sins against God?

All sins.

Do you mean they receive the remission from the church and not from God?

Well, read 2 Cor. 2:10. “To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also, for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ.” That is administrative forgiveness.

Is that anything but concurrent?

It may be concurrent, but it is administrative forgiveness.

Is it governmental?

Well, governmental if you like, I called it administrative.

If, in the case of James’ Epistle, the man was under the chastisement of God, is it administrative then?
Yes, it is. As the Lord says, “whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted.”

People have lost the idea of the present reception of forgiveness as a fact down here.

Is it not exceptional?

Every heathen received, and every Jew received, by the apostles, each and all were forgiven their sins.

It is the not making a difference between “perfected for ever,” and the recognition of such an one on earth by the administration of the assembly that causes the difficulty.

“Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” {Acts 22:16}, what is that?

Paul did so, and they were all put away. I see in scripture the believer come into a new place in Christ, where there is no possibility of condemnation: he is accepted in the Beloved, he is perfected for ever, and no sin imputed to him. In the Acts they came in, and when they were baptized, they got the forgiveness of their sins, and had no idea of difficulty as to administration.

Persons now put belief instead of baptism, and then say he is forgiven. A Roman Catholic will tell you it is when he is baptized, and, after that, by the sacrament of penance; and a Church of England person will say it is when he takes the sacrament; while in the primitive church, so-called, you will find discussions whether he could ever be again forgiven for sins after baptism. But all of them have totally lost sight of “perfected for ever.”

How does administrative forgiveness come in?

The sin is bound upon the person, for example, when he is excommunicated, and it is forgiven him when he is let in {received} again.

But “whose soever sins ye remit,” was said when there was no church? 58

There is no difficulty about that. The difficulty between the original forgiveness on admission, and forgiveness afterwards, is because “perfected for ever” is not known.

Could the Holy Ghost say now by a man as Paul said to the Corinthians, “I forgive also”?

No; Paul had a power to speak as we could not, not being apostles.

58. {Many statements in John are prospective, such as John 17:4, said before the Lord actually had done the work on the cross.}
But could the Holy Ghost say that?

The Holy Ghost could do it, of course, because if the church does it, the Holy Ghost does, that is, if the church is acting rightly.

What would “in the person of Christ” be?

That is because Christ was there.

Then administration has three aspects, it is declarative in the gospel; in admission; and in restoration?

In John it begins with remission, but in Matthew with binding {Matt. 18:18}, so that they are not analogous, in John it is more flowing out; “peace be unto you,” &c., precedes it.

“As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” is a mission in John, and the apostles are never named in John?

In the original testimony of the Gospel in Acts, when people were forgiven, it was administrative because a man was forgiven, then and there, of course, supposing that he received the testimony.

May I ask further, Would you say the administration of forgiveness is now only in the case of church discipline?

No, I should not. Suppose I was going to preach to the heathen, then the moment one became a Christian, he would receive the forgiveness of his sins at that time. Past sins then it would be of course.

But then he received it from God?

Well, if he did not receive that too, the other would not be worth much.

You see when a person was received from the heathen, or when a Jew was received, he then got the forgiveness of his sins, his relationship to God was changed. In the thoughts and counsels of God all his sins were forgiven for ever and ever, and there never will be any question of them in judgment; but supposing he became a Christian, he then got the forgiveness of his sins on earth, and stood in a different relationship to God, he was reconciled to God, and not before.

What is the difference between administrative forgiveness by the church, and the actual forgiveness of God? Say I preach the gospel, and a man receives the text of scripture, in which is the forgiveness of his sins?

There must be the direct agency of the Holy Ghost upon his soul; but there is a vast difference between the absolute efficacy of Christ’s work for the whole acceptance of the man before God, and the change which takes place in his state from being an unreconciled to a reconciled man acknowledged on earth.

Would you not say that Simon Magus had received administrative forgiveness but was not actually forgiven?
I speak of administered as being governmentally a present act, in contrast with an everlasting acceptance which a man has in God’s sight; he receives as well the forgiveness of his sins here which he had not before.

If a person is converted by reading the scripture alone, what would that be?

Well, it would only be by Paul’s preaching, or something of that sort. People do not seem to have got hold of the idea of the thing. Paul had washed away his sins when he had been baptized, but not before.

It might help if we took the case of a person who was converted but refused to be baptized?

Well, there was just such a case of a Jew who said he believed Jesus was the Christ, but he would not be baptized; I said I could not own him as a Christian.

We must guard against reasoning from a state of confusion, to what was the case when there was no confusion. Until you get clear of the confusion, you will not understand either the administrative forgiveness or the other. Put the case that Paul was preaching at Lystra; and that people were convinced what he said was true after all, but still said, “We will not become Christians,” would their sins be forgiven them? As a fact, then, would they stand before God as forgiven people, if they refused to be Christians?

Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses {Acts 13:39}.

Now, say I hear that text, and I believe it, am I not a Christian?

I cannot tell yet, I want to know if you take your place with the Christians; if you will not, then I say, you cannot be reckoned one.

But am I not forgiven by God?

Well, God will tell you about that, but I say you are not now forgiven here.

But I believe on Christ?

God will settle with you about that.

But I shall go to heaven?

Well, that may be, but you are not forgiven on earth.

Take the case of a Quaker?

I must leave him to God; he has not taken his place in a scriptural way, that is all I know. There is a certain standing-place on the earth where certain blessings are, and God has set this place up; the administration of it gives these blessings then. There is administration in the word of God
according to which things were administered down here;

but that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to
forgive sins {Mark 2:10}.

There it is. It is not reasoning about the acceptance of that soul for eternity;
it does not say there that that paralytic man was saved for eternity, but that
he had the forgiveness of sins on earth.

What would be the course then to be taken by us?

Go and preach the gospel to every creature, and get them to see clearly
the details afterwards.

Is administration the same as bestowal?

Well, administration is equivalent to bestowal, in a sense, at once.

“Thy sins are forgiven thee,” would not imply that all his future sins
would be forgiven?

Of course not.

If a person believes and goes among Dissenters, would he get the
forgiveness administered?

Now you come back to the confusion, and I do not know anything about it. I do not know how such an one receives the administration of forgiveness in the present confusion.

Did you not say the administration comes through baptism?

Well, yes, with heathens and those outside it does.

“He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all
unrighteousness,” is that administrative?

No. That is the moral thing, and it is God, not the church. This question in the present state of confusion is in many cases only theory.

But we know in places how busy Puseyite clergymen are, saying that they have power to forgive sins?

But that is the clergyman personally, and in another sense of forgiveness. They do not talk of administrative forgiveness at all, but of putting away the sin. I deny the whole thing there, and I say, Who are you? The clergyman. Who made you so? The bishop. Who is the bishop? And the whole authority falls.

In Acts 1:3, “the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” -- in what sense is the kingdom of God set before us there?

It is just going to be set up as the kingdom of heaven, as it would be in Matt. 13.

This would go on to the glory, would it not?
Yes. The appearing of Christ is brought out.
Is it the kingdom of God Paul preaches?
Yes; he says so.
Do you connect Romans with Luke and Acts, as it says, “to the Jew first”?
Yes, of course, even more so than the Gospel and Acts.
Should the preaching now be the kingdom of God?
Not that alone.
At Thessalonica the offence was his preaching another king?
Yes; but in his ministry of the gospel Paul brought in much else about the Lord’s coming and the Antichrist.
ACTS 2

I think it of moment to notice here v. 1, because there is a general current idea that only the twelve were present, that there were a hundred and twenty, and not the apostles only. “They were all with one accord in one place.”

What of the “five hundred brethren” in 1 Cor. 15:6?

There is no clue to that, that I know of. Very likely that may have been in Galilee, where the Lord had appointed others to meet Him, but there is no statement about it.

The hundred and twenty would comprise the whole assembly?

Not all who were converted, but those who were at Jerusalem.

Would it include the women?

Probably. Yes. In Acts 1:14 it says, “with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”

But in v. 16 Peter addresses them “men and brethren”?

Yes, but it is clear that the Holy Ghost was poured out on women:

I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; 59

and Philip had four daughters who prophesied.

“By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” {1 Cor. 12:13}, how are we to understand that in connection with this?

They were baptized into one body then and there, only it was not fully developed until the Gentiles came in. The Spirit coming down upon them then did baptize them into one body, but the term “baptism” is never applied to this, except at Pentecost, in scripture, that I know of; though all come into that one body. In Acts 1:5 the Lord says, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

But the Corinthians came in afterwards?

Yes, and they are spoken of as “sealed” and “anointed.” In John 1:33 “the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” it is the second part of the work of Christ. The first part was the taking “away the sin of the world” as the “Lamb of God”; the second, baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

What would that mean, “fell upon them as upon us at the beginning”
{Acts 11:15}?

That is not called baptism; but it is just the same thing in effect; the disciples were formed into unity by the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon them; it was a special case with the Gentiles to show that they were all one. The body was not in its developed condition before the Gentiles were brought in.

What was their condition before the Holy Ghost fell upon them?

They had intelligence of course but no power, like the disciples before Pentecost, as we were saying.

Would it be the condition of infancy in Heb. 5?

That was the Jewish state before Christ’s death and resurrection.

Would you not say that every believer is baptized with the Holy Ghost? No. When brought into liberty, he is sealed and anointed, and comes into the general baptism; he comes into the same place then. I know how people speak, and God does not make a man an offender for a word; but you get the case of Cornelius clear enough, when God was saying, I will have the Gentiles in spite of you.

What would you call the action of the Holy Ghost in giving a believer his place in the body of Christ?

No action. He is sealed when he receives the Holy Ghost, it is not another Holy Ghost, and so he becomes a member of that body.

But in 1 Cor. 12, he speaks of Gentiles having been baptized into that one body?

Yes; it is merely the use of a word. The practical idea is simple. I do not find it applied to an individual; it is the same Holy Ghost and the individual receives it; if a Gentile came, he received the Holy Ghost, and was formed into the same unity, that is the important point, the thing to be thoroughly seen and believed, that we do receive the Holy Ghost, and so get into this unity. When a man receives the Holy Ghost he is a member of the body of Christ, only the difference between this, and sealing, and anointing, is important in this, that there are individual relationships as well as unity, because in receiving the Holy Ghost, he becomes a conscious son of the

60. {It is important to see that the baptism in the power of one Spirit formed the body (Acts 2:33; 1 Cor. 12:13) and was a collective thing. Sealing is individual and joins us to the once-for-all formed body. The body cannot be formed again. The Spirit’s falling on others and sealing them, subsequent to Pentecost, joins them to the once-for-all formed body at Pentecost. Thus, Eph. 1:13 states that we are “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,” that is, the promised Spirit for which the disciples were waiting, thus linking us all with the coming of the promised Spirit, Who came at Pentecost.}
Father: I say conscious son, and he knows that he is in Christ, and Christ in him, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him; there are many individual things you must not lose sight of.

Would the individual things you refer to be expressed in 1 Cor. 12:13?

No; that is a different thing. But there is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us and again, “at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you”; that is all individual.

How are we to understand in Acts 19:2, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed”? They were only John’s disciples.

Were they not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Well, I suppose Paul saw something in them that made him ask the question. But they were not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as risen.

What is the difference between anointing and sealing?

None. It is by the Spirit, and the Spirit is the earnest, but anointing is the general term; it is a figure; the leper was washed with water, sprinkled with blood, and anointed with oil: and when God anoints a man, He puts His seal upon him, and gives him the earnest of the inheritance and all other things.

Would you expect that to follow immediately on conversion?

Yes, when one heard a clear gospel preached. But I could not expect anything; that is a matter of God’s condescending wisdom in particular cases, or He might see a person who wanted breaking down first, or a thousand things.

There seems to be an interval in the case of the Samaritans in Acts 8?

Yes, and so there was here too in Acts 2. I think it is gracious of the Lord to make all these things so distinct. I know what pious books say, that I receive the Holy Ghost when I am converted; it is all false, I receive the Holy Ghost after I am converted.

But the Holy Ghost works before?

Yes, of course, but my building a house, and my going to live in it when it is built, are two different things.

What is the “unction” in John’s First Epistle?

The Holy Ghost, always. It is an allusion to the anointing with oil, after sprinkling with the blood. It is said of Christ, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, but Christ is never said to have been baptized with the Holy Ghost; you get “him hath God the Father sealed.” Only remember, He was sealed and anointed in witness of His own perfectness, while we are sealed and anointed in virtue of Christ’s work.
But the holy anointing oil was not to come on man’s flesh?

Just so; and so Christ takes us out of flesh in that sense.

But before God does not anointing exist in every case whether known or not?

No, certainly not. These in Acts 19 were not anointed. I know no reason why there should be any delay. It was the regular thing when a man was sprinkled with blood, then he was anointed with oil.

There are many Christians who do not know what the anointing is?

The question is, Can they really cry “Abba, Father?”

Is that the criterion of having the Holy Ghost?

Certainly; “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts” {Gal. 4:6}.

Does not that imply receiving the Holy Ghost as soon as we are sons?

Naturally it does. If I find a person in liberty with God, he will say “Father,” and also if truly at liberty he will say, I am God’s son. People may sometimes say “Father” through a measure of training and habit, but such will be afraid to say, if they have not the Holy Ghost, that they are God’s sons. I mean even when they may use the name Father.

But there is such a thing as judicial blindness?

Yes, as chastisement there is. But, otherwise, when sealed, the consciousness of relationship will be there. That is a very distinct and definite thing. Just as a child may be forgetful and naughty, but still it lives in the consciousness of its being a child. It may have conscience deadened and hardened, but it is never out of the consciousness of the relationship after all. So when a person has the Holy Ghost, that gives him the consciousness of being a son.

Did the Prophet Joel think of the body of Christ? is it not merely a promise to the Jewish remnant?

That is what it really is, but it is promised to all flesh. It has its place so far here as well. But it is not true of us as its full final accomplishment. But we have the firstfruits of the Spirit.

But will it not be true of them that they will be baptized into one body?

No. But God was here going on in a way with Israel for a time.

But the full prophecy was not fulfilled here?

No. In Joel it says “afterwards” {Joel 2:28}. God will do it, but here it says, “in the last days.”

How can we divide it?
We have it divided for us here; only Peter changes the language.
Is there anything to be learned from the quotation?
If you look at Joel it is clearly this, “And it shall come to pass afterwards” -- after God has restored Israel, and set them in blessing in their land, and they own Messiah, then they get the Spirit; but they {millennial Israel} are not connected with Christ in heaven then, because Christ is down here on the earth with them. The Lord will do great things for them; He will restore them in blessing, He will be jealous for His land, and will pity His people, so that they shall never be ashamed; they shall know that God is Jehovah, &c., “and afterward I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” Now here Peter changes the word “afterward” and puts in “the last days,” and so takes in a distinct testimony.

Then would you say that those in the last days who receive the Spirit will receive Him, and the Holy Ghost dwell in them?

Poured out upon them is all that is said, but they have Christ present with them.

What part was fulfilled at Pentecost?
Just the fact of pouring out.
He does not say it was fulfilled, but “this is that which was spoken”?
Peter {in Acts 2:17-21} stops in the middle of v. 32 of Joel. What he really gives you is the fact that the Spirit was poured out.

Is there anything in the leaving out of the “of”?
No. But you get it used of the, Holy Ghost in scripture, as in “because he hath given us of his Spirit.” It is important to see that the Spirit is personally present on earth; 61 that is another truth.

What of “I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath”? That is warning.
Then the restoration in the land will take place before the outpouring of the Spirit?
Yes, but they are distinct parts of the prophecy altogether; and they are separated on purpose in the way that Peter is speaking. Verse 30 of Joel {2}

61. {The Spirit is omnipresent, always. But He came here in a special sense, in a special capacity, for special operations, regarding the church as heavenly. He not only indwells the individual Christian (1 Cor. 6:19), the church itself is God’s habitation by the Spirit (Eph. 2:21, 22). When the saints are caught up He will be removed (2 Thess. 2:7) regarding those special operations. He always is omnipresent and therefore is here on earth subsequently, for other operations.}
begins distinct testimony; he states a complete restoration of Israel to blessing; then He will pour out of His Spirit; and then in verse 30, before those days come, He will send signs and wonders; you get upon this little remnant of Israel, the Holy Ghost poured out, with the warning of signs and wonders before the terrible day comes. But Israel rejected this, as they did all the rest, and then Paul comes out with the Son in heaven; and the ground of bringing that out is Stephen’s murder.

Will the remnant get this pouring out of the Spirit before the Lord comes?

No. Joel says ‘afterwards’ {Joel 2:28}. I believe there will be a working of the Spirit, as by Elias, and so on; but they will not get this pouring out. You get the restoration of Israel to full blessing, then the Spirit. But then Joel says before the coming of the terrible day of the Lord -- the wonders.

The Lord delivers the people and then the Holy Ghost comes down, so that they are saved already before the Holy Ghost comes down, and then they shall never be ashamed.

Would the end of {Acts 2} v. 29 be how much of the prophecy was fulfilled?

Yes.

But must not those words of Joel be the unity of the body?

Why “must?” I have nothing to do with the unity of the body here; other teaching makes us know about that, but not this passage.

Why will not this outpouring make the Jews one when it comes? Will it not be a necessary consequence, because Christ will have left heaven then?

But can you make things necessary with God?

You cannot unite with a Head in heaven, when He is here on earth. Why is God to do in one dispensation the same that He does in another? Christ’s place now is ascended up on high to receive gifts for men . . . and now the Holy Ghost gives gifts, but gifts have nothing to do with the nature of the unity of the church. There is a prophet now, and so there was in the Old Testament, but they are different; you are assuming that God is pledged to act in the same way always.

Will the Jews have these apostles and prophets?

No, I do not say that . . . You get Christ’s ascension in Psa. 68, and His sitting at the right hand of God in Psa. 110. But what comes out between that and His return, on being united to Him in heaven, is not presented then at all. He gives gifts for the rebellious also, that is Jews in Psa. 68, but the apostle does not quote that, but says “received gifts in man.” But in the future day the Lord will be among them then as Messiah, and it is not the
same order of things. Christ received the Holy Ghost again for communicating these gifts.

Does not the fact of Paul’s ministry coming out, bring in a different character of action?

Yes, but it is Stephen’s death which is the turning point.

Would you be good enough to divide Joel for us?

In Joel 2:17, they are to weep between the porch and the altar; in v. 18, the Lord is jealous for His land and pities His people, He sends them corn, and removes the northern army, and does great things for the land.

Is the northern army Gog?

I suppose so, but the Lord comes in with many blessings and in v. 27, “ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.” There you get Israel completely restored, and that is one division. Then in v. 28, He goes outside Israel.

Is that after the last week in Daniel?

Of course it is. He goes outside Israel and pours His Spirit upon all flesh, and “on my servants and handmaids, in those days will I pour out my Spirit,” that finishes v. 29. Then there is another testimony,

and I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke, the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come {Joel 2:30, 31}.

The day of the Lord is on the northern army; the “day” is the judgment of the Lord. Verses 28, 29 are together; but vv. 30, 31 are distinct from them, and refer to what takes place before.

In the Acts of the Apostles we have the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh but a preliminary testing of the Jews. In ch. 2 Peter says, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

But in Joel, Israel is in full blessing before the Spirit is poured out on all flesh?

Exactly; he says “afterwards,” {Joel 2:28} after Israel is completely established in blessing. We have it now before, and here in Acts the Jews had it as preliminary. And Peter does not say that it was the fulfilment of Joel.

Would you say the Lord was present then when the Spirit was poured out on all flesh, in Joel?

Joel calls on the Jews to repent, and as soon as they do that, there is this northern army which is oppressing them and cutting them off, put down by Jehovah, while the Jews ‘weep between the porch and altar.’ Then He gives
them complete blessing, so that they shall never be ashamed, and they are established for ever and ever, and then He gives them the Spirit.

Does the Lord come personally to do all that?
Surely; how is the day of the Lord to come without the Lord?
Do vv. 31, 32 then go back?
Yes, it says so, you get “afterward” in verse 28, and “before” in v. 31. Then the whole of the chapter {Joel 2} has yet to be fulfilled in detail? Yes, it certainly has.

Why the weeping between the porch and the altar?
Humanly, it looked as if there would be destruction there, because this terrible enemy had come up.

Then vv. 28, 29 are suitable to a remnant that received Christ as Messiah?
They are suitable to “all flesh.”

But when the Lord comes back there will be only Judah and Benjamin in the land?
Well, but there is often a process going on, though you may not see every detail clear, I mean as regards Israel. You get Judah and the children of Israel their companions, and then the forming the whole house of Israel. What the Lord will do will be a long process, as I believe.

I get this, that the Jews are cut off in the land, but the ten tribes are cut off outside of it. In Ezek. 20 you have the restoration of the ten tribes.

I thought they came back after the beginning of Zech. 14, and so were not in the land when the Lord came down?
Very likely. When Gog comes up for the last time (he besieges Jerusalem twice in Isaiah), that is, this northern army of Joel. The Lord has already destroyed the beast, and then the Lord sets up His throne. Gog finds Him there.

The ten tribes never get back except as a remnant. The moment the Lord has destroyed the beast, He takes His throne, and the whole thing is settled.

Does Peter’s preaching in Acts 2 imply that, if the Jews had repented, the whole of Joel’s prophecy as to the Spirit would have been fulfilled?
Well, in a certain sense, yes, and the Lord would have come. The more you see, the more you will see, that the Lord’s dealings until Christ comes are provisional.

But many are looking now for the latter rain of the Spirit?
Well, then, they are looking in vain; but it is in a great measure
There are two kinds of gifts entirely distinct; I said so thirty years ago to Irving {about 1830}. Those in 1 Cor. 12 are gifts of power, so much so that often when there was positive power nobody was to use it; it was all under the rule and authority of Christ’s order in the house. And so there, therefore, I get no promise of the continuance of gifts; but when I come to Eph. 4, I get no gifts that are signs at all; but, after the foundation of apostles and prophets, I get evangelists, pastors and teachers, those which the Lord uses to build up His church, “until we all come.” I get Christ caring for His own body to build it up, and also the positive declaration of their going on to the end; they are

for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ {Eph. 4:12, 13}.

You have the caring for the church, and continuance.

What is “whether there be prophecies, they shall fail,” {1 Cor. 13:8} &c.?

It means that there is no premise there of their continuance. Corinthians is merely power and the Holy Ghost.

It is not a statement that these should pass away?

No, but there is no premise of their continuance though it may foreshadow their passing away. It is power, and then the Holy Ghost distributing to every man severally as He will, but it is a perfect state of things; the gifts are in a certain sense meant to fail, and so their continuance is not the subject at all; but I do get the assurance of their continuance when I come to edification. The word of God never contemplates the continuance of the church, but it contemplates Christ coming. People say, How could God set up a thing and not provide for its continuance beyond thirty years? Of course He did not. He taught the saints to look constantly for the Lord as a present thing.

What is the difference between the talents in the Gospels, and the gifts spoken of in the Epistles?

I believe the talents are the gifts, the things that Christ gave when He went away. The lord left the talents with his own servants and not with anybody else.

Is it not important to see here that we get the Holy Ghost connected with a glorified Christ?

Yes, here and everywhere. And that is what I was noticing that Christ
received the Holy Ghost afresh for us;

therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear {Acts 2:33}.

Until the death of Stephen you get more of signs, and as in 1 Cor. 12, and the other gifts come afterwards?

Yes, but you find signs too afterwards . . . You see, until a man had gone to heaven, the complete thought of God is not brought out. We see God come down to the earth, and man gone up to heaven into the glory of God. As regards the cross, the immense thing is, not merely my sins are put away, that of course must be, but I get all the purposes of God founded upon it. I have man in absolute wickedness against God in the cross, then Man in His absolute goodness on the cross, and perfect obedience to God; “but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, so I do -- absolutely obedient, and absolutely loving the Father, both; and then, too, at the cross, all the power of Satan is brought out as governing this world; while on God’s side, I have His righteousness against sin in the cup Christ had to drink, and God’s perfect love to the sinner also. I have every form of good and evil in man, and in Satan, and what God is in righteousness and love, brought out in the cross, and all settled -- settled for ever, and the consequence is, man goes into the glory of God. And then many other consequences come flowing out.

. . . The entire question is settled, and it is no longer man upon his responsibility -- like Adam who had to be tested -- but man already tested takes his place in the glory of God, and the Holy Ghost comes down to reveal all this.

Did you say Christ received the Holy Ghost afresh after His resurrection?

No; but in ascension. He is exalted first. This same Jesus is made Lord and Christ, the One whom they had crucified. It is that that reaches their hearts in the preaching -- Him in that position, you do not get Jesus preached as Son of God, but the rejected Man is made Lord and Christ.

Is there any thought of the oneness of the believer there with the risen Christ?

No. It is perfectly true, but it is not brought out here. Peter is dealing with the Jews, and saying, You rejected Christ and God received Him.

Would you say that so far as the testimony went before Paul’s conversion, it was an earthly thing?

Well, not quite; because you get in this chapter, “save yourselves from this untoward generation”; that did not refer to the ancient promises to
Israel, though it was on earth in a certain sense. Still Christ had gone up as forerunner.

Is there any intentional difference in the form of the words here, ἐπὶ τὸ, “in the name of Jesus” (v. 38), and εἰς τὸ in Matt. 28:19?

No, not that I know of: ἐπὶ is more the character, εἰς the effect.

In Acts 3:13, “His Son Jesus” should be “Servant” Jesus, should it not?

Yes, it is a mere mis-translation. It is so again in Acts 3:26, 4:27, 30; in the two last παις is rendered “child,” but the same word in Acts 4:25 is rendered “thy servant David.”

Is there anything special in Peter saying to them, “Repent and be baptized,” or is that still to be the preaching?

It is not quite the preaching now, because people so largely profess to believe in Christ already. It is the same gospel though, as to the value of Christ’s death and resurrection.

But if you were preaching to Jews, would it not then be correct?

Yes, I suppose so . . . I believe it will be carried on in the remnant.

Then how would the apostles preach to Gentiles?

I cannot tell how precisely to Gentiles, because they never went; but there is no different gospel as to the foundation of it, whether to Jews or Gentiles.

But Peter went to Cornelius?

Yes, that is a special case entirely by itself.

Could any who were not baptized at all be really happy?

Well, I suppose Christians might rejoice in the Lord who have not been baptized at all. Baptism here is “baptism for the remission,” please all recollect that the only baptism here recognized is for the remission of sins.

Would an assembly be justified in refusing those who confessed Christ, though not baptized?

It would not be in order to receive such; only you never get to the baptism for the remission of sins now, I mean to the ground the apostle takes here.

But how would you meet the case supposed?

That depends; we are all in confusion about it, and there is no way out except patience.

But how would you deal with those who have been baptized as children, and do not think it baptism now?

If anyone is anxious to be baptized as an adult, who has already been
baptized, he must settle that for himself.

But were not the sins remitted through the bloodshedding of Christ?

Yes; here is the doctrine of the bloodshedding of Christ for the remission of sins, and they were baptized on that ground.

Would it be baptism by the apostles for the remission of sins?

Whoever baptized: Paul washed away his sins.

Is not baptism death?

It is the figure of death, showing how the sins are washed away; still the fact of its being for the remission of sins shows what the administration of it is.

Did Paul preach it at all?

No, I do not get that, he was not sent to baptize {1 Cor. 1:17}, but he did not abrogate it either.

Does the commission in Matthew refer to the church at all?

The doctrine of the church was not brought out at the end of Matthew. There was no command to baptize Jews then.

Is there a single proof of the commission ever being acted upon?

No; but the question is the obligation of the command. The mission of the twelve was to teach all the nations, but in Gal. 2 they gave up this mission to Paul; and I should insist upon it that it never was fulfilled. Even to Peter, the sheet was let down before he went out to preach to Cornelius. But this is only proving what bad people the apostles were; they were to go discipling and baptizing and “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” {Matt. 28:20} that is, the {end of the} age.

Does not that refer to the seventy weeks?

I have no objection to that. Here I have a positive command to go and do something; I agree with you that it was not carried out, but that does not touch the command itself.

But is it not important to see that the disciples begin anew from the ascension?

Yes. Paul never owns them, nor even Christ after the flesh; and in that sense you must start from the glory.

I suppose Rome has kept to Matt. 28?

Yes, and lost plenty else besides.

Baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus, is it not?
Yes, practically.

The kingdom of heaven goes on, I suppose, until the Lord comes after the church is removed.

Well, that is a transitional time.

But will not the testimony then be like it was before the Lord first came?

You cannot have a John Baptist again testifying to the people of a Christ born in Bethlehem; and so coming for their reception. But you may have testifying to His coming in glory.

How does Paul’s work stand in relationship to the twelve?

I get Paul supplanting the twelve as to the Gentiles in scripture.

Are the twelve representative of us, or are they the apostles of the kingdom, looking beyond church time altogether?

In Matt. 10 the Lord takes up the ministry in the land of Israel, and that by the twelve.

But does not the latter part of that chapter make a difference?

But Christ tells the disciples, You go and do so and so, and you must not say they are not to do it at all: I do not say that it did not fall through, because it did; but that does not touch the authority of the command.

Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel {Matt. 10:5}.

Then the chapter is divided into two distinct parts, after “Behold I send you forth as sheep,” turning to a testimony to the Gentiles. Christ has gone then, for the Holy Ghost has come, and it is to be the Spirit of their Father that speaks in them. First, it should be worse for them than for Sodom and Gomorrah through the disciples then mission; and then He goes on to the time when the Holy Ghost should be there; and He does not think of the church, but says, “you shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.” The division is between verses 16, 17.

When is that testimony (v. 18) borne?

When they are brought up as prisoners.

Have you not their mission to the Gentiles in Matt. 24?

That is yet to come.
ACTS 3 - 17

What is striking here is that, after the setting up, in a sense, of the church, and saying “Save yourselves from this untoward generation,” Peter then addresses himself to Israel as such, and tells them “Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,” not “when” but “so that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” God had raised up His Son Jesus, and now He deals with the nation, and that after having called upon them to separate from the nation. God is still dealing with Israel on the ground of Israel. In v. 13 he says “the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus,” he goes as far as that.

The prophets, the covenant, and the fathers are all brought in, in connection with this fulfilment? (Acts 3:25).

Yes. The heavens must receive Him until the times of the restitution of all things; and that is still going on in fact. He proposes to them in this way the return of Christ; and he says, “I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.” But it was supplementary dealing with Israel on the ground of the intercession of Christ, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

But then the apostles are not allowed even to finish their speech, and Israel rejects the supplementary grace; “as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people.”

In Acts 3:26 does “raised up” refer to the fact of the Lord’s coming amongst the Jews?

I have no doubt it does.

“Sent him to bless you,” is that by the ministry of the apostles?

It takes in Christ’s life on earth as well.

Is it “God was in Christ reconciling”?

Ah, that is “the world”; here it is, “ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers.” This is an address to Israel, when Christ was gone, to say that He would come back again if they repented; as indeed He will when they do repent. But the priests stop their mouths altogether, and tell them that they must not preach; and then they say they must obey God rather than man. The priests let them go, and they go to their own company; but they have got their own company to go to, notice that.

Then we get another manifestation of the power of the Holy Ghost and its effect in making them all of one heart and of one mind too (Acts 5:12).

Had Peter this in his mind in Acts 2?
No; there it was “Repent and be baptized, every one of you,” and “save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Here the return of Christ promised on repentance; but Acts 6 is present christian testimony, the other was supplementary grace.

Were they thoroughly given up until the last chapter?

Well, this was outside Jerusalem.

There is no offer that Christ should return after this?

No, not at all.

Would you explain Acts 3:21?

It is what the prophets had stated, that is all. Nothing more is to be restored than they had said should be. In Acts 5 you get evil coming in inside; then you find the power of judgment, and they fall down dead; and fear comes upon all within and without. It was the manifestation of God’s presence encouraging His disciples. Ananias and Sapphira were lying to God as in the assembly, and the Lord’s presence showed itself in judgment.

Does Peter allude to this when he says judgment begins at the house of God?

No; though it is the same principle. Then comes another character of evil -- murmuring about the temporal provisions; and the seven are appointed. An important principle is connected with this, and that is the free action of the Holy Ghost shown even in Jerusalem, in Stephen, and afterwards in Philip too. It was not apostles merely bearing witness, but you now see this free action in those who had the serving of tables.

I suppose Judaism was not thoroughly judged until Jerusalem was destroyed?

Well, not externally; but the patience of God still went on with them. You do not get the closing of all that, until the Epistle to the Hebrews and the going outside the camp.

Is the Epistle to the Hebrews supplementary and lingering?

Up to going outside the camp, and then there is no lingering after that.

What is “dared no man join himself to them”?

The people magnified them, heard them gladly, but not the grand folks, it would not do for them. On the contrary, it was they who put the apostles in prison. And then comes something more -- angelic power is employed to minister to the heirs of salvation; the Lord sends His angel who opens the prison doors, and the apostles come out and preach as before. That is a wonderful display of power. “Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.” And Peter testifies to the council,

We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised
up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost {Acts 5:31}.

Then God has providential things ready for them by the hand of Gamaliel. You get our New Testament Joshua here.

At what point does the primitive church lose its full power of blessing?

It gradually died down; though you get a point in

I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock {Acts 20:29}.

Then comes a question whether the apostles did not fail in staying at Jerusalem, because the Lord had said, “When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another,” and they did not do so.

You never find a church among the Gentiles in such a state of outward attraction as at Jerusalem?

No. And you get here at Jerusalem, Ananias and Sapphira trying to deceive the Holy Ghost; and then the Hellenists murmuring, and so on. Then comes this action of the Holy Ghost in Stephen, preaching and confounding his hearers; and they bring him up to the council.

Murmurings soon came in?

But the murmurings are met by the Spirit of God. First, there is a display of blessedness, everybody giving up what he has; then comes in this murmuring about it all; and then power by the Holy Ghost to meet that. And power goes on in testimony all the while, and in ch. 7 Stephen is put to death, and that closes that scene. A person is sent to heaven {Stephen}, and that closes up Christ’s coming back, because He has got some one gone up there, and that begins another thing entirely. In his speech in Acts 7, Stephen goes through all the dealings of God from Abraham down, from beginning to end, and shows the result as to man. Really the cross had finished everything. Abraham was the beginning of all the dealings of God; there were no dealings before, but a testimony only, not positive institutions or dealings (nor indeed promise to fallen man, though in the judgment on the serpent a revelation of Christ which faith could lay hold of), and that testimony ended with the flood. Then in the beginning of the world, after setting up authority in it in Noah, when that declined, God calls out a person who thereupon becomes the father of the faithful {Gen. 12:1}; he is the father of the race of God, just as you had the father of a wicked race in Adam, but in Abraham you get the root of the olive-tree.

Well, Stephen begins there, and gives the whole history of Israel, summing it up with this, they received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it; their fathers persecuted the prophets, and slew those who told before of the coming of the just One; and of Him they themselves had now been the
betrayers and the murderers, “ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye” {Acts 7:51}. You have there the law broken, the prophets killed, Christ crucified, and the Holy Ghost resisted. And so that chapter is the turning point of Israel’s, and indeed of man’s history.

What are we to understand by the Lord standing at the right hand of God?

I believe He had not sat down to say it was all over with Israel, until they had killed Stephen. It is a figure of the thing. The whole scene is exceedingly beautiful: the stones are flying about Stephen, and he kneels down and prays for those who throw them, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” {Acts 7:60}. You see in him the effect of the perception of Christ in glory; Stephen is formed into the same image. The heaven is opened too; it was opened on Christ at His baptism, but then, heaven looked down on Him as perfect, here Stephen looks up into heaven. The difference is total as to the person.

Why in Acts 7:2 does Stephen call God “the God of glory”?

That was the natural title as to Israel. And here it is that you first meet Saul. We have been tracing the rejection of the truth, not only in a humbled Christ, but in a continued course of history, which is over now, and that is where Saul comes in; he is the expression of the condition of man, who is an open enemy to the very last possible expression of God.

And that is why he calls himself the chief of sinners?

No doubt. Well then, persecution arose and God allowed it. And Philip’s service in Samaria follows. Then the offer of Simon Magus to buy the power of giving the Holy Ghost. Philip is a beautiful character of promptness and readiness; he is sent off, when in the full tide of service in Samaria, into the desert; he purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith.

What was the character of his preaching?

Jesus.

How far does that go?

To the eunuch. He explained Isa. 53. The eunuch asks, “Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself or of some other man?” and Philip began at that scripture; it goes on even to the glory, for you get “he shall divide the spoil with the strong.”

What is “the kingdom of God” in the Acts?

It was the great truth that the kingdom of God was come now, in the form of the kingdom of heaven.

Would preaching the second coming include the kingdom of God?

It brings it in. Preaching the kingdom is not dealing with the world merely, but it was setting up a kingdom.

What is the meaning of “ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel until the Son of man be come”? 
They will not have gone over them until He comes again.

Was Simon’s administrative forgiveness when he was baptized?

It was external, and there was nothing real in any part of it; but he had the form of it.

But the judgment of him was not brought out until afterwards?

Just so. He let the truth out when he saw the power working, that he thought it would be a fine thing to have that. And the apostle says, Thy money perish with thee, thou hast no part or lot in the matter.

Are the Samaritans here treated as a separate class?

Rather so.

They do not appear to have made the same difficulty about them as they did about the Gentiles?

No, you see the Lord had been in Samaria.

It speaks strongly for the unity that the apostles did not say, They are only Samaritans, let them alone?

In Acts 8:22 he says, “Pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee,” what is that?

Possibly he might get forgiven if he bowed to God; it does not exclude him from hope; that is all.

There is something in that word, “his life is taken from the earth”; was it not important at that moment to press that?

That is what he was reading, there was no pressing it more than any other part.

It was going from Jerusalem that this took place?

Yes, he was a proselyte. So now we get Jews, Samaritans, and proselytes, not Gentiles quite. And then we get Saul, the apostle of what brought final judgment on man; by final, I mean, after God had done everything, and Christ was utterly rejected.

And the whole testimony is rejected from the earth?

Yes. And Saul’s place is an exceedingly special and peculiar one. Afterwards you get Peter receiving the Gentiles.

What marks Paul’s place?

He tells us in Acts 26:16.

I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee.

Paul was neither a Jew nor a Gentile, but taken out of both and connected with
Christ in the glory. Sovereign grace had taken out this person, guilty as he was of final hostility -- hostility to the very end, and in the moment when he was occupied in carrying out this violent hostility of man against God, notwithstanding all that God could do in grace, he is taken out, is identified with God’s servants, and sent out in service; “delivering thee from” is really “taking thee out of,” so that he was neither a Jew nor a Gentile. He did not even know Christ after the flesh. And you get a new truth at Saul’s conversation, in “Why persecutest thou me?” “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest” {Acts 9:5}. That is, all the Christians were Christ Himself, in Christ’s estimate of them. As you have “so also is Christ” {1 Cor. 12:12}. The whole mystery is involved if not developed in that word “Me.”

How do you understand the Lord’s appearing to him?

It was because he was to be a witness for Him. Did Paul forget this when he said, “I am a pharisee, the son of a pharisee”?

I suppose so. It is not like his counting it all dross and dung at any rate.

Was Paul right in saying, “Is it lawful to scourge a Roman”?

Well, I do not know that there is any objection there.

And at Philippi?

At Philippi he was right; but his using the plea that he was a Roman sent him to Rome.

Did you mean just now that Paul was put into any other position than that of a believer in Christ?

No; but he was put into the position of a vessel and witness of the truth specially.

In what peculiar sense was he entirely a heavenly man?

Because he was neither a Jew nor a Gentile, and so totally different from what went before.

Was he more heavenly than any other christian man?

Practically he was; but not as to true position. If I receive Paul’s testimony, I get into Paul’s place. He is a special vessel of testimony; God might have used other instruments as well, and did, and they preached . . . by the Holy Ghost.

“Filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ,” what is that?

Paul had his share, and a special share too, of the afflictions of Christ. Christ had to suffer for His love to the church, and so had Paul.

Paul says that by revelation the mystery was made known unto him, but was it not revealed by the Spirit to the “apostles and prophets”?

I do not doubt others had it revealed. But the first time Paul preached, he preached that Jesus was the Son of God; now Peter never preached that once,
so far as we get in scripture.

Did the other apostles get their knowledge of the mystery from Paul?

I do not know. Peter knew Paul’s writings, and thought some of them hard to be understood. In Galatians “privately” is what Paul communicated to them when alone. We get great truths shown out in him, and this remarkably, that sovereign grace takes him up when in the extreme of hostility against Christ, and makes him the instrument of declaring sovereign grace to those who were in that condition themselves . . . His opposition was a terrible thing; conscience told him he ought to do it, and all the religious authorities told him too; and then he found that he was fighting against the Lord of glory. He found out that all that was right in him (in one sense it was right) had just set him to destroy Christ. It was a complete smash -- an utter smash -- not of a wicked man at all, but a smash of a man in his most cultivated capacity; and the man was gone too. It was sovereign grace entirely above everything.

It seems to have always characterized Paul’s ministry -- this revelation of the mystery?

Yes . . . Then as soon as Paul is called, we get back to Peter, with not only the power still going on, but all Lydda and Saron turned to the Lord, and then, though Paul is called the apostle of the Gentiles, Peter is used to bring in the first Gentile.

Why was that?

Because it must all be brought in in unity; if Paul had started apart, then it would have been a Gentile church, as well as a Jewish church, and that would not do at all.

Peter was naturally averse to going to the Gentiles?

Yes. You do not get unity at first, but blessing for Gentiles in itself.

Is this Peter’s having the “keys”?

Yes.

And the Holy Ghost is given them too?

After the testimony of a crucified Christ and faith in Him . . . You must get blood before you get oil, and the oil may come immediately after the blood, as in the case of the leper. When I am cleansed by the blood of Christ, then the Holy Ghost can come and dwell in me.

* * * *

When you come to understand and know the condition of man, you will find there are no promises belonging to him, any more than righteousness. Wherever you have promises, you will find man in some measure owned. There are no promises to man as man, at least Gentiles have none. That is what I see in the Syrophenician woman, and in what she was brought to own. “It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and cast it to the dogs.” She
acknowledges that is true, but “the dogs eat the crumbs,” she says -- takes the dog’s place, and looks to God’s sovereign love to send to those who have no title, and then gets everything she wanted; but as long as she talked about the “Son of David,” she got nothing.

What is “the Holy Ghost fell on all”?

Peter says it is the same thing happened to them -- the Gentiles -- as did to us at the beginning.

In Acts 8:16, it says, “for as yet he was fallen upon none of them”?

That is the Samaritans. And now you have Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, all made partakers of the Holy Ghost.

Just a word again about the water, and blood, and oil: do you put the washing with water as the new birth?

Yes; then the sprinkling with blood, the remission of sins.

And an interval between that and the oil?

There often is.

And an interval between water and blood?

Well, there may be, but not in a general way so much, at least, where Christ is preached. 62 And here the oil is at once: “they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.” Cornelius was a converted man, and now he is more than that, he is “saved” by Peter’s word, and the Holy Ghost fell on him.

Was he not a Christian until then?

A person is not entitled to be called a Christian until he has the third thing; “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not of him” {Rom. 8:9}. 63

If we have no promises, what is meant by “all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus”? And Peter speaks of -- “whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious premises”?

That is the second Man, “yea and amen in Christ Jesus.” And Christians have promises of course. But not the first man -- not Gentiles, I said.

What is the meaning of the place being shaken?

It showed the power in an outward way.

62. {This answer is vague. The water and blood are applied together as settling the question judicially before God. However, the value of the blood often is not rightly apprehended immediately. Perhaps this is what was meant. When a person rests on the Person and on the finished work for the knowledge of being in the forgiven position, He is sealed; the oil is applied, so to speak.}

63. {JND’s understanding of this verse is that a born again person (a quickened person) who is not yet sealed, is not in the Christian position.}
There is no mention of the Holy Ghost in the case of the Ethiopian?

No; but he went on his way rejoicing; and to this day the Abyssinians are half Jews and half Christians.

What of Cornelius himself?

His alms, it says, came up before God, and his prayers; and he was a devout man. He may have heard of Christ, for this thing was not done in a corner; any way he must have known of Christ, much or little, but he did not know the gospel, as we call it. It is important to see on this question to notice that the word “saved” has a force which is not generally given to it. Take the word “delivered,” and then Israel was not delivered until they had passed the Red Sea; they knew they were to be, but were not really.

Would you call it a transition state?

You may call it so, or what you please, but they were not saved. Only remember, I do not go and preach about a transition state to a mass of supposed unbelievers... Strictly, salvation is not believed in. Conversion is. Quickening is. But that a person is taken out of the state he is in naturally, in bondage in the flesh, and delivered from it, is not. And that is “saved.” 64

Then what is the difference between conversion and salvation?

Conversion is when a man turns to God, through the Spirit of God working in Him.

What is conviction? Is that there?

It would include that, and be conversion too, if the will is bowed. But salvation is positive deliverance from the state the man is in. The prodigal son was converted when he turned and came to his father; but he had not Christ on him until he had the best robe. He would be glad before if he could but get a corner in the house.

In Acts 11 you get the gospel preached first to the Jews, and then some spoke to the Gentiles. Then Barnabas gets hold of Paul, and that is where the new ministry comes in. The church at Antioch is started.

“As far as Antioch,” the distance did not hinder them.

Were Grecians Gentiles?

Hellenes were, but Hellenists were not. Here the whole point is that they were Gentiles.

You have faith there before conversion, they “believed and turned to the Lord”?

64. {Persons confuse being safe for heaven with the NT doctrine of saved, or salvation. A quickened soul is necessarily safe, but not necessarily saved in the NT sense. Cornelius was quickened, thus safe, but not saved until Peter preached to him words whereby, appropriated, he would be saved.}
Yes, you always get belief first in that way. If they did not believe, they
could not turn to Him. Then we get persecution and other things. The Lord
delivers Peter out of the prison, but Herod cuts off James’ head. The first
persecution was by the chief priests, but this is a royal persecution. In the
dealing with Herod we get the government of God outside the church. This is
the end of Peter.

In Acts 13 we start from Antioch. There you get the public testimony with
this important element, that they are sent forth by the Holy Ghost. Christ had
called Paul, but now you get the immediate action of the Spirit for carrying out
his ministry.

Would “ministering to the Lord” be worship?

Partly so, I suppose; partly worshiping and partly praying, they were
together before the Lord. It would be like Israel, they kept the charge of the
Lord until the cloud was taken up, or came down.

Is there anything special in Saul’s name being changed?

Well, I believe he had got among the Gentiles, and Paul is a Latin name

In Acts 13:47 Paul takes Isa. 49:6 for a command; it is really a prophecy
spoken for the Lord.

In Acts 14 “elders” are chosen, and this is the first intimation of that
arrangement.

Is it “ordain?”

The word really means choose, but in ecclesiastical Greek, to ordain. Calvin
put in the words, “by the advice of the assembly.” In Acts 1 the translators
put in “ordain,” simply from their own views. The etymological meaning of the word, “by show of hands,” is quite lost.

What about these elders now?

Well, if you want them, you must first get me the church, and then
apostles too. In Acts 20 Paul speaks of “the flock of God, over whom the Holy
Ghost has made you overseers.” If you were to choose elders amongst you
now, you would be just a little sect with its own voluntary arrangements.
Christ was the source of authority: He appointed apostles, apostles appointed
elders. Authority came down, never went up. There is no kind of choosing by
the church in that way in scripture. There is scripture for subjection to those
who labor in the word, and so on; that is on moral ground. In Hebrews and
Thessalonians you have, “esteem them very highly in love for their work’s
sake” {1 Thess. 5:13}.

But to appoint them needed either an apostle or an apostle’s delegate?
Yes {see Titus 1:5}.

How do you understand that “from themselves” grievous wolves should
arise?

I do not confine that to the elders, though such might come even from them.

In Acts 15 we get the question of what was to be done with the Gentiles -- were they to be circumcised?

Antioch and Jerusalem were tending towards a split; now, if Paul had settled it, each would have gone on its own way, and we should have had two churches. God hindered that, and made Jerusalem set the Gentiles free; so keeping up the unity practically. Then, as they went through the cities, they delivered the decrees to them for to keep.

There is one verse that I should like to get to the bottom of, and that is, “it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.” What is the force of that?

I do not know that it is not Cornelius there. 65

Was it that in the assembly the Holy Ghost spoke?

In Acts 15:25 the Holy Ghost is not mentioned; and in v. 23 you have apostles, elders, and brethren. They were decrees of the apostles and elders . . . You see the Holy Ghost had let in a Gentile without making him a Jew . . . I see one very wise thing; the apostles let all the brethren tire themselves with discussing, and then they (the apostles) come in lively. James quotes a passage, the scope of which has nothing to say to the matter -- one that is in the Septuagint -- “that the residue of men might seek after the Lord,” but which in the Hebrew is, “that they may possess the remnant of Edom.”

What is it quoted for?

For one single word, “the Gentiles, on whom my name is called”; that is all that he quoted it for.

What is the principle of a decree of the council?

Merely that there were certain things they would do right to attend to. There were three things -- the proper claims of God; the relationship of man and wife, purity in man; and then, that life belonged to God.

Jews in every city?

Yes, that there are plenty everywhere to plead for Moses. But spiritual intelligence will take up the defense of blood. It is not law only, but before it.

Are these binding upon us now?

Not in the shape of a decree now; but it is clear enough as to two of them. As to things offered to idols, if a thing were sold in the shambles I should ask no questions about it.

Paul’s higher truth could not abrogate this?

65. {This is transcribed from my copy, but makes no sense.}
No, certainly not. And as to fornication, in Thessalonians Paul presses the same thing; but it was ingrained in their habits, they were so degraded. Then we get Barnabas and Paul disputing. I do not doubt, after all, God’s hand was in it, because Paul had to stand alone in the place he takes up. Barnabas takes Mark. John Mark, was sister’s son to Barnabas, and so he was not above connection with nature as Paul was; that was the secret and therefore he would not be a suitable person to be with Paul.

I suppose it is distinct that the Holy Ghost was with Paul?

Yes; but he may have lost his temper about it. It is beautiful to see how, afterwards, he says (2 Tim. 4:11), “Take Mark, and bring him with a thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.”

The brethren recommend Paul to the grace of God?

Yes. He is ordained twice; here, and in Acts 14:26, we read what it meant, “Whence they had been recommended to the grace of God.” It was laymen ordaining an apostle, if you take it as ordaining, and done twice over. It is very simple if you really take it as stated; they had what we should call a prayer-meeting about it, and that might be done a dozen times.

Would there be any danger in doing it again now?

No; doing it honestly.

What of laying on of hands?

Laying on of hands was always used as a sign of blessing.

In Acts 16 we come to an important principle for evangelists, and that is, that while they are called to preach the gospel to every creature, there is Christ’s authority too for being here or there, as He sees fit; while their commission is universal, their direction is particular. Paul was not to go into Asia or Bithynia then (though he was allowed to go into Asia afterwards); but he is directed by a dream, and then says, “assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us.” When he comes to Macedonia with Luke, then we get “we” for the first time. And we get the wisdom of God needed to defeat Satan. You see how subtle Satan is; if Paul had accepted this woman’s testimony, this Pythoness, he would have accepted the devil; and if he put the spirit out of the Pythoness, then he raised the devil against him. And he does nothing for some time, and then he is stirred in spirit, and cannot help himself. Another thing: though he was very glad to preach in the synagogue, when he comes to Philippi, he goes and sits down by the river side with a number of poor women, and that is the commencement of one of the brightest churches we have in scripture. He does not put out any handbills or such things. He goes to the Jewesses. Lydia was a proselyte. And this was the commencement of the work in Europe.

Why did not Paul cast the evil spirit out at once?

Well, it is evident he avoided meddling with it for many days; at last he
cannot stand the pretended co-operation of Satan, and then he arouses, and casts it out.

Will Satan co-operate now-a-days?
To be sure he will, if you will let him.
Not in the same manifest way?

Manifest! how so, how manifest then, except to the spiritual perception of the apostle? Many an infidel would come and work with you now, in some respects, if you would let him. It teaches us how important it is to see what we accept in the way of help in God’s service.

In Acts 17 it is all Paul’s ministry. And then you get him at Athens. Then you have Paul’s defense, not sermon, from v. 22. He had preached (v. 18) Jesus and the resurrection.

He preached repentance, and that characterized his gospel preaching?

Only you must not call this preaching. Paul is here brought to Areopagus to answer for himself.
This is general history of Paul’s service; and we may see how cast on the Lord we are in work. Corinth was a frightful place of luxurious wickedness, and he continued there a year and six months. Then he must by all means keep the feast at Jerusalem, and he goes away, and through Galatia. I suppose at this time the Epistle to the Galatians had hardly been written. You get his first preaching in Acts 16, and now he is confirming the disciples.

Is Apollos introduced here for any special purpose?

I do not know, except that he was a very eminent laborer afterwards. He went over to Achaia, so that they could say, “I am of Paul, and I of Apollos,” there. Then Paul went to Ephesus, and there was an uproar. We do not know when he went to Crete, though it is supposed that it was when he was at Ephesus. Just after that uproar he wrote the Epistle to the Corinthians; then Titus came back with the answer to the first letter, and Paul wrote the second. It tells us he was three years at Ephesus.

Was this trouble in Asia, what he alludes to in 2 Cor.?

Yes, only it must have gone further.

It says “disputing?”

Well, it was discussing the things of God; as an old term disputing was used in that way, not with bad feeling.

In Acts 19 we get very distinctly the Holy Ghost consequent upon believing -- “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” And in Acts 20 he calls the elders of Ephesus, and shows them that all would go thoroughly bad after his decease. “Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things,” &c. It is the religious body that is the spring of persecution; so at last, no doubt, the beast kills people, but the blood of the saints is found at Babylon.

What are the chief points in his address to the elders?

There is, first, the gospel of the grace of God; then the kingdom of God; and then the whole counsel of God.

What is that last?

It would have special reference to what Paul had to communicate . . . It was not that man was a moral being, and so on; it was much more objective than subjective; but the effect is to produce the subjective state, and the subjective state is always formed by an object.

It is not preaching about repentance that produces it?

No; but still you must preach that they repent; and it is repentance towards God too.
That is stated before “faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ?”

But that sentence (Acts 20:21) is abused in a violent way, putting repentance before faith; if it is faith in the full efficacy of Christ’s work, of course it can, and will come after repentance; it is impossible that repentance can go before faith, because when a man goes with a testimony, if it is not believed, it produces no effect.

Is not this the first historical notice of the great deflection {defection?} of the church?

I suppose so. The Epistle to the Thessalonians was written before this; and the second to the Thessalonians was written after Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

Suppose a person took the ground that this was limited to Ephesus, how would you meet it?

Why, there is nothing about Ephesus in it. Paul is speaking in a general way, “after any decease.” And you get the same things in Peter. It is Paul’s ministry closing -- that is the point.

But is it not fatal to all apostolic succession?

Yes, entirely, so called. But I get apostolic succession in scripture, and that is in the binding and loosing which is conferred on two or three gathered together in {unto} Christ’s name {Matt. 18:18-20}; and that is the only thing the power is passed on to. But here, in the vulgar {i.e., common} sense of apostolic succession, it is positively denied.

Do you think that the mystery had been fully revealed to Paul at this time?

I do, because he had written to the Romans before this, and there refers to it {Rom. 16:25, 26}. You could scarcely have the whole counsel of God declared without the mystery being in it.

Could you call that view of apostolic succession uninterrupted?

Well, no, not quite, because it must come to “two or three.” It is remarkable how literally this has been fulfilled . . . It is given when they are a remnant getting out of an old system. Then the Lord tells them to count the cost, &c.

Ought an evangelist now to preach as Christ preached?

You never get the gospel from Christ at all; you get it practically stated, but His is the gospel of the kingdom.

But you get “salvation,” and “go in peace?” Yes, to one individual, but that is not His preaching about the country.

But the gospel now is the gospel of God? Yes, it is God’s glad tidings.
Is that practically now, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life?”

Yes.

Did people who were quickened on earth know Christ’s salvation?

No; nor the 120; at least Peter, the first of them, did not.

But “thy sins are forgiven thee,” to the man?

That was no “gospel” at all; it was administration {of forgiveness} on earth. I do not understand any effort to show that the Lord could preach what is our gospel; how could He preach His own death and resurrection for salvation as an accomplished thing? You get some of the truth prophetically, in a way, as to His death, and so on, but that is all.

But you find in Rom. 3 that the ground is now established, “to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness?”

Exactly; that is the very thing I am saying. There is no formula or rule as to preaching, but, taking all things together, here Paul characterizes the whole of his preaching by these two words, “repentance” and “faith.”

Is “the word of his grace” the written word?

Well, wherever they could get it, this was partly written, but not all; it would be all of it when it came. When you get decay brought out fully in Timothy, then it is, “Continue in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them,” and “the holy scriptures.”

Is it “God,” or “the word,” that is able to build you up?

I think it is the word of His grace, but it is not without God -- I am sure of that.

And no state of ruin can at all hinder the full blessing of that?

No, but on the contrary, it is the state of ruin that throws us entirely upon it. Only, as I said, in Timothy, I must know “of whom” I have learned, and “the scriptures.” Cyprian says, if I get a channel choked from a spring, I go back and see if the spring has failed, or if the channel is choked. Chrysostom says of Matt. 24, that flying to the hills and mountains is flying to the scriptures. Not that I know much of the Fathers, for when I began to read them, I found them such trash, I could not go on.

How soon was church authority insisted on?

In the second and third centuries; it grew up gradually. It was rather official authorities at first than the church.

Did Paul write the last of all?
John was the last writer, not Paul; all John’s writings, so far as known, were after Paul’s. There has been a controversy about the date of the Revelation, but, according to the most received evidence, it was thirty years after Paul: at least it was after Paul was killed. That is why the Lord says of John, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee.” He was the one who watched over the church until the last. Many learned Christians have put John’s gospel as the last thing written.

What coming did the Lord refer to in that John 21:22?

His own coming again.

Not the destruction of Jerusalem?

The destruction of Jerusalem had nothing to do with Christ’s coming; that was the judicial action of setting aside the people on earth. Morally it was done before; so that there was nothing left after that but his return. And the Lord says, Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. I think it is most important to notice that passage in 2 Tim. 3:

In the last days perilous times shall come: men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.

And then he refers Timothy, as we have said, to the things he has learned; and from a child Timothy had known the holy scriptures. John says,

He that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us; hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error {1 John 4:6}.

Then it is by means of the scriptures we are to know the truth?

I do not know how else. You cannot hear them (the writers) so you must read them. The principle of church authority is gone in “the seven churches”; there I am not called to hear what the church says, but I am to listen to what the Spirit judges about the church.

What is “hear the church” (Matt. 18:17)?

That is the assembly in discipline, not about doctrine at all, or anything of that kind. It is not for teaching -- the church does not teach, the church is taught. Teachers teach, apostles teach, and the gifts the Lord has given. Take away this horrid word “church,” and say assembly; then how can the assembly teach? I do not know a more mischievous word than that word “church.” If the church were teaching, you would have a hundred people talking together.
They say “a teaching body?”

Ah, the teaching body of the church, says the Romanist, and that comes to the clergy.

The “pillar and ground of the truth?”

The church confesses the truth, and so is the pillar and ground of the truth, but it does not teach. Suppose I were to say here to Mr. O., “Now I cannot believe you, ‘O.’ until Mr. B. guarantees what you say.” What would that prove? Just this, that I do not believe Mr. O. at all; I should be believing B., not O. And if I do not believe what is in the word until the church says it is right, I do not believe the word at all, but the church . . . I am sure I am very thankful to have been brought up to confide in the word; but if you come to real power, then you never believe in the word, but by its power over your own conscience. I remember a priest saying to me, “How do you know that it is the word of God?” And I asked him, suppose I give you a deep gash in your arm, how do you know what I have got in my hand is a knife? The trouble is, such things silence people at the moment, but they do not bow; it shows mere infidelity. How did the woman in John 4 know that Christ was a prophet, and not merely own that what He said was true? What He said was true, but because it was true, and came to her conscience, she knew that He was a prophet . . . I quite admit there is external testimony to the word, but I do not believe that gives faith. You get the power of the word in your conscience, and you have the testimony of it there. As for the Apocrypha, in the preface of the Maccabees, the writer says, “I have abridged five books because they were too long.” What authority can that carry? And there are numerous “gospels,” so called, with horrid stories about Christ’s power as a child, so that one says they were obliged to shut Him up, lest He should kill everybody. But you do not find people quarreling with the Koran as they do with the Bible; it is because it is the word of God that they will not let it alone. They do not quarrel with Homer, or books that have no power of conscience.

Does the word ever act on the affections before it acts on conscience?

Oh yes, I quite admit it may.

And the different books of the Bible?

The word is like a dissected map, I do not want proof that it is all there; there it is, and all the parts fit in. The only book, as to external evidence, that you can cast any doubt upon is the Second Epistle of Peter; rather, there is less for that than for any other -- not that I have the least doubt about it at all.

Could you give us an idea how the canon of scripture got welded together?
The canon of scripture is nothing to me, and the putting it into canon nothing either. You have the whole thing adapted and fitted in together. There may be more apparent difficulty about the Old Testament than about the New; but if you accept the history at all, then the Lord Jesus and the apostles distinctly recognize the Old Testament.

Are all quoted in the New Testament, as a whole, as well as separately?

Well, if I believe Christ is the Son of God, then I get Him taking a book which, on infidel showing, is not genuine, and opening their understandings to understand from it things about Himself. You get all in the law, the prophets, and the psalms; they are the three divisions. Then there are a great many moral proofs. Infidels will tell you there is nothing like the life of Christ, and yet they say it is an imposture -- a man who set up to be the Son of God, and He was not.

But they deny that He said He was the Son of God?

Well, that is not true. Besides, when a man comes and tells me, God ought this, and God ought that, what is that?

People say He was not called Son of God in the synoptical gospels?

He is commonly called Jesus, and Jesus is Jehovah-Savior; you must get the facts first.

It is said that they read Clement in the churches of old, and Hermas too?

But then I do not admit that the church has authority in that. As for Hermas, what is the account you get there? It is that God took counsel with His Son, and with the holy angels, to put a pure spirit into a body, and then sent His servant -- Christ -- to set up stakes, and stake out a vineyard, &c., that is, apostles, and so on, in the church; but he did a great deal more than he was told, for he set to work to pull up the weeds, that is, take away their sins; and then God takes counsel with His Son, the Holy Ghost, His angels, what shall we do to Him for this, and they agree to make Him a joint-heir with the Son. Now, if the church authenticated that, then I get the epistle is authenticated, but the church itself unauthenticated. Origen said that that thing of Hermas I have quoted was inspired; but that does not make it inspired. Irenaus too.

What about the Book of Jasher?

The Book of Jasher was not inspired; but the king says to Ammon, “Go and look at that record, and see if this country is not ours” . . .

I suppose there is no doubt that it was Saturday night when the disciples came together to break bread?

. . . Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

In Acts 2 they broke bread from house to house?
Not from one house to another, but at home.

Is that the Lord’s supper?

Yes. Then we get general facts as to Paul going up to Jerusalem.

In Acts 20:11, is that the love feast?

I do not know; but they used to have it generally.

Was it breaking of bread on board the ship?

No, not on board the ship.

**THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS**

**EPHESIANS 1**

Here we have the thought of God about us -- all that there is of blessing in Him for us. Angels, principalities, and powers will learn through us the manifold wisdom of God. Then He unfolds it all. First our calling, then God’s purpose as to Christ -- His place -- then our inheritance. The close of Eph. 1 puts all these subjects together; all are founded on this title which God takes -- the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is only after His resurrection that Christ calls His disciples His brethren.

Eph. 1:3. You get here the double title. It is the secret of all God’s thoughts, that His purpose is to put us into the same place as Christ (1 Cor. 15:49). We shall be as like the Second Adam as we have been like the first.

In Matt. 16:20, He forbids them to say He was the Christ. In Matt. 12 He is rejected; Matt. 13, He introduces the kingdom of heaven; Matt. 16, the church; Matt. 17, the kingdom of glory, but at the end He shows the disciples where He was leading them. He says to Peter, You and I are children, we are therefore free -- “for me and thee,” think of the Lord of glory saying that! He puts Peter into this place with Himself. Then He shows His power over creation. He puts Peter in association with Himself just when He was showing this divine power.

Eph. 1:3 is altogether in contrast to the Jew. They will be blessed with temporal blessings under Christ, we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. He has blessed us; that is the first wonderful statement.

Christ’s place comes second, not that it is second, but unless we were brought into the place, we could not understand His place.

Eph. 1:4. We have to go through the world, all of us (speaking generally), but we belonged to heaven before the foundation of the world. “Holy,” “love,” that is God’s nature; we are made partakers of it; that gives capacity for knowing Him. I know not anything of an angel, for I have not
his nature; but I am capable of knowing and enjoying God, and that in His own presence.

Verse 4 is what Christ was here -- holy, blameless, and always before God in love.

Eph. 1:5. “Children” implies “Father,” but it is still in Christ. It does not say in v. 4, according to the good pleasure of His will, for He could not have unholy creatures before Him; but here it is said, for though He might have only desired to have servants, He chooses to have “children.” Verse 4. He might have said “accepted in Christ”; that would not do, it is “in the Beloved,” accepted according to that.

Q. Is holy in Christ our state now, or our standing?

A. It is put here as it is in God’s mind, not as it is found in the poor earthen vessel. The extent of God’s grace almost alarms people. Do you believe that God loves you as He does Jesus? If I have glory, it is “the glory which thou gavest me.”

Q. Do you think we get this without going through Romans and Colossians?

A. No; but it is of immense moment for us to understand that it is by “grace,” and that according to what God is.

The conscience must be reached. God is light and love; and that manifests what we are -- exposes us.

He reasons down from what God is -- no one is ever free till he gets that side.

Israel, in Egypt, were sheltered from judgment; but it is a different thing at the Red Sea. There they are told to stand still, and see the salvation of God.

I am where God has put me, not where sin has put me.

In John 3 you get the two sides. Then my peace flows from what God is for me. If I go to God now, I go to the One who did not spare His own Son for me. I get all the love that was in His heart, this love reigning through righteousness.

The forgiveness is not according to the measure of my need (though it meets it, of course), but the manner of it is “according to the riches of His grace.”

Eph. 1:9, 10. Then God says, Now that I have brought you into capacity to understand, I will make known to you my purpose about Christ.

There is nothing absolutely certain but faith. I may believe there is such a town as Edinburgh, but it is possible that an earthquake may have destroyed it. Nothing but faith can be absolutely certain.
In Hebrews we read, the “full assurance” of faith. Three “full assurances” are spoken of -- in Colossians it is of “understanding,” in Hebrews of “hope” and of “faith.”

“Prudence” is an unhappy word; here it is God’s mind, His thoughts, not prudence in practice. You get the word in Proverbs. He unfolds to me His thoughts and plans about Christ; He is going to head up all things under Christ as man {Eph. 1:10}, and we get three reasons for this. In Colossians it is as Creator; in Hebrews Christ is the Heir as Son; and thirdly, having been rejected as Christ, He comes out as Son of man, Head over all things. Heb. 2: “He left nothing that is not put under him.” He is seated at the right hand of God, but He is waiting till the time appointed to take His power and reign over all.

He has this Headship as Creator, as Son of God, and as Son of man; personal, relative, and positional Head over all; but Head to the church, which is His body. A head would be incomplete without a body.

But there redemption comes in: as a Redeemer He fills it all, not merely as God.

We have seen the plan of God as regards Christ; then I get the inheritance. The first part of the chapter is our calling, afterwards we get the inheritance.

Eph. 1:12 and 13. Those who trusted in Christ before He appears, get to be with Him -- same place as the church.

We are sons by faith, not merely born; quickening and believing go together. We get the Spirit, the earnest of the inheritance, until Christ comes in His glory.

Q. Does “after that ye believed “suppose an interval?

A. No; it should be “having believed.” It is not that there is an interval, but you must get the things in their order; God could not seal an unbeliever.

There is nothing in heaven that does not belong to me now.

Moses and Elias talked with Christ, that was the kingdom; then came the cloud, that was the Father’s house, the Father’s voice heard speaking from it, and they entered in; that was a new thing, the disciples were afraid.

Q. Does “the inheritance” include everything, heavenly and earthly?

A. The inheritance takes in all created things, you must not confound it with our calling.

Eph. 1:17, and {chapter} 3. We find the distinction between God and Father in these two prayers. Here He is looked at as Head over all things. Three things the apostle prays for -- that they might know “the hope” of the calling and the “riches” of the inheritance; but then he prays that they might know the “power” that raised Christ from the dead. The calling is the first
part; then that they are sons, they get the inheritance because they are sons. Then he goes on to pray that their “eyes may be opened.”

Three callings -- in Thessalonians it is “walk worthy of God, who has called you into his kingdom and glory”; in Colossians, “walk worthy of the Lord”; here it is simply God’s calling.

To Israel, God says: “The land is mine.” He inherited the land, in, and through Israel; here it is His inheritance in the saints.

“That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

We are called to enjoy what is above us, and to inherit what is below us. The crowned elders were happier when they were on their faces than crowned on their thrones, more blessed to adore Him than to be in honor one’s self.

They [the translators] were afraid to say “thrones,” so they say “seats.” Far above all.

Q. What is the eternal inheritance in Hebrews?

A. Oh! it is all eternal there. You look at the inheritance in two ways. Peter looks up, and that’s eternal. Here it is -- (end of the sentence lost, A. B. T.).

In Ephesians it is union, in Hebrews priesthood.

Q. Is not the “inheritance” there spoken of in connection with the new covenant, which is millennial?

A. No; all is eternal there, in contrast to Judaism. He looks at the heavenly calling, a positive thing, in contrast to the old [covenant]. God’s side of the new has been accomplished, but it must be made good with the Jew.

While God makes the principle of the two covenants different, the blood of the new is shed; but He had other purposes -- the church -- and the new covenant is suspended till that be accomplished. We are sanctified unto the obedience of Christ {1 Pet. 1:2}.

What delivers us from law, was not that it had lost its force, but we have died in Christ {Rom. 7:4}, and you cannot apply the law to a dead man, you cannot charge a dead man with having lust in his heart.

In Rom. 8, I find that what the law could not do God did -- condemned sin in the flesh. It is not that He let it pass, but has done with it in the cross; it is not here that Christ died for my sins (that’s true), but I died with Him.

Rom. 5:12 is the commencement of the new subject -- what I am, not what I have done. I have died by faith, of course. Then there is the new life in Christ, which delights itself in God’s will.

It is dead to sin in Romans, to the world in Colossians. You get not a
word of all that in Ephesians, but that which takes me out of my own standing, and places me before God -- Christ my righteousness -- Christ my life.

In Colossians you get, “risen”: that question is not looked at in Ephesians, there it is dead in sins; I am dead in them -- I am dead to God {Eph. 2:1}; God takes me up in Christ, and puts me in the same place. It is new creation here.

Death is spoken of in three aspects. In Colossians, “Ye are dead”; Romans, “Reckon yourselves dead”; 2 Cor. 4, “Always bearing about in the body,” &c., that is, carrying it out practically. I am at liberty, because I reckon myself dead, and so I can carry it out practically.

In Ephesians, “I am dead and quickened” together with Christ; and that is new creation; that power which came in and took Christ from that state of death and puts Him at God’s right hand, takes us, and puts us in Him. The result, all things under His feet, and He Head over all things to His body. He fills everything between hades and the throne of God -- fills the whole thing for faith. You cannot put my spirit in a place where Christ has not been. Eph. 2:2 is the Gentiles (v. 3 the Jew), Satan’s power over the world. By nature the Jew was very far off, but not by position; by position he was near to God, the elder son.

God does not give two epistles for the same purpose. In Colossians we do not get the Holy Ghost, but we do in Ephesians, therefore there is the strongest possible contrast. “Together with Christ” is a great deal more than new life. I am taken out of the condition I was in, and put in Him, there where He is. I have divine life, but there is more here, my standing is in Christ.

The position is totally changed, it alters the whole character of the Christian, if they get hold of it. It is new creation, not merely that I get a new life, but I have got a totally new position {see Eph. 2:10}. We have not to grow to become meet, not to grow up, &c. The growing is all right, but He has “made us” meet.

That is the ground of it; we are not in the standing of the old man before God at all. It is a wonderful thing to apply to oneself, that God is going to show forth in me the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness.

Q. “It makes us so small.”

A. It makes us nothing, that is the comfort. “By grace are ye saved” -- a fact, not a principle. God’s salvation is, that I am going to be in the same glory as Christ.

Q. Does “that not of yourselves” apply to the whole thing?

A. No; I believe it applies to the faith {Eph. 2:8} -- faith is just simply
the word of God applied to man’s soul by the Spirit of God. When the conscience is awakened, it puts God in His place, and man in his.

If I know all that is in your mind, I am your equal, as to your mind.

The Pharisee and the poor woman (Luke 8) is an instance. Who was the child of wisdom? She was kissing His feet, and honoring God -- that was God’s wisdom.

I believe there is instinctively in man a conscience that he has to do with a power above him. A thing that reasoning proves is never a fact, but only a consequence.

“Unto good works, foreordained” {Eph. 2:10}; the works as much foreordained as I am.

In Eph. 1 we have the universal thought of Christ, Head over all to His body. Here (end of ch. 2) we get a new thing, not a body, as in ch. 1, but a habitation of God.

Apostles and prophets are those of the New Testament.

In the first place, Christ builds (Matt. 16). In Peter we have, “built up as living stones” -- that is another aspect. What God has already done is, to set up man in responsibility, the first thing man does, is, to fail. Then Christ comes, and makes all good in the second Adam that failed in the first. In 1 Cor. 3 “a wise master-builder”; that is man’s building. But when Christ builds, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

In Eph. 2:21 we get, first, it “groweth”; then (v. 22), what God has set up, “ye are builded together” -- it is not union here.

Q. When would you say the house will be set up in perfection?

A. In the heavenly Jerusalem. On the one hand the house, His dwelling-place; on the other, His body. It is union with Christ the Head, where it is His body, or, the bride.

Q. The body is not for the earth only?

A. Oh, not at all, it is for ever {see Eph. 3:21}. There is no union till Christ is glorified in heaven.

The Vine and the branches {John 15} is not the church at all. I get the house on earth; it will be the temple for ever. Consequent on the Holy Ghost coming down, the members of the body are united to Christ -- entirely heavenly.

The church was never revealed in the Old Testament; not only did it not exist, but it could not be revealed till after the cross. You get the same thing in Colossians. You must have Christ glorified first, or you would have a body without a head; the church has its connection with Christ, the children with the Father. The Holy Ghost coming down from the Father puts us in the
place of sons, and unites us with the Head: all that is heavenly. God has come out, and man gone in; the veil has been rent.

Col. 1:26. You cannot have the revelation of the church, and the Jews, at the same time, for they set aside each other.

In the Song of Solomon it is quite a different principle. There it is a question of going after Him, and finding Him, and losing Him (what the church never does). You have neither the place of sons, nor union with the Head.

Q. What is the difference between “children” and “Sons”?

A. Well, “children” puts them in the place of relationship, but “sons” are considered as of full age. John speaks of “children,” Paul, of “sons.” You get “Sons” in John, when it ought to be “children”; and “children,” in Gal. 3, when it ought to be “Sons.” In 1 John 2:1, 12, 28 it is all Christians; in vv. 13 and 18 it is young Christians.

Here we get a Man in heaven, sitting at the right hand of God. Consequent on that, the Holy Ghost came down (the Holy Ghost came down ten days after Christ ascended); then you get the consciousness of being sons.

You get all about Christ in the Old Testament, but no idea of union could be there.

Q. Will the temple be set up in the millennium?

A. I believe it will {see Zech. 6:12, 13; Ezek. 40-48}; the temple is never given as a figure of heavenly things, but always the tabernacle {signifies heavenly things}; “the faces of the cherubim turned inwards, and their wings stretched forth on high covering the mercy-seat.” It was the secret counsels of God. In the temple they turned outward, and their wings stretched to the wall of the house. It was the administrative government of God.

The difference of the prayer in Eph. 3 comes out in v. 15, where you get the expression, “Every family,” in connection with that of “Father of the Lord Jesus.” Before Abraham there was no family of faith; Abraham the root of all the promises.

God had His throne between the cherubim but no more from the Babylonish captivity. Then Christ came as a King, and they would not have Him; this sets the whole thing aside. The principle of Judaism was to keep up the partition, of Christianity to break it down.

The Syrophenician woman got through all dispensations to the heart of God; and all God’s heart was at her disposal.

It is not now mercy and promises, but grace. “Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” -- the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God {Eph. 3:5, 9; Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26}. 
The heavenly beings did not know it, for it was hid in God. Then the 
“manifold wisdom”; a new thing came out. Our conversation is in heaven 
{Phil. 3:20}, our hearts ought to be there; all our living associations.

If I speak of “Sons,” it is not union -- we are justified; you are a son and 
I am a son, but it is individual -- we are two; but when it is said “one Spirit,” 
it is union.

This prayer is very instructive. There was not one place where it was not 
the Jews who raised persecution against Paul, so he says to the Gentiles, “My 
persecution is your glory.”

Now, I get “the Father” (Eph. 3:14) of the Lord Jesus Christ -- a deeper 
thing than “the God of the Lord Jesus” (Eph. 1:17). “Every family in heaven 
and earth” {Eph. 3:15}; this expression is taken from Amos 3:2 -- angels, 
principalities, the church, &c.

He revealed Himself as Almighty God to the patriarchs; as Jehovah to the 
Jews; it will be as Most High in the millennium. We come in as heirs with 
Christ, and He is our Father; we belong to no dispensation.

He does not say here, as in the prayer of Eph. 1, “That ye may know”; 
here it is internal -- we have it. He is in us as life, but here is another thing, 
“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” {Eph. 1:17}.

See John 4 what a difference that makes; it spiritualizes the whole life. It 
is wonderful how far he goes here. In Rom. 5 “the love of God is shed 
abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,” -- purely God’s love. I get it in all 
its absolute purity, in the heart of God Himself. I had no part in what saved 
me, except my sins.

Christ is the center of all God’s purposes in glory -- I have Him in my 
heart. Thus having Christ in me, I am at the center. “That ye may be able to 
comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height” {Eph. 3:18}.

What is that? Of God’s glory. He brings me back to that center, and I am 
at the very center of the glory in heaven. It is beautiful that He puts me into 
the center of all the glory; he goes on, “And to know the love of Christ which 
passteth knowledge” {Eph. 3:19}; impossible to go beyond that! You may not 
be able to take it all in, but it has taken me all in.

I cannot realize the thought of infinite space, consequently I can never get 
out of it, I am lost in it: still, I know the love of Christ which passteth 
knowledge. We are creatures though a new creation; and shall be even in 
glory. “We know it” and “it passteth knowledge” go together.

Nothing of God that is revealable that is not revealed. We may think of 
one part at one time, and another at another time, but here we have it all 
revealed -- “filled to all the fulness of God” {Eph. 3:19} “according to the
power that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the church,” &c. {Eph. 3:20, 21}. He is to be glorified in the church; He is looking for a power in us, and Christ being glorified in the church by that. People generally separate the last verses, but they go together; it is according to the power that worketh in us, that there will be glory to Him in the church by Christ Jesus.

Many have not the courage to go on in God’s warfare, because they hold on to something which is inconsistent with the light they have received. Perhaps, alas! they lose the light which they have not acted up to, and Satan is able to bring their mind under the darkness of his good reasons for staying where they are without conquering more territory from him.

The armor should be put on before the battle, not just at the battle.
WHAT IS THE CHURCH
And in What Sense is It Now in Ruin?
On the Epistle to the Ephesians

Question asked. What is the church, and in what sense is it now in ruin?

J. N. D. There is, dear brethren, great importance in the subject we are about to enter upon, and I feel that the Lord is particularly gracious to us at this time. It is very certain He is always so, whether we apprehend it or not, but He manifests His power in working in the midst of His people. It is not that I am unconscious of the trials and difficulties of “brethren,” but at the same time I do discern the Lord’s hand at work, and it is ever cheering to see this, for when He takes anything in hand, the soul that trusts Him is sure to get blessing, because He is ever working for our good, though He may sift and humble us. I see that some of the saints are brought more than ever to value their position, and if asked as to this would say, Yes. In this I see positive blessing. I see there is flesh (and the sifting in many cases will manifest it) but still blessing, and this is a comfort to those who know how to trust God.

Assuredly there is failure, great failure, but our failure does not close the eye to the fact that God is working. It is true the world has crept in among us; I admit it; but I do not dwell upon it now, but when God begins to work there must be blessing, although, of course, when the Lord stirs up the pool a little of the mud will appear, because it is there.

Many dear brethren have been troubled at the expression “the ruin of the church”; now I can quite understand this, and I make no complaint about their jealousy lest it should be thought that the church could fail, because in one sense it is impossible that the church can be ruined; but there is confusion in some minds between the purposes of God, and present dispensation in which man is placed under responsibility. In speaking of the ruin of the church, we speak of it as down here, set to manifest Christ’s glory in unity on the earth, and we must remember that there we are placed, and as in this responsibility, there we must stay. If it could fail spiritually it would be disastrous indeed! There are two thoughts respecting the church in ruin which are full of mischief. The thought on some brethren’s minds is, that we intend by this the interruption of God’s purpose, which evidently cannot be. There is a jealousy, which I respect and for which I have no regret, lest the idea of the church in ruin should seem to affect the purpose of God. As regards the purpose of God the church cannot be ruined, but as regards its actual present condition as a testimony for God on earth it is in ruin. The other thought is: Well, suppose it is in ruin, so it must be; there
we are and there we must stay; so that we are saved at last, never mind; we will take no thought about the present condition of the church, being satisfied that we are saved from the wrath to come. This listlessness and hanging down of the hands, causing cessation of all spiritual energy, is induced by a want of apprehension of what the church is in God’s sight. But practically many saints think they are to remain content in the ruin. There is danger in taking up such a thought, because it would be the denial of the power of God. To unbelief discouragement may be the result of this idea of the church’s ruin, but I do not look at it as discouragement, because I believe the grace and power of the Lord is suited to the need of the church such as it is at all times. I should feel it to be a very sad effect if the expression “ruin of the church” were to dishearten a soul about the operation of the Spirit in bringing blessing to the church. Neither of the suppositions I have alluded to can be proved, for it is impossible that the church can be in utter ruin in the sense of upsetting God’s purpose, or that the power of the Lord is enfeebled when there is actual present ruin. His working will be according to the state the church is in, not to the state she is not in. We are all liable from the feebleness of our minds to say too much or too little, even where truth is held. Man is in a sad state, and I should get disheartened unless I saw the power of Christ to meet that state. God’s purpose, of course, is unfailing, and therefore it is not true that the church can fail as it exists in God’s purpose. What we want is not so much an abstract notion that the church will be saved, but real practical faith in the application of the resources of God to meet present circumstances. If a Christian is in a bad state, and I do not look beyond it to Christ I am troubled, but if I do I have confidence, and in that sense I am at rest, because I know the Lord can and will bring it right by His power working for him. I should feel sorry if seeing failure should enfeeble faith as to the Lord’s care of the church, and I have felt the danger of this; still I say He introduces blessing according to the present condition of the church. We must not say, if we are looking for blessing in the path of faith, the church is sure to be brought through according to God’s purpose of grace, it would produce listlessness; we have to look to the present working of His power in blessing to glorify Christ. God always takes an interest in the church’s circumstances, and if we are looking for blessing, we shall find it even in times of the greatest failure, for God will have His church in glory, and living faith sees not only the need, but sees also the thoughts and mind of the Lord about that need, and counts on the present love of the Lord. It is as true of an individual as of the church. As having the Spirit of Christ I cannot rest in the thought that a Christian is secure in Christ, and therefore not endeavor to instruct and exhort him and lead him on. The church will be saved, and so will every member of it; but if I have the affections of Christ, I cannot be contented unless I see the power of the Spirit in any individual saint manifesting that
saint’s relationship to Christ, and just so is it with the church of God; if my faith is in exercise, I am not satisfied unless I see the carrying out of its relationship to Christ as a present thing. If I see in an individual saint that which is not consistent, I am not happy, and so of the church. I do believe in these latter days that the Lord has awakened the minds and souls of many of the saints who were walking in single-eyedness, to examine what the church of God is. Therefore it is not surprising that Satan should come in to resist the truth of the Lord’s coming, and the church’s relationship to that. Besides this, many have come into the position of blessing, without knowing in themselves what the church’s blessing is, and therefore feebleness is the result, for when worldliness crept in they fell backward and were discouraged. They had fellowship in the blessing, but they had not intelligence and fellowship in the principle and grace that produced the blessing, and consequently when there is the want of blessing, restless apprehension and uncertainty will be the result, for when Satan comes in upon our souls, the shallowness of our faith appears.

Well, I see this, and bless the Lord that He is awakening in the souls of many saints everywhere the question -- “What is the church of God?” I have no doubt that with many very dear saints we should find that they have no definite idea of what the church is beyond the thought, that there are certain persons who are saved and brought to glory. This is true, but then it is clear that the understanding of the relationship in which the church stands to Christ is the basis of all its affections to Christ. If the Lord is now awakening saints to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the relationship of the church to Christ, and it is not understood, we cannot be bearing a true and faithful testimony for God; and I add further that the truth which does not come up to any special testimony of God at a given time is used by Satan to hinder its reception. Satan will use a past testimony to hinder the reception of the testimony God has raised up for His saints. Thus, the unity of the Godhead is a truth we all hold, but it was held by the Jews for the upset of Christianity. They held “Jehovah our God is one Jehovah,” but they did not hold the Father and the Son. Thus they strove to upset the special testimony by which God was then acting -- the revelation of the Father and the Son. If God is presenting truth to set His saints in a place of testimony, Satan will also seek to perplex their minds about that very truth, so that they should not be able to give any testimony concerning it. If Satan succeeds in distracting their minds so that they become tired of it, and go back to past truth, then Satan has gained his point by perplexing their minds. Now this is most important. Yet the Lord has always the upper hand of Satan. I doubt not there will be some Lots, who will get tired, but I believe the exercise of soul on the subject will be used by the Lord to bring the souls of those who are faithful on to more solid ground. Thus as to the Lord’s second coming, and the presence of the Holy Ghost in the church, many may get hindered, but
souls walking in simplicity will be more strengthened by these efforts of Satan.

As regards the salvation of any soul, it is by the blood and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I do not dwell now on the great truth of the work of Christ, and the quickening of the Spirit; neither do I dwell on the fact that the Old Testament saints were saved by the blood, and will be in resurrection glory with the Lord. I assume all this as acknowledged truth, taking it for granted that the soul may rest there, while I go on to other points. And first, Has God taught us anything about the church of God?

Now there are many very precious saints, sound in the faith, who are not prepared to accept what the church of God is as set forth in the word of God. If it is meant that all the saints ever saved will in the end be in company in glory, and surround the second Adam as His family, so to speak, in redemption and life through Him, and they call that the Assembly of God, I have no objection. I do not doubt that the second Adam will have all around Him in glory, as the first Adam had all around him in sin. But scripture speaks of another thing which greatly concerns us -- of our place, our privileges and responsibilities. In Israel it was the same thing; it was true that there was salvation before Israel was a people, for Abraham was saved before Israel was brought in, and yet there was a distinct revelation concerning Israel, and relationship based on it; and if any neglected the revelation, they would not only have been unfaithful, but would have lost blessing. David was saved as Abraham was, but the manner of his relationship and responsibilities towards God on earth were not the same as Abraham's, because David formed part of a people placed in a position, the claims of which did not apply to Abraham. If Samuel and others had neglected this, they would have been unfaithful to God, because the ground on which God had set them as a nation was the measure of their special responsibility to Him. In the word of God I find that the church of the living God is a body brought into testimony by the Spirit of God definitely and distinctly, as set in a special relationship to God. And now, as the Lord may enable me, I will show you what the church is.

The church of the living God is the body of saints formed on earth in unity with Christ in heaven as the Head, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven to form them into unity with Christ at the right hand of God. The church is not merely a number of saved persons, but a body formed into unity with Christ their Head, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven consequent on the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God. There has been a habit of calling all the saints from first to last the church, and there is a fear lest tender-hearted saints who have done so should be alarmed by altering it. I greatly respect the jealousy of souls (who have the consciousness of the electing love of God, in saving every one whom He has
called from Adam downward), in being alarmed lest this distinction should affect the foundation of salvation through the blood according to God’s electing love; but still it is my duty as well as my privilege to understand the position in which God has set me, and to call by the right name what God has called by name in scripture.

The Lord said to Peter, “On this rock I will build my church.” He had not been building from Adam downwards, but He says, “I will build.” What do I find people talking about? A visible and invisible church. Now this is Satan’s lie. The so-called visible church is in fact the world, and cannot give any testimony at all for Christ. If I say it is an invisible body, the testimony is all gone. In Israel, what was the visible body then? A nation. God’s unity then was the unity of a nation, ninety nine out of a hundred of whom were not converted -- the true saints were invisible for God had His hidden ones among them. When Christ came Anna spake of Him to all who waited for redemption in Israel. But the church of God is very different, though so often confounded with this state of believers in Israel. The saints are now formed on earth into a body in unity with Christ risen by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven in consequence of the exaltation of Jesus. Our relations, our affections and our duty to Christ are all founded on this truth; and if it be not understood, there must be defect in the walk and in the consciences of the saints. When the Lord said to Peter, “I will build,” of course it was a thing not yet done. The foundation stone was Christ.

We all know the way the Epistle to the Ephesians speaks of this; indeed that epistle is founded on the truth that God has set Christ far above all principality and power in heavenly places consequent on His death and humiliation. Redemption work gave Him the title, although as the Son it was His already. The church is put into association with Him there (Eph. 1, 2). Before Christ came they waited for righteousness, and God forbore, but now we are waiting for the hope of righteousness; not waiting for righteousness, but for the hope -- what belongs to righteousness. The righteousness of God is perfect in its accomplishment, Christ the Righteous One being set down in glory. God has now set up a people in union with Christ their Head by the power of the Holy Ghost; hence I find that Jew and Gentile distinctions are done away. Before, the whole ground of God’s dealings was the distinction of His people the Jews from the Gentiles, but now there is “neither Jew nor Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.” Was that ever before? At that time they were Gentiles in the flesh, but now made nigh. He “hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition.” God had Himself built up the wall between them which He has now broken down, to make of two one new man. Now many a Jew had been saved, but had not been made one new man with Gentile sinners called by God, through Him who hung upon the cross and abolished the enmity, and having ascended on
high formed both into one new man in Himself. Simeon and Anna and many
godly Jews who looked for redemption in Israel were saved, and saved, of
course, as alone any can be, as saints are now saved; and what did God do
with them? left them Jews. But when Peter preached and three thousand
souls believed, what did God do with them? He added them to the church.
“In whom also ye are built together for an habitation of God through the
Spirit.” The old habitation -- a temple made with hands -- is cast down, and
a new one formed both of Jews and Gentiles. Eph. 3 opens out this mystery
and adds, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly . . .
according to the power that worketh in us”; not for us. Eph. 4 is practically
speaking of the vocation. If we get away from what has previously been
spoken of, we cannot walk worthily of the calling by which we are called,
and God has called the saints to be His habitation. It is not enough to be
merely saints, but they must listen to the vocation, and endeavor to keep the
unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It was not enough for Abraham to
be a saint, but he must leave Ur of the Chaldees, because this was his
calling, and if he had not obeyed, he would have acted most inconsistently
as a man of God. When God had given him a sign to keep of His covenant
relationship with Him, if his posterity had neglected to keep it, they would
have been cut off from God’s people -- outwardly manifested as such on the
earth. So also we do not answer to God’s calling unless we obey it. Of
course the church will form a glorious body in heaven, but the Spirit in
addressing the church does so as on the earth. The Holy Ghost has come
down and formed the church for a habitation of God here on the earth, not
in heaven. In Eph. 4 we find certain gifts for the edifying of the body of
Christ on the earth, not to edify it in heaven; “edifying itself in love” that is
not in heaven; “making increase of the body” must be on earth.

In 1 Cor. 12 I find the same testimony most distinctly. The Spirit
baptizes into one body on the earth, not in heaven. “Now hath God set the
members every one of them in the body”; this was not done before. Israel
was the body, as far as there was one in any sense, or God’s assembly in the
wilderness, and most of them unconverted. “Now ye are the body of Christ,
and members in particular.” Nothing can be plainer than that the body is
formed on earth (of course to be glorified in heaven) by the Holy Ghost sent
down from heaven after Jesus was glorified. This is what the church is as
taught by the New Testament.

When I look at the church in glory, I look at it as a body securely and
infallibly perfect in God. There will then be no question of glorifying God,
for God will glorify Himself in us. I see that whenever man is put in a place
of responsibility, in which he fails, God brings in a better accomplishment.
Thus Adam fails, and the Lord Jesus becomes the fulfiller of his
responsibilities for the glory of God as the second Adam. Israel failed; God
gave them His law and thus brought them into a certain relationship with Himself which did not exist with any other people, and He required them to bear testimony to this, and for this they were responsible. Under God’s new covenant the law will be written in their hearts, so that they will yet keep it. The priesthood itself failed, and I see the same thing in the church -- at first set up, and then failing, but God will accomplish all in full purpose in glory; but there I see an important difference, for we ought to be by the Holy Ghost the manifestation of God’s thoughts down here. What do I see in the church? The bride of Christ, engaging His affections as His bride, and her affections should be according to her relationship.

Now what do I mean by the ruin of the church? A simple question will answer this. Who will show me the manifestation of the unity of the body of Christ? I cannot find it; but I can find saints that will be saved; I can find the unfailing faithfulness of God in manifest tokens of His faithfulness, “for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst” {Matt. 18:20} -- and therefore blessing, but the church as a manifested body on the earth is ruined. When Lo-ammi, not my people, was written upon Israel, still the Lord in Haggai comforts them with “according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.” The power of God could not change, and hence the word, “fear ye not.” When God said to Israel, “not my people,” it was not that God gave them up. He did not change His mind; no, never! They shall be His people at last, because He did not mean in purpose when He said Lo-ammi, but now they are Lo-ammi still.

I have been much struck of late with the fact that the Lord never addressed Israel as His people in the three prophets after the captivity (though He says they shall be hereafter), still the word was “fear ye not.” It is not simply, then, the evil amongst “brethren” 66 that gives me sorrow, but a certain character of discouragement among them (because of circumstances) from the lack of simple faith to rise above the circumstances to Christ. Does Christ love the church less? Is He less powerful? Faith has constant unfailing confidence in Christ. I know what sorrow is, but discouragement I do not know. If you are counting on your own strength, then I am not surprised at your discouragement, but “He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.” We ought to be humbled -- ah! humbled in the dust, if you please, but never discouraged. A truly humble man is not discouraged; the discouraged man is not a humble man, for he has trusted, as man, to something beside God; true nothingness cannot. “While men slept, his enemy . . . sowed tares.” Does this discourage? No. “Let both grow together until the harvest.” Some years after the conversion of my soul

66. The *Plymouth* breakdown had taken place.
I looked around to find where the church was, but I could not find it. I could find plenty of saints better than myself, but not the church as it was set up with power on the earth. Then I say the church as thus set up is ruined, and I cannot find a better word for it. The church is ruined as Israel never was, and will be cut off as though it had never been, for this reason: when Israel was God’s witness on the earth, the veil was not rent, and therefore if Israel failed under the old covenant, they can be brought in under the new, but the church was founded on the earth in the spirit of the new covenant, and if it fails, there is no veil to be rent now. Judgment has been executed on Israel, and Israel has no place now as a nation, but on the church God has not executed judgment; we must not confound ruin with cutting off.

I feel the importance of definitely apprehending the relationship in which the Lord has set us; it will touch us in our consciences, not merely saying the church is secure -- surely it is, but we ought to be touched with the sense of our relation to Christ, and the responsibility of that relationship. Hence would flow that rigid obedience, and obedience is the only thing in which a Christian should be rigid, it would keep us from latitudinarianism; and there should be nearness to Christ which would keep us from sectarianism, the most natural weed of the human heart (sectarianism is getting an interest in a little circle round ourselves), and would give us a feeling as to, and an interest in, the whole church of God, for Christ can love nothing less. Then I shall refuse to own anything that is not the bride of Christ, but be ready always to acknowledge and receive that which is the bride of Christ. Will Christ have an English bride -- a Swiss bride -- a French bride? No. The evangelical alliance, is that it? No. At home and abroad I find this question, What is the church of God? One says, The church is visible. What do you mean? -- that the professing church is the visible church of God? What is its testimony? Is it to Christ its heavenly Head, separate from sinners? Another says, It is invisible. What? the church of the living God invisible! What then is its testimony? It is only invisible because in sin. There is a false church visible, a true one invisible.

But there is no enmity produced by such a conviction against those mixed up with the evil, or in ignorance of it, because the man who is certain, though he may be pained, can never feel enmity. When “brethren” came out, what were they? Nothing. What was their feeling? They took up the interest of the church of God, desiring to see all who loved God manifested in it. A large measure of blessing followed; numbers joined. Then came trouble and trial within, and that plentifully occupied their hearts, and practically that became their circle, and consequently not the church of the living God. People say, we have been too narrow, we must mix up a little. No, never, I cannot go back. “If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” I have nothing to go back from. The one
desire of my heart is the beauty and blessing of the church -- the bride of Christ. That will make me earnestly love all saints for they are of it. I desire its entire separation to Christ to whom she belongs -- espoused as a chaste virgin. My feet in the narrow way -- my heart as large as Christ’s.

It occurs to me to add a thought as to difficulties in some minds. The church of God as distinguished from other things which are found in scripture. This is not only a question of interest to our minds, but one of extreme importance. First, the question as to Rom. 11. To many minds it has the appearance of grafting the church on to the previous system. This has the effect of keeping the mind in abeyance. If our souls are kept in hesitation there is no affection at work, and what I desire to see is active affection. Secondly, Eph. 2:19, “Fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Lastly, distinguishing between the church of God and the kingdom of heaven. There are two things (Matt. 16), “On this rock I will build my church”; there is no key there. Then it is further said to Peter, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”

It is clear to me that Rom. 11, properly speaking, has nothing to do with the church as such, though it has to do with those who go to form the church. There is no thought here of the body in unity with the Head in heaven. The unbelieving Jews were broken off because of unbelief. Now in no possible sense could it be said that the Jews were broken off from the church, for they were never in it. The apostle speaks also of breaking off the Gentile branches. That cannot be the church, because in no possible sense can it be said that the church of the living God in its true sense is broken off. The whole wording of the chapter proves that the olive tree has reference to the line and channel of the administration of God’s promises on the earth. In that all this takes place. The children of Israel were heirs of promise according to the flesh; they were broken off and the Gentiles grafted in. The Gentiles will be broken off if they do not continue in God’s goodness, and the Jews grafted in again. The church cannot be broken off nor grafted in again; the olive tree shows the successional administration of God’s promises on the earth. It is connected with God’s outward dealings, and the moment this is seen the difficulty of the chapter is removed. The Jews will be grafted into their own Olive Tree again, not into this new thing, the church of God.

The passage in Ephesians is in direct contrast with what is here spoken of as the olive tree; it owns neither Jew nor Gentile. It is the position of the church down here, “fellow citizens with the saints.” It is a simple fact that the Gentiles are what they never were before, but so, too, are the Jews who believe. The Gentiles are not brought into the previous condition of the Jews. The passage does not speak of a previous Jewish state, the Jews themselves together with Gentiles are brought into a new condition where both are made one new man; they are “fellow citizens” together. It is not uniting the
Gentiles to the previous Jewish constitution, but bringing Jews and Gentiles into a common new one.

Now one word as to the kingdom of heaven. It is in one point connected with the church, because it is the administration of the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, though it is invisible or in mystery now. It is not the reign of Satan or of the four beasts, but the reign of heaven. It is the reign of righteousness and judgment, and the thought of its being the church will not do, as I do not find grace characterizing it. When the kingdom of heaven was preached by John, he said, “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor.” “He will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend.” Now this is judgment, and though the church will be associated with Christ in it as reigning with Him, yet the kingdom of heaven has not the same character as the church of the living God. Again, “Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.” This has nothing to do with the church of God or the gospel. Still the church has a testimony to the kingdom of heaven, that it is to be set up. Again in Psa. 68:23, “That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.” Now this is vengeance, and not the characteristic work of the power of redemption. This greatly facilitates the understanding of the psalms, for in them we constantly find the Spirit of Christ crying for judgment on His enemies. The dreadful expressions of vengeance in the psalms apply to the judgment of enemies on the setting up of the kingdom. In Psa. 21:8 we find that in consequence of the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God there will be judgment upon His enemies, as it is said, “Thy right hand shall find out all thine enemies”; it speaks of Him as King. But in Psa. 22 there is not a word about enemies. When He cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He was suffering for sin in the way of atonement. When it was that kind of suffering, His soul entered into it, as He, and He alone, could know it. Then I find nothing about enemies, but “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” The principle is, that He takes His place among a happy people. The church is altogether above and beyond the kingdom; the church is a happy people associated with Christ in the love God has for Him. The church will reign with Christ over the kingdom, and she now owns Christ as King by right.

To return to Eph. 2. There is something entirely new. “We are his workmanship (Eph. 2:10). “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph. 2:20). They are not the prophets of the Old Testament, but of the New. This we see by comparison with Eph. 3:5, “it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” What is here spoken of as revealed is something entirely fresh. There is one new man made of two sets of people. Jew and Gentile are done away with, and “He
is our peace, who hath made both one.” Jew and Gentile are brought in as “fellow citizens.” The Gentiles could not be made Jews, but both are reconciled to God in one body by the cross. The apostle addresses those near and those far off, and of both one new man is made in Christ. They are “fellow heirs” in the new thing, the heavenly Jerusalem if you like it.

In Rom. 11 the point discussed is whether God has cast away His people. Whether Israel whom He foreknew should be cast off? “God forbid”! says Paul, “for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew”; though He may have cast off the nation temporarily. Now this question applied to the church would have been utter nonsense, as He was then and ever since gathering the church of God in by the gospel. “But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” Was this casting them off? In Rom. 11:4, 11, 26, the apostle gives three proofs that God had not cast off His people. God replied to Elijah when he said that he was left alone, It is not so at all, for “I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” “Even so then at this present time also,” says the apostle, “there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” Again, God is caring for them in the very bringing in of the Gentiles “to provoke them to jealousy.” And again, “So all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” {Rom. 11:26}. At the close of Rom. 8 the apostle had finished the salvation question -- “no condemnation.” Then comes the difficulty that in planting the saints in Christ he threw down the special place of the Jews -- “there is no difference.” He then reconciles this with God’s immutable purposes towards Israel, and in Rom. 9 reasons thus: If you say that as a child of Abraham you have a right, then Ishmael and Esau come in. Your national claim is through God’s sovereignty, your own title of descent from Abraham will not stand, for then Ishmael and Esau have a title to come in. God exercises this same sovereignty in letting in Gentiles. Then in Rom. 10 he shows the Jews how they stumbled. This is not the principle of sovereignty as in Rom. 11; it had happened according to the plain testimony of the Old Testament: “They stumbled at that stumbling stone.” God has not ceased to care for Israel, He is still carrying out His plan as to them, and the Gentiles have been grafted in. If some of the branches are broken off it shows there must be some remaining, and He cares for them. “If God spared not the natural branches.” Now who are the “natural branches” of the church of God? The natural branches are looked at as having been in the position of heirs of promise down here on the earth, and God is able to graft them in again (these Jews who were broken off) into the position on earth of heirs of promise. It is impossible to apply all this to the church, “Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” How can this be the
church? “The Jews beloved for the fathers’ sakes.” Is this the church of the living God?

Ques. Suppose a child of God recognizes what the church of God is, and its ruined condition, is he to labor and pray for its restoration; or what course is he to pursue?

J. N. D. Well, if it is so (ruined) the conscience cannot be satisfied with it. If the church of God is responsible in walk and affection and everything to God, the conscience acknowledging the ruin, what is it to do? It cannot be satisfied for it cannot rest in a sinful state. Now the Lord remembers the kind of relationship in which we know ourselves to be, as in Jer. 2, “Go, speak in the ears of Jerusalem, I remember thee, the love of thine espousals” -- not God’s love to Israel, unfailing as this proved to be, but Israel’s love to God, when they thought God worth following for Himself, when they had nothing else beside. Then Jehovah asks, “What iniquity have your father’s found in me?” Have I failed towards you in goodness? Their being in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, and being brought safe through, was the very proof that God was with them. They went on badly enough, they went back in heart to Egypt, and Dathan and Abiram despised Him; still, their being there in the wilderness proved that they cared for the Lord so as to follow Him, and the Lord here complains that no one said, “Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt?” that no heart referred to that time? Now Gideon did plead in this manner; his faith was in the Lord that brought them out of Egypt, and herein was the secret of his strength, for God said to him, “Go, in this thy might.” It is impossible, if the word has reached our ears, that we should be contented where we are, for there cannot be contentedness where there is a sense of failure. As regards what I look for, and it is the one sole object before my soul, it is Christ’s coming. If I have the spirit of the bride I shall desire the Bridegroom, because He is the Bridegroom. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.” There may be much ignorance as to what to do, but let the relationship, the affection to Christ be seen.

I should feel disappointment at the thought of reconstruction; if I have the Spirit of Christ I shall be sensible of the loss of suitability in the bride to Him, and the sense of unfaithfulness will be accompanied with the wish to become fitted for Him. “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as be is pure” {1 John 3:3}. That is the principle; the bride that is looking for the Bridegroom will seek to be purified for Him; to be prepared and ready for Him through “the washing of water by the word.” Spiritual energy will seek that the church be ready for Christ. The Lord, spiritually, has brought us into a land of blessing, but we have lost the consciousness that we are for Him, and have become occupied with one thing and another, and are not sensible that we are for Him and for Him alone. It would be
immeasurably happy for our souls if we knew nothing whatever of all that is passing around us, save as God Himself brings it before us, and had the light of that truth in full power on our souls, that we are for Him -- the whole soul should be His, and His alone. Reconstruction is not the object of pursuit. Whenever a man from desire is in God’s service, if he has not entirely God’s object, he will succeed because he will be setting up something instead -- some other object looking like it, but quite another thing. Paul did not succeed, for the end with him was “all seek their own.” When a man has God’s object, and is thoroughly working for God, he must be a man of sorrows. Paul never got the faith of his fellow laborers nor the church up to his own. The true notion as to the church now is -- a people made ready in spirit for their Lord; not as adorned, because that is resurrection glory, but kept ready in spirit by the “washing of water by the word.” I believe the sole object in all ministry, even in evangelizing, is to present the church to God as Christ’s bride -- wholly separated unto Him as a bride ought to be. Ministry and reconstruction of the church are quite different things. I am ministering tonight, but not reconstructing. Many may be confused in their minds on this point. Now I do not doubt that ministry comes in as “washing of water by the word” in order to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Now I must guard against any thought that I undervalue order. Subjection to the Spirit of God is shown in subjection to what the Spirit of God gives; but I am not pursuing that as an object, but looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Still I do not doubt but that all my service to the saints down here will come in as ministry.

**Ques.** Is there a church now on earth or not?

**J. N. D.** Is there an army or not? Suppose an army not destroyed but scattered to the four winds -- why, there is an army, and there is not an army; it has lost its corporate character.

**Moses, Aaron and Hur go up to the top of the hill, and Israel under Joshua fights in the plain below with Amalek . . . Israel might have reasoned on the manner of their fighting, on the strength of the enemy, and on ten thousand things; but, after all, their success depended on Moses’ hands being stretched out. It is very hard for us to see ourselves and Satan to be as nothing and God to be everything.**
CANAAN AND THE ARMOR OF GOD
A Lecture, by J. N. D. (Unrevised.)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore; having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (Eph. 6:10-20).

It might seem strange at first sight that in this epistle, where there is the fullest unfoldings of the privileges of the children of God, conflict should be brought out; but we are often not aware of the character of the conflict from not knowing our privileges. Here it is found we are specially in conflict, and in a conflict that is neither known nor got into until we realize the privileges which this epistle specially unfolds.

In Galatians there is conflict, but it’s a conflict between flesh and Spirit -- the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; but in Ephesians it is not flesh, but spiritual wickedness in high places. We have to overcome flesh, and there is a very close connection between these two conflicts, still they are distinct.

In Ephesians, it is a new creation {Eph. 2:10}; Christ has ascended up on high, “He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” {Eph. 4:8}. So completely has He taken us out of the power of Satan that He can make us the vessels of His service. He has taken us out of the world, and then sent us into it, and if we thus stand associated with Christ, (which is the privilege of every Christian, though all do not realize it,) we must expect all the conflict associated with the place into which we are brought. In proportion as we realize that we are the vessels of heavenly service, we get this special character of conflict.

You cannot cross Jordan without finding the Canaanite and the Perizzite
in the land. There are the trials and perils of the wilderness, which test our hearts, -- all know more or less of the weary way testing our hearts and discovering what is in them, but wilderness experience is not the same as conflict in the land. When Joshua got into the place of the privileges of the people of God, he was in the place of conflict. God has set Christ as a Man in the glory, because He (as a Man) has perfectly glorified God as to sin. Christ has not only died for our sins, but we have died with Him, (dead with Christ is what Jordan is,) and we are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; thus associated, dead and risen, with Him, we are brought into the place where all the conflict is. It is most valuable and precious to get distinctly hold of this; many a Christian has not realized it; there is many a one still in Egypt, holding the value of the blood on the door-posts, but knowing nothing of the deliverance accomplished at the Red Sea. Israel had to stand still and see the salvation of God; this answers to the death and resurrection of Christ {Ex. 14, 15}. I am out of Egypt: the judgment which fell on the Egyptians has saved me. God has raised up Christ and given Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. Just as every poor sinner has been driven out of the earthly paradise because sin is complete in the first Adam, so am I taken out of this world into the heavenly paradise in the Second Adam because righteousness is complete. God raising up Christ and giving Him glory proves that the question of sin has been all settled in Christ on the cross, and in virtue of this, He is sitting where He is, at the right hand of God. The passage through the wilderness is to humble and prove us; our perseverance is tested by God, leading us through the path in which Christ was found implicitly faithful. Israel went through that great and terrible wilderness where were the fiery serpents and scorpions and drought, where there was no water. God brought them water out of the rock of flint, fed them with the manna to humble them and prove them, to do them good at their latter end. They came to Jordan, they pass it, they get into the land, they eat the old corn, and the land is theirs.

In the wilderness and Canaan we get two characters of Christian experience, -- one, the life down here; the other, the position in the heavenlies. We are not only a testimony to the world, but also to principalities and powers in the heavenlies. -- “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God” {Eph. 3:10}. He “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places” {Eph. 2:6}; but though that is all true as to title, as to fact, the Canaanite and the Perizzite are still in the land to dispute the possession. We have our place in the power of the Spirit of God. Christ having gone before, our place is sure to faith; but the Canaanite is not yet destroyed -- Christ’s enemies are not yet put under His feet, so conflict characterizes the place of the Lord’s redeemed people. When Joshua got into the land, he met a man with a drawn sword.
Fighting was to characterize their possession of the land, and when Joshua asks, “Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?” the answer was, “Nay, but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” They were the redeemed of the Lord -- the Lord’s host, -- so completely the Lord’s, that He uses them as His servants in conflict to subdue His enemies.

They must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and they cannot fight the Lord’s battles if the flesh is at work. With an Achan in the camp there can be no victory, and therefore we must be practically dead to fight successfully; not merely reckoning ourselves dead, but be always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body.

Paul, as a servant, always carried with him the sense of this, not as a title merely, but “Paul” was kept completely down, always bearing about in his body the dying of Jesus; nothing of Paul appeared, it was Jesus only. As soon as they crossed the Jordan (Jordan is death and resurrection with Christ), they were circumcised—death is practically applied; and in like manner after they had crossed the Red Sea they had to drink of the bitter water -- really the salt water; they had been saved by it, they must now drink it. “By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of the spirit.”

As soon as we get in heavenly places we get the “old corn” -- we find Christ there, we feed on Him; but we have to be circumcised, practically putting off the body of the flesh. Israel got into the land, and had to be circumcised; -- their title they knew, but they had not taken the ground of being practically dead and risen (from Egypt). If a man is practically dead and risen, what has he to do with this world? A man dead, and thus taken out of the world, has to go through the world and live in it again if God so wills it. We have to run across the wilderness to glory. As one associated with the Lord, I am the witness and testimony to the world of what a heavenly Christ is. I am to be a follower of God, an imitator of God. I shall be seeking other souls to enjoy it with me. If we are endeavoring to serve the Lord, shall we not find hindrances? if seeking to maintain the Lord’s people in the place of fidelity to all this, do you think Satan will let you alone? There will be the wiles of Satan to get saints into his power, and we have to withstand his stratagems, even more than his power.

Infidelity, superstition in its various forms, are opposed to us, consequently we need the whole armor of God the moment we come in. We shall not get through in our own strength, we need the strength of the Lord and the power of His might; we need the whole armor, not one piece must be wanting; the armor must be of God; human armor will not ward off the attacks of Satan; confidence in that armor will engage us in the combat to make us fall before an enemy stronger and more crafty than we. Let us see what this complete armor is.
“Stand, therefore; having your loins girt about with truth” {Eph. 6:14}. This is the first thing, looking at what we call the subjective part. Our state comes first, and there is no divine activity until the heart is perfectly in order. The loins are the seat of strength when duly girt {i.e., girded}, but represent the intimate affections and movements of the heart. The figure is taken from the habits of the country where these instructions were given; they wore long garments, which hindered their working unless girded up. We get the expression in Job 38:3, -- “Gird up now thy loins like a man” -- that is, to see what he had to say to God. It is the power of truth applied to every thing that takes place in the heart; it is not doctrine, but truth practically applied. The Lord said, “Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth” {John 17:17}. God has sent into the midst of the world all that can judge man according to what God is. Christ is the center of the Word; He was the light of the world; He revealed the thoughts of many hearts. He was here as a man, and revealed what God was, and the world was judged by it. He comes and brings all that is divine and heavenly in a man (Christ) in direct contact with all that is contrary to God in this world. Satan, as the god of this world, led man against Christ. 67 Some fancy that he has ceased to be the god and prince of this world; but though the cross broke his title, it was not until the cross (where man openly ranged himself, under Satan, against God) that he became its prince. Truth came into the world -- Christ Himself, the truth. The truth of God brought right to men’s hearts discovers their thoughts and intents. Now, when I get this Word effectually applied to me, I get the girdle of truth.

When all that God has said in His Word, and the unseen realities He reveals, have their true force and application to my heart, my loins are girt, my garments are not dragging in the mire of this world, my thoughts are not wandering, and the condition of my heart is, so to speak, tucked up ready for service, whatever that may be. We do not get into this conflict until we get into this place. We get the conflict of the old man, but that is Egypt. In order to get the victory over Satan, and carry on the Lord’s battles, I must realize my position according to the truth, just as Israel overcame by realizing the promises of God.

First thing of all, my heart must be completely tested and subjected to a heavenly word. The Lord said, “No man hath ascended up to heaven” {John 3:13}. Christ brings this heavenly truth before us and says, Does what is in your heart correspond with this? When this Word becomes a positive delight

67. {It is suggested to the reader that since Satan was called the Prince of the world before the cross (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and the god of this world (i.e., age) after the cross (2 Cor: 4:4), that the prince of this world used man to crucify Christ; and consequent on the rejection of Christ, Satan has the title, god of this age.}
to us, we get the taste and appreciation of heavenly things -- the things that are lovely and of good report -- which He has brought to us. I get on the one hand judgment of all flesh in me, and on the other the blessedness of what Christ is. Wherever the loins are girt about with truth, there will be confidence of heart, and the soul will be steadfast, there will be no turning back in the conflict to judge ourselves; our souls, so to speak, will be naturally with God, there will be occupation of heart with Christ, and there will be the Holy Ghost taking of the things which are Christ's and showing them to us.

The result of this girding of the loins is, that a man’s condition is the effect of truth. It was Christ’s condition; He was the truth, and my condition will be like Christ’s in proportion as the truth is in effect on my heart, -- the affections and heart right, I pass through the world in spirit with Him. “Stand, therefore; having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness” {Eph. 6:14}. All this, mark, is practical righteousness with God; we do not want armor with God, we want it against Satan.

If I am an inconsistent man, going to serve God without the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left -- without practical godliness, Satan will be sure to bring it up. In preaching, for instance, if your walk is not consistent, the world will say you are no better than they, and Satan will then have power against you. If you are walking according to Christ because your heart is according to Christ, you have the breastplate of righteousness; but unless a man has a good conscience, he will be a coward, and afraid of being detected. With a good conscience, we can go on boldly; the condition of the soul where Christ is revealed is truth, and the walk of the man is all right -- there is nothing for Satan to lay hold of. The loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, I have then to see that my feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. I pass through the world with my feet shod. “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace” {Nahum 1:15}. In this path there is no selfishness; selfishness is for maintaining its rights, but that is not having my feet shod with peace. Self is subdued if I am following Christ. “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart” {Matt. 11:29}. Learning of Christ, he carries peace with him, the soul is at peace with God, the conscience at rest, his feet are shod with peace, and he carries through the world the spirit and character of Christ.

He has on the breastplate of righteousness. What was the path of the blessed Lord? There was nothing in question as to His state. He went untouched with all that man could bring against Him; His feet were shod. So with him who follows Christ; he can bring out the spirit and character of Christ wherever he goes. It may raise hatred; as it did with Christ; His
perfect love brought out the hatred of man; but a subdued, godly, upright man will be a peaceful man in passing through the world, and although man may not speak peaceably to him, as much as lieth in him, he is to live peaceably with all men. Thus we get it in both aspects, -- the path is characterized by the spirit of grace and peace, and there is righteousness and truth. The state of the heart first right, loins girt with truth, righteousness for a breastplate, and feet shod with peace, the soul subjectively right, I can then take up the shield of faith. Subjectively right, I have not to think of myself. A man walking with nothing on his conscience is free; if not walking right, he will be occupied with himself. The mere existence of an evil nature does not suppose a bad conscience, but yielding to it does. We are not told to confess sin, but sins; it is easy to confess sin -- easy to say, “I am a poor sinful creature,” but that generally is to excuse sins. I have failed to keep the flesh down. Of course I can never say I have no sin, but if I am not bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, practically dead, the flesh will surely play me false. We want these three first elements of the armor, and then we have not to think about ourselves. Practically in the light, as He is in the light, the heart right, I then get the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. This shield supposes I can look up with entire blessed confidence in God. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be Thy shield and buckler; thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day” {Psa. 91:9}.

God is above Satan. Satan may shoot his arrows, but they cannot break through the shield of faith. In Christ, the victory has been won in man and for man. Satan did his worst against Christ, first, to seduce and afterward to deter Him, but he was completely overcome. All the power of Satan is broken and gone. Christ has gone through death and annulled him who has the power of death. Christ has not only put away our sins, but as a man standing for us, He has completely overcome the devil. We are not told to overcome, but to “resist” the devil, and he will flee from us. If resisted, he meets Christ in us and runs away. Human nature cannot resist, it will acquiesce. It is not a question of power on our part, but of simple faithfulness and looking to Christ; it is not that we are strong, but strength is made perfect in weakness. What was ever so weak as Christ -- Christ crucified through weakness? but then the weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Nothing could be more weak and foolish in man’s eyes than the cross, but we know, nevertheless, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Whenever we are content to own ourselves weak, there is the strength that enables us to overcome. Satan is very subtle. If Satan deals with man (apart from God), it is all over with him. How is it possible that wise and learned men of this world give way to
such follies as ritualism and the like? Satan, more clever than they, is behind it all, and laughs to see them trusting their own wisdom. The simple soul that has his heart right cannot go wrong. Satan has no kind of power while the soul is walking in obedience, that is the secret of it all. If walking inconsistently, the shield of faith will be down, and I shall be open to all the fiery darts. There should be that blessed confidence in God which reckons on Christ having completely overcome the world and the devil, and that all the power of evil now in the world will soon be put down. We are to be exercised in the conflict; the Lord has said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

We have as yet no activities brought out, -- so far, it is defensive. The defensive armor comes first. We are slow to understand this, and we often get into activities when we ought to be quiet. The shield is defensive. Satan is active. The Lord may bless and help us, in His grace, but there is many a one got into activities without knowing themselves. The helmet of salvation is still defensive; we have the conscious, blessed, and full certainty of being in heavenly places in Christ -- the soul walking in the full confidence that I have Christ there, who has delivered me out of the power of the devil. Christ has fought my battle and overcome. I can hold my head up, because I have got salvation. The blessed certainty that I am in Christ and Christ is for me is my helmet. I can now be active. Having judged the flesh, godly in walk, peaceful in my path through the world, with confidence in God, and salvation assured, I can take up the sword of the Spirit, -- I can fight, sheltered in the inner man, and shielded from all attacks from without. I take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. We do not always look to see that it is so -- that there’s nothing between God and our souls, so that He is practically with us in the conflict. Are we walking in the practical sense of God being with us? If there is an Achan in the camp, as there was with Israel, God will not go up. It is of all-importance we should be clear as to this. Paul kept under his body, and brought it into subjection. If we are to be active in the service of the Lord, we must go out from the presence of the Lord according to what His presence gives. Paul said, “Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and men” {Acts 24:16}. Always self-judgment, always keeping close to God, and then you can go out in service to others; not always, perhaps, in public ministry, but in the path of every-day life.

You will have the secret of the Lord with you, the consciousness of God with you, clearness of judgment, and not distracted or dismayed by half a dozen thoughts. You have the secret of the Lord: going on quietly, it may be, but going on with God. Then comes, no matter how active I may be, the inward preparation, -- “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for
all saints” {Eph. 6:18}. We have had the inward affections and the sword of the Spirit, but now it is entire dependence -- the Word of God and prayer. These two things are found running together through Scripture: *the Word of God and prayer*. Mary sat at the Lord’s feet and heard His word. The Lord said, “Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” {Luke 10:42}. In the next verses, the Lord teaches His disciples to pray. When the apostles chose deacons, the reason assigned is, that they might give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word. When there is to be service carried on against the wiles of the devil, half the battle is to be fought out in God’s presence beforehand in prayer. When the prince of this world came to the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, he found Him agonizing in prayer. Peter slept while the Lord prayed: the result was, that Peter denied Him, but the blessed Lord witnessed a good confession.

Nothing can, nor ever will, take the place of that earnestness in prayer: if we are to have God with us, we must pray. It is marked by perfect calmness. If we have God with us, we must be with God, who is sovereign in love and goodness, and has associated us with His own interests. Does not my heart yearn after the conversion of poor sinners? do I not pray that hearts may know more of Christ? that saints may walk more faithfully? God desires this, and He has given us a path in the world associated with His interests. There is to be perseverance and supplication for all saints. If I see a soul in danger of going astray, I go with all perseverance and supplication to God about him: my heart is in it.

The very same word used of the Lord in Gethsemane is used of Epaphras, who labored fervently in prayer. It is conflict of heart. He craves the blessing of God with all his heart -- craving for it earnestly, and entering into it because it is in the interests of God in the world. This has to be carried on in opposition to Satan, who will bring all his craft and power against us. We have consequently to be with God. What a blessed thing to know that I get power and wisdom from God, grace and wisdom in practice! If I use a sword, I must get wisdom for it. What a place of blessing it would be if we were all practically with God!

For our own souls it is so helpful, because prayer is the expression of entire dependence, but at the same time, confidence in God. A person like Paul, in weakness and trembling, fightings without and fears within, going about getting victories! He says to the Corinthians, “I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling” {1 Cor. 2:3}. It is always good to be conscious of weakness provided there is faith in God. Constant dependence is the constant expression of faith in God; the soul goes to God with God’s affairs; we realize how much they are our own. The blessed Lord has gone down into the dust of death. Satan’s power was exercised to the fullest, but it was all broken. He comes up again and sits at the right
hand of God, takes His people, whom He has completely delivered from the hand of Satan, and uses them for conflict against him -- the instruments of His service in the world. A wondrously blessed place if we only knew how to hold it, -- blessed to be made the Lord’s host against Satan. The more you are in the forefront of the battle, the more you will be exposed to the fiery darts. The more you bear testimony to God’s thoughts, God’s mind, the place the saints have in God’s mind, the more you will be the object of Satan’s attacks. You will necessarily be exposed to more snares and dangers than those who lag behind, and there is no place where dependence is more needed and felt.

There is more strength provided for those in the forefront to bear witness to Christ’s title against Satan, and Satan will never let it pass without opposition. When I have all the armor on, and come to wield the sword, I am not to be thinking of the armor, but of God and His purposes, “watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” {Eph. 6:18}. Oh how little we know of this! Supposing we pass through a day, was all that happened turned into prayer? If I am walking maintaining Christ’s cause, it all turns to prayer. It is a wondrous test of the state of our souls. Do you find you can intercede much for others? Do you find earnestness in intercession for all saints? Is my heart so in the interests of Christ that I can have a lasting and continual interest for others? If my heart is in a bad state, and the presence of God is revealed to me, I think of myself -- I am not free to intercede for others. “And for me also,” says the apostle, “that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, . . . as I ought to speak” {Eph. 6:19}. How is it with us, beloved friends? It is an amazing blessing to be doing this, but we cannot if our own souls are not right -- if I am not in the presence of God. As far only as I keep on this armor, I am useful: all is founded on being in a settled place before God. The blood on the door-post, the Red Sea crossed, Jordan passed, circumcised, and the reproach of Egypt rolled away, -- then comes conflict in the land: all is founded on redemption.

Be assured we shall meet the wiles of Satan. Our own state and conscience are easily detected if our hearts are simple in the truth. It is not that we are to be learning Satan’s wiles, but if our hearts are simple, we shall be more than a match for him. Satan is a good deal cleverer than we are, and wherever redemption is not fully known, there Satan plays his tricks. The moment that redemption is really believed in, all the systems of superstition, so prevalent in the world, are gone. You may have old things lingering, but you will never find a person under the power of superstition who has the consciousness in himself that Christ has died and suffered for him. We see wise and learned men going away to ritualism, and the devil behind it all, but the moment redemption is really known, the devil’s power
is gone. The system of ritualism proceeds on the footing that Christ can have to say to man in the flesh that he is not lost and dead in his sins, and consequently a complete and accomplished redemption is denied. The moment I have my soul established in Christ, this snare of the devil will not prevail. A man may know the truth of the incarnation, and may speak more beautifully of the person of the Lord than even Christians, but all the time ignorant of redemption. I have the witness of Christ in me; I know Christ. They may try to persuade me that Christ is such and such, but I know Him; I have got Him; He is dwelling in my heart, so that I am not to be turned by such follies as ritualism and the like. The Lord keep us in a constant sense of dependence, in a sense of what He is, dependent on Him every moment, that we may never get out of the presence of God, for when we are out of His presence there is danger.
COLOSSIANS 1

What characterizes this epistle, is, that we are looked at as risen -- dead and risen -- but not yet seated in heavenly places, it is not the Holy Ghost revealing our place in heaven, but we walking as risen men in the world looking for it.

In different epistles we get various aspects of the Christian. In Ephesians we are seated in the heavenlies; in Romans alive in the world; here we are risen, but not in glory. We get here, more fully than elsewhere, life unfolded, your life is in Christ, in God. Then you should walk according to that. He puts us to run the race.

People get confused by connecting these “if’s” with redemption. “Christ in you the hope of glory” -- in you, Gentiles -- is an entirely new thought, a thing never heard of before; it is that side of the mystery that is revealed here -- not Christ come in glory to take up His people, but Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Col. 1:8 is the one place where “Spirit” is named in this Epistle.

Col. 1:10. He puts the walk first, not merely avoiding wickedness (a natural man might do that), but filled with the knowledge of His will. Christ left the traces of His path in the wilderness.

In the ordering of Israel, the tabernacle was in the midst of the camp, and they were to march in the same order as they encamped; but when they wanted to find a way through the wilderness, the ark leaving the prescribed place, that was the center, went before them, it was grace.

It is remarkable that there is no direction as to the walk, but filled with the knowledge of His will; are you that?

How often we do not know if we are right, even when we desire it.

Seeing the path through the wilderness tests the state. The vulture’s eye hath not seen it. If we are to walk worthy of the Lord, we must be filled with the knowledge of His will. Men ought to read “Christ in you,” as distinctly as the ten commandments on the tables of stone.

This is the apostle’s comparison, not mine. We shall be perfectly like Christ in glory, and the eye is directed to that now. As though He said, I am going away, and I cannot be glorified in my own Person down here, but I should be in you. You are called to walk worthy of the Lord.

The first thing that struck me when I began to think seriously was, that Christ never did anything for Himself. He ought to govern our hearts, our motives, everything.

He was never weary of doing good -- as a Man.
He sat weary at the well, yet ready to speak to a poor woman. He had come down so low as to be dependent on her for a drink of water. We should walk here, having Christ before the heart, governing us, as the only motive.

He was at all times, and in every case, governed by divine principles -- sensible to everything around Him, but never governed by what was around Him; always by what was divine. We should always be governed by Him.

He was at all times the expression of divine perfectness.

“Christ is all, and in all,” not “all in all”; that is never said of Christ, God is all in all.

Our calling is to walk worthy of the Lord: we are in this place, epistles of Christ. I am called to walk through this world to express Christ.

Three ways in which we are told to walk worthy -- of “God,” of “the Lord,” of “the vocation.”

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

It is the spiritual state that discerns what is “worthy” of the Lord.

Col. 1:11. “Strengthened,” &c. There is no doing without patience in the difficulties; you would expect it was to do something great -- no, to be patient.

There is no will when I am patient. You will find when you fail through the day, it is patience has failed. We get wisdom to show what the path is, strength to walk in it -- not strength to overcome, but strength to endure. “Rejoice in the Lord always.” If my will is at work, I am sure to get vexed with something.

We do not read, “Resist the devil, and you will overcome him,” but resist, and he will flee from you; he knows he has met Christ, for flesh would not resist him.

Col. 1:12. Now he comes to what set him in the path. I am fit for heaven, made meet; I cannot look up to God without having the consciousness, I am fit to be there in light. An exercised heart looks at Christ.

The thief was fit to go to heaven; he confessed the Lord when the disciples were afraid to do it. He says, “Lord,” and cared for nothing, though he was in agony, but “Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom” -- and it is an ugly place to be remembered, as a thief on a gibbet.

The Lord will not remember him only -- “this day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” He was fit to go -- to be the Lord’s companion from the gibbet.

Do you believe that Christ by His work has made you fit? I do not ask if you have accepted it -- God has; and you should be only too glad to have
He gave His Son in love, and accepted Him in righteousness; and the thing that gives me peace is what God thinks of it.

We are delivered from Satan’s power. “Resist him, and he will flee from you.” Christ has broken his power -- I am delivered from the power of darkness -- but that did not content God; He has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. We have got a positive place, the kingdom of the Son of His love, not of light, though it is that.

He has many attributes -- He is holy, just, righteous; but there are two names given as what He is, “light” and “love,” and we get the love as well as the light.

He is not content to say you have light, but you have love too.

Then He speaks of the fulness of the Person of Christ, but I cannot go into it all here.

Col. 1:16. I get blessed revelations brought close down to me. You must not suppose that we do not know Him because He is not present, for we know Him a great deal better, because we have the Spirit. I am not a stranger before God, for I know Him, and as my Father -- if you get that, you get everything.

I have met God, I know what He is; and He is all love to me.

It is the full revelation of God to my soul.

In John 4 had Christ a hard word for the poor woman? Has He one for me? No; He would have given the living water -- I have got it -- He is all love to me; it makes me feel what a poor creature I am, these blessed revelations.

1 John 4:15. We have the consciousness that He is with us. If I make my abode with the Father and the Son up there, they will make their abode with me down here. One has a consciousness that He is with us -- in us. He goes on revealing Himself to us. The time is coming when Christ will take to Him His great power, then I get glory.

His first coming did not bring the world into order: at His second everything will be brought into order, both in earth and heaven.

Look at the earth now -- oppression, wars, &c. That was how Christ found the world; and He was a man of sorrows in it.

As to heaven, we read of angels that sinned and were cast out, and we never hear of them again. Do you think Christ, when He comes, will allow such things? Not for a moment.

The thing that should characterize us, is going against the stream. I know God is infinite love, He gave His Son for me, He will reconcile all things;
but you hath He reconciled. It is never said God is reconciled to us. God’s love was the spring of it all.

I joy in God, instead of hiding myself like Adam. You are brought now to enjoy His love. “Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.”

I cannot realize this wonderful love of God without loving Him.

It is the sense of its mother’s love that makes the child obedient. I am reconciled, I am fit to be in the light. There is no “if” in what has gone before; perfect love accomplished all, “by one offering.” The word “for ever” means uninterruptedly. The “if” never comes in as to redemption, the thief goes straight to heaven.

In the wilderness we are tested -- you must set out for Canaan or you will not get there. We have the journey to take where the dangers are, and there we are thrown on the faithfulness of God, to keep us, and that is dependence.

The danger is real, but the care is faithful -- it is constant dependence; but He has to keep me, every moment. “No man shall pluck them out of my hand”; but why does He say so, if there is no danger. Satan would like to do it. “Pluck them” (John 10:28) is the same word as “catcheth” (v. 12). The wolf catcheth the sheep.

In 1 Cor. 1:8, after having said, “who shall also confirm you to the end blameless,” he begins to blame them for every single thing. They had more gift than grace, these poor Corinthians.

Christ is in heaven because my sins are gone; but when I come to my path, there is not an instant I am not dependent on His faithfulness; every instant of every day, I need to be in dependence on Him, and as to my sins if they are not perfectly put away now, it can never be done. “He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.” God had been considering Job, and it is He who directs Satan’s attention to Job, but He forces Satan to own that Job was no hypocrite. He withdraweth not His eyes for one instant.

Do you believe, beloved friends, that God sees everything -- a constant, unceasing care over us every moment?

It is not a question of my walk, but of the unchanging faithfulness of the living Lord. He never takes His eye off us, and if ours are always on Him, He will guide us with His eye.

“As he is, so are we in this world.” I do not see any presumption in believing what God says, though it is most wonderful, blessed too.

Look at Israel, they were going on wretchedly -- “a stiff-necked people” -- but what do I hear from the mountain-tops? “I have not seen iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel.”
No encouragement, beloved friends, to carelessness. But is it not encouragement to lean on the Beloved?

We are strengthened, but we need it, and have to walk in the sense of our need of it.

The Lord give us, beloved friends, the full blessed consciousness of the full efficacy of the work of Christ.

NOTES OF PRIVATE CONVERSATION

Q. Should it be, “Since ye then are risen with Christ”?
A. Yes.

Q. It does not mean any doubt, does it?
A. No; just as I should say to you, if you are a Scotchman, I hope you will honor your country.

Peter was afraid to walk on the water when he saw the storm, but had it been smooth he could not have walked any better.

To me it is a wonderful thing, far more wonderful than the glory, that the Father loves me as He loves Jesus. The Lord was constantly laboring to persuade the disciples, that they were loved as He Himself was loved. The tribute money was an instance of this. People think it was tribute to Caesar -- it was the tribute for the temple. They ask Peter, Is your Master a good Jew? “Oh, yes,” says Peter -- he was always ready to say something, you know; but we find the Lord is beforehand with Peter. He asks, “Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute?” {Matt. 17:25}. We are the children of the great king of the temple. Then He says, Take the fish that first comes up, you will find in it two didrachmi, that take and give unto them for me and for thee.

What amazing condescension, to put Peter along with Himself!

Q. Is chastening always on account of evil?
A. No; it is often to prevent evil. Paul had a thorn in the flesh to prevent evil.

I feel sure christian life is not what it ought to be. It will be seen in the end there was nothing else worth living for but Christ.

The Lord takes care of people. The Lord’s work goes on in spite of all; man’s thoughts and ways cross each other, but the Lord goes through all.

Q. What does that mean, the devil disputing about the body of Moses, in Jude?
A. Well, I suppose it was lest it should prove an object of superstition to
the Jews, like the brazen serpent. We do not find that in the word, it is just my mind about it. The Jews might have made pilgrimages to it. The Lord buried him, and “no man,” &c.

It is impossible for a man to understand God; we are so constituted, that when we see things, we at once see that some one made it. Tell a man in the country that nobody made his wagon, he would look out an asylum for you. We know there is a cause for everything, we cannot understand anything to exist that was not made. It is impossible for us to know God, we are only finite, He is infinite. If I can know God, He is not God, and I am not a man.

Q. What does that mean, that the disciples should not go over the cities of Judah till the Son of man come?

A. They have not gone over them yet. They were prevented by judgment.

The destruction of Jerusalem, you know, came in.

* * * * *

Samson . . . was one separated to God, sanctified for Jehovah . . . his hair was not to be cut. While the commandment and precept were observed, his strength was with him. There might have seemed little connection between long or uncut hair and all-overcoming strength; but God was in it: and an obeyed, honored God is a God of strength to us.
THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

In Philippians we get the experience of the Christian, but no allusion to sin. All the out-goings of the heart -- Christ. There is no “if” as to being in Christ, but plenty of “ifs” the moment we get Christ in us. Caleb and Joshua were sustained as examples of the power of faith in the wilderness; that is Philippians, God sustaining in grace where there was only weakness. The wilderness is the production of Christ’s life in the circumstances of this life. Canaan is the power of Christ introducing us into spiritual conflict with the power of Satan. Holiness is as needed for one as the other, for the words said to Moses at the bush are repeated to Joshua in the Land (cf. Ex. 3:5, and Josh. 5:15).

The epistle to the Philippians is a pattern of christian experience as it ought to be: the power of the Spirit of God leading in the path of God amid the manifold trials of the path -- heavy trials of Christians getting on badly -- all seeking their own. But faith cannot be hindered by circumstances in its link with God, nor, therefore, in thoughtful service for men, suited though it might be to the need around. The character of Christ, giving up self, is just what is needed for this.

Phil. 3 presents the energy of divine life connected with a Christ gone up as Man on high. Phil. 2 presents what forms our character down here -- Christ came down. The two together give us the display of divine life in us. In one, Paul is on the way to glory and all else is dross and dung -- there is no difficulty in giving that up. I may have a very good cloak in a race, but if I want to run I throw it off. What I get in the other gives me Christ as the object, imparting the mind of Christ, giving up self. If not given up -- judged and got rid of -- it impedes. The grace without the energy would be human sentiment; the energy without the grace would be stoicism.

The terms of the exhortation in Phil. 2:14-16, tell us that what Christ was, we are to be. It is the power in the midst of the reign of evil. It is not the reign of good now. The failure of man was always uniform and immediate, but no failure can break the link of faith with the power of God. The darkest circumstances brighten the light; a candle is nothing in the day, it is seen for miles in the night. Dark times become the times for the manifestation of faith.

It is a great thing to have the right thing, but it is blessed and needed to have the mind of God to carry out the right. Now, if self is at work, this is hindered. See the Apostle’s grace in Phil. 1 and 2, the mind of Christ is the perfect model of this. Does our energy take the form of a servant? It may be of faith, and with a true heart, but does it take the place of service?
The blessedness in glory is not simply blessedness, but Christ ministering to it. By abiding in Him we get His mind -- self nowhere. The man that is walking in Christ is occupied with Him, and sees Christ in his brother, and all the ugliness of self in himself, so he finds it easy to esteem each better than himself. Just because of love the parent sees all the good qualities of his child. The power of good in the midst of evil is learnt in the coming down of Christ from the glory to the cross.

Mark another character of the life -- obedience (Phil. 2:8). There is nothing so humble and unselfish as obedience, because self does not work at all. The Word forms this: we live by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. There is no truth in the world, but in the Word of God. Christian obedience is not being stopped in a will of our own, but in having no will -- God in His Word guiding the new nature.

Phil. 2:12. The contrast is between Paul’s work and God’s work in the Christian. No deprivation of Apostolic power will stop obedience by God’s working in us -- only then there is called for more earnestness and seriousness, for Paul was a mighty warrior.

Salvation is the result in glory. Salvation is never looked at as simple redemption, but as the result in glory and blessing. We are subjects of the conflict between God and Satan. What a serious position! Which would you like, Christ’s place, i.e., no place; or honor and position in the world?

Phil. 1:15 and 16 describe exactly what Christ was -- that is the Christian.

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 1

In the Epistle to the Philippians there is not much doctrine, but Christian experience as it ought to be -- in the power of the Spirit of God -- as it was in fact in Paul’s case. You never get the working of the flesh or the word sin in the Epistle, but the operation of the Spirit of God leading the saint to walk in the Spirit. All through it is the working of the Spirit in varied aspects of Christian life.

Phil. 1 -- The general character of Christian life in the presence of life and death.

Phil. 2 -- The likeness to Christ in graciousness of walk.

Phil. 3 -- The energy of Christian life that carries Paul through circumstances.

Phil. 4 -- The entire superiority to all circumstances. Paul had a thorn in the flesh at the very time; so it was not absence of flesh, but
walking in the power of the Spirit.

Phil. 1:1. Office {i.e., eldership} was local, not so gift. Order is gone and it is a mercy it is, in one sense, because else I should have to recognize the clergy and all the corruption. Man always spoils at the outset what God sets up. All will be set up in Christ, the second Man, that failed in the first, in all its various forms and shapes.

Phil. 1:6. Personal dependence on the Lord to carry on the work.

Phil. 1:9-11. Paul was not content merely that the Philippians should do no wrong, but that they should have spiritual discernment as to the best thing to do, namely to glorify Christ. The fruit of righteousness is the expression of the life of Christ, not merely the natural consequences of the life but its manifestation. The day of Christ brings Christ more personally before us than the day of the Lord.

Phil. 1:18. You find things that are done in the spirit of evil that you can rejoice in, though you cannot go with them (cf. Luke 9:49).

Phil. 1:19. Nothing is looked at as accomplished in the Epistle. All our blessings in Christ are looked at as at the end. Paul looks at the Christian as running the race, therefore it is not doctrine. I have eternal life, but it is looked at as the end. Satan seems to have got the victory as to the Apostle, but he says “this shall turn to my salvation.” I have got righteousness but it is not displayed except in glory. The consequence of Israel being delivered from Egypt was that it brought them into the wilderness. There I am dependent but have the comfort of God’s faithfulness. I am held in infallible safety, but have to be held -- kept by the power of God, but need to be kept, and would not come to a good end if I were not. I need grace every minute, though not more safe when in heaven. For the race you find the “ifs.” He will perfect, but He needs to perfect and to be perfected -- a constant action on the part of God. So Israel in Deut. 8. God was not uncertain what He was about, but putting them into and through all the exercises, and when they came to the end they found that God had been thinking of everything for them. They had not been thinking of it by the way, but it was all “to do thee good at thy latter end.”

Phil. 1:28. Satan in the darkness and opposition to the truth. We are apt to be cowed by the power of evil. Where there is boldness it is the ruin of the adversaries; they have got in collision with the power of God, not of poor man. It is a question between God and Satan. The instruments of Satan are cowed (cf. Josh. 2:9-24). The man four years in prison, chained to a soldier, encourages those who were not in prison. It is not when the trial is there that we suffer the most, where there is faith; but when we are expecting and looking at it: when in it we look out of it at God. If we do not lean on God the enemy can have his own way and run after us.
Philippians 2

Phil. 2 and 3 present the two sides of Christian life. The graciousness that makes me thoughtful of others, and the energy that enables me to run on through the world without caring for it. In one Christ is presented as coming down and you are to come down like Him, in the other Christ is gone up and I am to go up after Him.

Phil. 2:3. This is not possible if I took at the bare hard fact, but quite possible in Christ. I see the flesh in myself and Christ in my brother. Compare 1 Cor. 1:4-9 with the rest of the Epistle. He begins to blame them for everything, but he sees all the good first, and rests in the good, and then blames them, without vexation, in love. It is a great test of nearness to Christ. It needs to live with Him and learn oneself there. The flesh mixes itself up with so much of our judgment of evil, and we get vexed with it. Self jostles against another man’s self. Now if I think of what Christ thinks of that person all this is put down. Near Christ there is lowliness of heart and we see our own wretchedness and good-for-nothingness. “Things of others” are things which God has given.

Phil. 2:6-9. The last Adam is presented in contrast with the first. Adam set up by robbery to be as God. He who was in the form of God humbled Himself down to death below the creature. Adam exalted himself and is abased. Christ humbled Himself and is exalted. Satan’s temptation was, “If thou be the Son of God command.” “No,” he says, “I will not keep out of the place of service, I came to obey.” He left the glory as to state not as to nature {Phil. 2:6}.

Phil. 2:12, 13. “Your own salvation” is often quoted as if it was in contrast with God’s, but it is in contrast with Paul. Paul worked for you, God works in you. The path of obedience is that in which salvation is wrought. God works in them the willing and the doing.

Phil. 2:14-16. The effect is the life of Christ completely expressed. Every member of the sentence is just what Christ was in the world.

Phil. 2:17. Paul looks at himself as the libation. They were the main thing, he only poured out on them -- his death the accompaniment of the sacrifice (cf. for the sacrifice Rom. 15:16). The great thing was that Christ should have His people; if Paul suffered for it, it was all right.

There is no hardness in the Christian or in Christ. When it is the service of God and faithfulness we must not regard father or mother. The Lord sent His mother away whenever she came to Him in His service. It is not the destruction of natural affection, but superiority of Christ -- God coming in or else it is idolatry. If I get honey when I am fighting the Philistines it lightens the eyes. I get refreshment by the way, but I cannot put honey in the sacrifice. The moment it becomes an object it is not allowed.
Phil. 2:29. “Receive him . . . in the Lord.” It brings in Christ, into the kindly relationships. You do not get this in the Old Testament -- divine life brought into the circumstances of human life.

Philippians 3

What is called holiness is generally righteousness. For acceptance righteousness is wanted, not holiness. Righteousness looks at meeting every claim of the relationships in which we are. Holiness is the activity of the nature in its own delights, or the abhorrence of evil. There is the new nature in us, but no nature can exist without an object. Our own righteousness and law go together, the righteousness of God and faith. The two parts of righteousness are, first Christ died to clear away my sins (Rom. 3 - 5); second, that in which God has His glory (Rom. 8). The position is never fully brought out until the first man is cleared away; then I find myself in the Second before God. In Corinthians the aspect of righteousness is higher than in Romans because more connected with the counsels of God. What Paul looks for, as an object, is what forms him now. If we were risen what would trouble be? He is looking for a condition in which he will have done with the whole thing. Instead of suffering being a terror to him, it was only making him more like Christ. You could not kill a dead man (2 Cor. 1:9). He would be nearer being raised from the dead when he was dead than when alive. Christ’s resurrection had set aside the power of death. Phil. 3:10 presents power along the road; Phil. 3:11, future resurrection. The power is not the object. It is present attainment by future resurrection -- a thing already accomplished in Christ. It is resurrection from among the dead: there is no attainment at all in the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection from among the dead is the resurrection of those in whom God has the same delight as He has in Christ -- it is the expression of it. That they without us should not be made perfect proves that the Old Testament saints are included in it (Heb. 11:40).

Two things Paul was running after, to be with Christ, and to be like Christ.

There are three classes in the chapter. First, the perfect Christian who is not stopping short of being raised like Christ in glory. Second, real Christians but in the imperfect state of not having got hold of this. They rest in the work of Christ, they love Him, but have not got the power of the calling on high. Third, those who bear the name of Christ but are not His at all.
The last chapter presents superiority to circumstances and the Lord proved sufficient.

Phil. 4:6. The request might be foolish. The answer is not promised, but the peace that God is in to keep our hearts. Nothing disturbs the throne of God. Thus free my heart can be occupied with what suits God -- the bright and blessed things of His own presence,

**PHILIPPIANS 2**

We get here how the Lord humbled Himself, and associated us with Himself according to the counsels of God.

The Deity of the Lord Jesus is the basis of everything for our souls. Without it God could not be known to us. Who could leave His place but a Divine Person? I say that because I desire this evening to speak of His humanity, that brings Him specially near to our souls, and enables Him to associate us with Himself. It is His human place I speak of. It inspires our hearts with confidence. “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” {Col. 2:9} -- that is the reality of humanity. “Though he were a son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8). He understands it all as having gone through it. He never gives up the place in which He has associated us with Himself. He has set Himself apart in the glory that all that is divine may be presented to us in a Man -- in Christ -- and thus win the affections. He never gives it up nor will give it up.

There are several other passages to which I desire to refer, to show the reality of His having become a Man. But first I refer to Phil. 2:12 and 13, because they present a difficulty to some. “Work out your own salvation” is often taken as contrasting our work with God’s. It is a simple blunder. They had lost the Apostle, now they must do for themselves. If they had lost Paul, had they lost God? No: that is just what they had not. It is our part in contrast with Paul’s, not in contrast with God. The effect is to produce in Christians exactly the character of Christ. Phil. 2:14 to 16 are word for word a description of what Christ was in this world. We are set to be practically what Christ was in it.

Now I turn to speak of the humiliation. Just by meditating on what He is we become like Him. The great starting point of all this wonderful truth is Prov. 8, where Christ is spoken of as the wisdom and power of God before the world was. Before ever the world existed it was man, not angels, that was His delight and the object of the testimony of His grace in redemption. The delight -- predilection of God (speaking reverently) -- was in man.

All that God is morally has been brought out in redemption -- holiness,
majesty, love. “It became God . . . to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings.” Now that was first expressed in incarnation. The redemption work was necessary to bring us into the enjoyment of it. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” Perfect love was there in the presence of perfect evil -- that which is not in heaven. There is no evil to bring out patience there. We can therefore follow Him step by step and learn God: thus only angels can see Him. There is spiritual power by grace to contemplate and feed upon it. God prepares the body for Him, and He says, in free love, “Lo I come to do Thy will O God.”

Now I turn to Luke 2. It is sweet to see the perfect unjealous glorifying of God in these angelic and holy beings. All Christian doctrines are facts, so that the simplest can understand better than the wisest because he does not reason about it. “Glory to God in the highest, peace upon earth, good pleasure in man.” Heaven itself is celebrating this ‘wonderful thing that is proved by Christ becoming a Man. If you go to an inn it is a kind of epitome of the world: they look at you, scan you, and assign you your place. There was no place for Christ. He began in the manger and finished on the Cross, and had nowhere to lay His head all the way along. The moment He takes that place, man can deal with God so to speak, and refuse Him any place. In the end of the chapter the Lord was in perfect submission -- Son of God -- but entirely subject. He does nothing at all until called out -- what a lesson for us (Luke 2:51).

In Matt. 3 we see Him take this public place. He was that “Holy thing” {Luke 1:35} born of the virgin Mary, called the Son of God. God was changing everything, bringing God and man face to face. It was not a law to see how man could stand before Him at a future day of judgment, but God come to man as he is. God comes as a present thing in the heart and conscience. God and man are thus face to face whenever a soul is converted. Just as I am God meets me -- perfect light showing me what I am -- and then all perfectly settled. And it is perfect grace.

It is no question of the law here -- they were condemned already. The kingdom was going to be set up, and the people go to be baptized of John in Jordan confessing their sins. “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him.” He needed no repentance. I trust I need not say that here, yet He does go there doing His Father’s will. “Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” {Matt. 3:15}. He enters by the door taking His place among these in whose hearts God’s Spirit and Word had wrought. At the first step He says, I must go with them. Then man is put into his proper place. I am speaking of Christ now. Redemption was needed to put us into it. The way it was shown that His delight was with the sons of men, was by His Son going there. The Lord came thus among these godly ones, and heaven is opened. Four times we
find heaven opened. Here He comes among these poor things, who, when God came claiming good, had only the confession of none. The Father owns Him as Son, and the Holy Ghost seals and anoints Him. It is a wonderful passage bringing out the whole Trinity. The Son is there. The Holy Ghost descends upon Him in the form of a dove. The Father’s voice is heard; and all brought out in connection with the Son become a Man, taking man’s place according to the thoughts of God’s delight. Redemption was needed to put us into it. By it He can say, I have brought you into my own place.

I get the sweet and blessed truth there of His coming there as Man, taking man’s place according to God. What is the next step? We have first His place, ours with the Father and God. Is there no other place? In the world I mean? Yes: with the devil. Perfect obedience has brought Him where sin brought us (Matt. 5:1). We have to do with Satan, Christ makes our place: as to all the difficulties of our path, He puts Himself into them and passes through them “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” He meets Satan as we have to meet him, only Satan is overcome now. The first two temptations are the wiles of Satan, the third is open iniquity. Let me say a few words on the details. There is no harm in taking food when hungry: but Satan comes to tempt Him to command. He says I came to obey. That is the obedience we are sanctified to. Did He have His own will and God stop Him in it? Never! Here when everything depended on it -- when He was in all the sorrows of the wilderness -- for the Son of God a single word was sufficient, and for the devil too. The power and authority of the Word of God was shown when everything depended upon it. There is another thing, confidence in order to obey. That was where Eve failed. “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Tempting is distrusting Him; people say it is when you are trusting Him too much! There is entire confidence to enable me to do His will. The last thing was the world (v. 8). The devil shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Alas, a little thing often turns off our hearts. He makes our place with the Father, and gives us next the power of our path with Satan, and in the world, serving us as love delights to serve (selfishness wants to be served). You might say that is all over now that He is in glory. John 13 shows us the contrary. He had been with them in gracious love and condescension, He is going back, as the unsullied One, to the Father, getting all things into His hands, but do not think He has given up serving you. With all His glory in sight, just going out to the Father He says, “I cannot stay down here with you in the world, I will not give you up, but I must make you fit to have a part with Me where I am going. You are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you, but you will be picking up dirt by the way; that will not do for heaven.” When it comes to communion I cannot have an idle thought in my heart that does not hinder it. He washes our feet. That is His present service for us in glory. It was not because Peter repented that Christ
interceded, but because Christ interceded that Peter repented. There is no excuse for defiled feet. There is not one of us that does not fail here, and the type of the Red Heifer figures it. Your failure gave Christ the Cross. That is what makes sin so horrid. There was only one place where He was alone when He had become a Man -- the Cross.

PHILIPPIANS 3

This epistle gives us two practical characteristics of Christian life in which we find the true practical power of the life—the principle on which it passes through the world according to the mind of God. The Epistle is not doctrinal but, in it, we get the Christian path, Christian experience in the power of the Spirit of God. There is not a word about sin in it from beginning to end: but it sets out the Christian path in a person walking in the power of the Spirit.

The first characteristic is lowliness as in chapter 2: the second, the energy that leads a soul on, with Christ in glory as its object. This is the whole power. The basis of the whole thing is, that Christ is in the glory as man. It is a wondrous truth, that man -- that is, the Lord Jesus Christ -- is gone into heaven on the accomplishment of that work on the ground of which man could go in, hence as our Forerunner; and that the place that man has thus got in Christ is what the Holy Ghost always sets before our minds as our object.

All the great truths of God are found centered in the cross. Seeing a man in heaven sets man aside in the earth. We have got to pass through the world till Christ comes, and the question is how we walk down here till then. Of some the Apostle tells us weeping. We are looking for Christ to change our vile bodies. Till then we are not in the full result. That is what is set before our minds; but Christ is presented as already set down at the right hand of God, the distinct testimony of our accomplished salvation, and the blessing into which it brings.

Our calling is heavenly. Nothing is more important than our distinct apprehension that our calling is to be with Christ and like Christ where He is now. There is a full definite revelation of it all now. It is not merely that we are cleared of sin, but that God has a purpose about us which forms the object of the running here. “For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” {Rom. 8:29}. The Cross was the turning point between that which tested man’s responsibility down here and God’s purpose concerning us. Before the world was, God had this purpose about believers, to have us there like His Son (Prov. 8). God, according to this purpose, would have us in this glory with His Son -- the personal dignity of the Lord being always kept safe. You never find the saints said to be brought
into this glory, without the guarding of His perfect excellency. The heart delights in preserving it.

Let me refer to one or two instances. In Matt. 3 Christ took His part with the remnant -- going with His people in their first right step. Never till then was the heaven opened. At this moment the heaven was opened unto Him, and the Spirit of God came down, and the voice of the Father declared, This Man is My beloved Son. Now heaven was just as much open to Stephen: but mark the difference. When the heaven is opened over Christ, does He look up and see an object that changes Him into the same image? Not at all; heaven looks down upon Him. But this is just what Stephen does. Thus His person is kept safe, while Stephen gets as like Christ as the creature can.

So on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elias appear in just the same glory as Christ; but the moment Peter would put them all together on the same level, they go away. He remains -- the voice again declaring, “This is my beloved Son, hear him.”

But to return to these thoughts of God about us, in Matt. 3. Having put man into his proper place there is for the first time the revelation of the Trinity. There, where the fact of God’s Son taking His place as Man sets man into his proper place before God, all three Persons are revealed in connection with it. The more we enter into the thoughts God had about us, the more we see what poor worms we are. How could we ever have thought of being brought into this same glory as the fruit of His redemption? It shows how it is all grace, “That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.”

He brings these things before our souls now that our affections may be formed by them in living association with Him where He is. We want to walk through this world with our affections flowing from our connection, as new men, with the second Man, that is Heir of all, in heaven. He connects us with the Man that is there -- Christ in heaven -- the only accepted Man according to the counsels of God -- by the Holy Ghost. God did not begin with the Man of His counsels; He gave promise of it in Eden, and it becomes clearer and clearer afterwards. He began with the responsible Adam. All that probationary system is closed, in the setting aside of the old things altogether in the Cross. It closed the connection between God and the flesh, in spite of all that man -- infidel and religious -- can do to make something of it. That makes all the difference in our position. Now I have a fallen man -- each of us adding our own sins to the heap -- and a glorified Man. Am I walking on the principle of the fallen man, or the heavenly Man? I cannot do both. To walk as the heavenly Man is full blessed liberty of soul. The Cross made Christ say, “Now is the judgment of this world,” but Christ then said, “Now is the prince of this world cast out.” God did that work on the Cross; while
men slew Him, it was “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” {Acts 2:23}. It was the triumph of Divine love, that through Christ’s work the counsels of God might be accomplished that put us into the same glory as Christ. The counsels were never brought out while that probationary system was going on, because the foundation for them was not laid. But the counsel “is now made manifest” (2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:3). Hence we read, in 1 Cor. 2:7, “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery . . . ordained before the world unto our glory,” but it did not come out. Again, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” People stop there, saying it is so wonderful and blessed we cannot know it. It is just the opposite, “God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit . . . that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Then we have three steps as to the revelation of these things. First revelation: second, the inspired communication of them: third the spiritual reception; and this founded on a perfectly complete work. A Man has entered into the glory as our Forerunner, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. There is a difference between having our debts paid, and having all this glory before us. We might have our debts cleared and be without a farthing, but God gives us besides an inheritance of glory.

In John 13 Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him, if God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself.” He does not wait for the royal manifested glory. The Holy Ghost comes down and puts us into connection with Christ in the glory of God, and the things that are around Him. That is the Christian position.

What becomes then of man’s righteousness, if you are made the righteousness of God in Christ? The Cross puts an end to it altogether. It was just the attempt to maintain the legal righteousness that led Paul once to persecute the saints, and afterwards became his whole toil and burden to oppose. The continual effort is to build up the first man again -- in bold infidelity -- but even in the Christian too. Whatever there is of it is a hindrance to the enjoyment of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Cross has judged it all, broken down the whole thing, “He takes away the first that He may establish the second.” We get it here, “We are the circumcision which . . . rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh” {Phil. 3:3}.

What is confidence in the flesh? A very easy but a very foolish thing. It is the religion of the flesh. In Phil. 3:5 and 6 you get all that man was under the law. Who established it? God. Why then speak of it in this way? Because under that system they had crucified His Son. “If I had not come and spoken to them they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin . . . now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father” {John 15:22-24}. The Jews had promises and Christ was the fulfiller of them: He
had come and they would not have Him, and the Jews were shut up in unbelief that they might come in under pure mercy just as the Gentiles.

Religion of the flesh is still man’s confidence, because we do not know that we have no power, and we try to make out righteousness for God, instead of seeing God has made it out for us in a new way in a Man in glory. The Cross was the end of the trial of religion with man, to see if there was any good in him. But people say, “Ought I not to walk in this way?” You ought to have done it, but you are guilty under that system.

Here we have the religiousness of the flesh (not sin) which he calls concision -- a name of utter contempt. That was the grosser thing, that was first set aside. But now he comes to “all things” and counts them loss for Christ. “That which was gain to me,” that was the secret of it. If he was learned, who had the credit of it? Righteous -- to whose credit was this? Paul’s; but he says, I will not have “me.” There is a totally new thing that God has set up -- a Man in the glory of God as my righteousness, and the Spirit of God makes Him the object of my affections.

I am crucified with Christ . . . and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me {Gal. 2:20}.

Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people {Titus 2:14}.

What my heart wants is to have the Christ that has done it, in glory. “For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” He says, “There is God’s intention about me, now, in the settled certainty of that, I want Him in the glory as my object.” Here he is speaking of what carries the heart on. The object of a man is what characterizes him: if money, then he is covetous; if pleasure, then he is a man of pleasure; if power, then he is ambitious: he who follows after Christ is a Christian. Christ is the power and principle of his life here. Paul was walking down here but he had no other object in the world than to win Christ. Christ had laid hold of him to have him in the glory, and he wants to lay hold of that. What governs the Christian in his path is the Cross written on all down here, and Christ up there as the object.

“Not having mine own righteousness which is of the law.” He does not say, “Not having his sins,” but his righteousness. Christ has obtained the glory. The law would have been his righteousness down here; but doing what I ought to do would never give a title to be in the same glory as the Son of God. Why should it? But he will not have his own righteousness, “but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the
fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death” (Phil. 3:10). It is not that we are to seek suffering, but the cross was before him and he says “I will only be more like Christ; I have a life in Christ that is beyond death.” As he says in 2 Cor. 5, “We are always confident, knowing, that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.” His place is all a settled thing: if killed he will only be with Christ. But he has not got it: it is his object. He sets aside all that man is. The flesh, take it in all its best show and colors, is all legal righteousness -- fleshly righteousness. All is set aside.

Another thing has come in -- not making the first man righteous, but -- substituting the second Man for him.

His first object was to get Christ Himself; afterwards his own part in the blessing. Christ takes up the active open enemy against God. Not content to stop at home, like the chief priests, Paul goes to strange cities persecuting the saints, and then God stops him in sovereign grace, with a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun. If it is a question of laboring for Christ, there will be different results; but if of glory, it is true of all saints as of Paul, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. If you believe in Him, He has obtained it for you.

Then he looks at that glory. If it costs him his life, that is what he wants—“having a desire to depart and to be with Christ.” There is no uncertainty. Cost what it will going through this hostile world— if it cost him his life -- he says, “Well, I will be more like Christ,” and he will have the conformity of His sufferings.

He was a man of one thought, one object, one purpose -- “This one thing I do.” All gain to him is loss, “I have suffered the loss of all things,” but “I do count them but dung.” Not “I did count,” but “I do count.”

It had not lost its present power. Do we count everything but loss for Christ? In Matt. 25 there is time left between the cry “Behold the Bridegroom” and the coming, to test the heart to see if Christ is everything. If we look around how often people talk of losing first love. It is that Christ has lost His first power over the heart. The world comes in in such a subtle way -- and the things of it -- and deadens the heart. The consequence is we begin at last to judge after the atmosphere we are living in. When Christ fills the heart the temptations are not there. It is the power of this new Object.

I turn now to what is connected with that, what Paul calls the perfect Christian. The thing set out before us is to be like Christ in glory. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, according to the eternal counsels of God. We are not that yet. “He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure” {1 John 3:3}. That supposes that the heart has understood this -- not merely that my sins are put away, forgiven,
but my place in Christ. Rom. 5 and 8 give the contrast; “if any man be in Christ” is the new place I have got into. Not my sins blotted out -- that is the first thing -- but, “he is a new creation” {2 Cor. 5:17}, belonging to this new world. This is what the Apostle earnestly insists on. I am not a debtor to the flesh -- there speaking of its sinfulness. The point of that is “crucified with Christ,” not Christ crucified for my sins merely, but I am a dead man. He takes this truth of our being crucified to put our hearts, and consequently our lives, where we are not in body yet -- in complete association with the Man that is in heaven. The old man has been condemned. If I know my place then I put off the old man and put on the new. Where do I get the measure of it? “Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” {Eph. 4:24}. Besides sins put away, the cross of Christ has separated us from our existence in the flesh, sin, the world, and law; and risen with Christ, I have my place in life, and heart, and spirit, along with Christ, who has redeemed me to Himself in glory. “Our conversation is in heaven.”

I add another thing; the same Spirit that dwells in Christ, dwells in us. People talk of being united by faith, Scripture never does. We get the Spirit and then we know that we are in Him and He in us. The soul gets hold of this by grace, and my part, my portion, and my place is with the Son of God, the second Man and not the first. The Cross closed the whole system of righteousness by law. I died and now belong, as having Christ as my life, to the place where He is; and the Spirit is given that I may know it. “Our conversation is in heaven.” What am I waiting for? For Christ to come and put me there, every day seeking to be more like Him here.

You find a Christian first converted knows his sins forgiven. But if you want to be a Christian as God contemplates it, you are in the world but not of it as He is not, you are in Christ. That is the reason why God puts us constantly through trials and difficulties, that God may make all this real to our souls. “Always bearing about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body.”

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ... who mind earthly things.” The Cross has put entire contempt upon them. If I look for the glory of God, where do I find divine dealing with sin, infinite divine love? In the Cross. That is what has put an end on God’s part to everything connected with man -- pretension to righteousness, recoverableness, everything, save the body left to be the vessel of the manifestation of the life of Christ.

“Our citizenship is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” {Phil. 3:20}. We are left here like the man with the legion of devils, sent to his friends that they might know what great things the Lord had done for him. We look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, to
do the one thing that remains to be done, to change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. Then all will be complete. He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied then.

Christ has come and given Himself for us that He might purify us to Himself. The Cross was the test of infinite love. And what we have to look for is that love of Christ to come and take us to Himself. If a Christian understands that he is done with the old man, he has learned to grow up to the stature of Christ. There is no other full growth of the Christian but that. As to mind and faith he gets into the full grown state. The thing is to be attained in glory, we cannot say we have attained, but can we say “This one thing I do”? If a man has only seen forgiveness yesterday he has got to walk according to the same rule. To be forgiven and know it, is blessed of course; but can you say you are doing one thing?

People talk a deal about perfection, but they have lost the sense that perfection is to be as Christ in glory.

Can you say that your citizenship is in heaven, your righteousness in Christ, the associations of your heart with Christ, everything there? Infidelity is stalking abroad, ritualism is in high places. Can you say I have no confidence in the flesh? Divine righteousness is in heaven, but the Cross has written death upon all below upon earth, and all association with it. We find our imperfection every day, but is the ruling object of our souls Christ? Are you looking for Christ? You cannot say when He will come. It is carefully not revealed, to keep you watching. But whenever the Lord speaks of it, He never puts it beyond the life of the people that were then living. He never presents another thing to their thoughts. In the parable of the virgins, those that awoke at the midnight cry were the same that fell asleep while He tarried {Matt. 25:1-13}. He wakes them up and then He comes, but stays sufficient time to test hearts as to how far He is everything. If He were to come to-night, would your hearts be saying, Oh that is what I am looking for? Do you love His appearing? Would it be the joy of your heart to say, “Oh there He is, and I am to spend eternity in the glory with Him”? You cannot expect joy unless you are looking for the Lord to come. The Cross put an end to all fleshly religion, and earthly things, and Christ becomes the bright blessed Object: while the love of Christ lays hold of, sustains, and comforts the heart, and gives us the consciousness that nothing can separate us from it.

When we are occupied with Jesus the littleness of all that one is, or of all that one has done, remains in the shade, and Jesus Himself alone stands out in relief.

There is a danger of being too much occupied with evil; it does not
refresh, does not help the soul on. “Abstain from every form of evil,” but
be occupied ourselves and occupy others with Christ. The evil itself becomes
not less evil, but less in comparison with the power of good where the soul
dwells.
THOUGHTS ON 2 TIMOTHY
FOR THE CLOSING DAYS

It is worthy of remark that the moment you get out of the epistles to the churches, you get catholic epistles and others which treat the church as in the “last days.” In John, there were “many antichrists.” In Peter, “Judgment must begin at the house of God” {1 Pet. 4:17}. In 1 Timothy, “In the latter times some shall depart from the faith.” In 2 Timothy, “In the last days perilous times shall come.” In Jude, “Certain men are crept in unawares.” In 2 Peter, “There shall be false teachers among you.”

It is at such a time that God specially commends us to His word; and He has taken care that we should have in Scripture what would guide us in the last days, when He commends us to it. After Paul’s departure grievous wolves would come in, not sparing the flock. He commends us to God and the word of His grace (Acts 20. See also 2 Tim. 3:14-17). We need the grace of endurance in such a day. And when one goes through the trial with God beforehand, he meets the enemy and the actual trial when it comes, and the distressing effect upon the heart is gone. God helps and sustains us in it and through it.

One is struck in reading the second epistle to Timothy, by the way in which Paul goes back from dispensational glory (as in Ephesians, etc.) down to natural and Jewish relationships of private and personal character: “I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers, with pure conscience,” and, “When I call to mind the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother, Eunice.”

There is nothing he insists on more, than NOT TO LOSE PERSONAL COURAGE IN A TIME OF RUIN, no matter how great the ruin may be:

For God hath not given us the spirit of cowardice; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind {2 Tim. 1:7}.

It is always thus.

In nothing terrified by your adversaries {Phil. 1:28}.

Be not thou, therefore, ashamed of the testimony of our Lord (i.e., the gospel and the testimony generally), nor of me his prisoner {2 Tim. 1:8}.

Satan is to be met with confidence as a beaten enemy. This gives steady firmness to the soul. One has the truth, and knows one has it; and this gives quiet consciousness, and keeps one in the midst of the attacks of the enemy in an evil day. He is to be thoroughly courageous when all the evil was coming in, and was there; to “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”; to “endure hardness.” It was when the power of evil had come in that he
expects courage.

This is not the tide of blessing which carries on others; but the ebb had come, and individuals were standing and stemming it, and carrying on the testimony of the truth. It was not like the tide of the gospel at the first when “a great door and effectual opened”; but, rather,

be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God {2 Tim. 1:8}.

It is then we require the power of God and personal courage more than ever. All this is “truth for the times” in which we live. (There is truth for eternity as well.) 2 Tim. 1:9, 10: “Not according to our works,” i.e., our responsibility. The history of the responsible man {i.e., the first man} ended with the Cross. There atonement was made, and God’s eternal purposes came out. The Cross maintained the responsibility of man and the authority of God. Through it, we get out by redemption into the state where it was His purpose and grace to put us before the world began. The Church has nothing to do with this earth except to go through it.

The tide of the Gospel had gathered a crowd of people into this wonderful calling, but the tide began to ebb, and all were going back again (2 Tim. 1:15). Positive power is needed in such a time, as well as having the truth. There are two things that are worthy of notice; first, that we now have only the power of good in the midst of evil, but the evil is never set to rights till the Lord comes; and the instant the power of good is not there, you get away down the stream; and second, how the good that God set up failed so fast. But this has always been so. The counsels of God as to what He set up were made known, and the power of evil came in at once to frustrate the counsels.

2 Tim. 1:12. “For the which cause,” &c. He was a prisoner for having carried the testimony to the Gentiles. But he had entrusted his happiness to Christ, and He would keep it for him against that day.

In 2 Tim. 1:13 and 14, he passes on the testimony to Timothy, who would commit “the truth” to faithful men, who could teach it to others. The Church had ceased to be a guarantee for “the truth,” i.e., the doctrines of Christianity and of Christ.

Defection was the order of the day (see 2 Tim. 1:15); and in view of such, as of the general state of things, Timothy was to be “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” The Apostle now takes up the case of a soldier, an athlete, and a husbandman. He must not be entangled with the affairs of this life, but be entirely at the disposal of Him who had called him to be a soldier. Striving in the games, he must do so lawfully; and laboring first, be a partaker of the fruits of it.

Paul’s gospel and Paul’s doctrine are positive things for the last days.
We are walking and laboring in the midst of an immense network of systems in which Paul’s ministry is totally unknown. For it he suffered as an evildoer unto bonds.

How like to Christ’s own words are those of the Apostle in verse 10 of ch. 2!

We now get corruption of doctrine (2 Tim. 2:16, &c.). There had been falling away. Thus (2 Tim. 2:19) individual responsibility (coupled with God’s faithful knowledge of His Own) to depart from iniquity. In v. 20 we have ecclesiastical apprehension.

Supposing a person says, “I do not see that so and so is wrong when Scripture forbids it,” this those walking in the truth cannot allow. You cannot take the conscience of the individual for the rule of the church. Scripture is its guide. Thus we have to walk with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. At the beginning of Christianity we did not find this expression. It was more general, “all that call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours” {1 Cor. 1:1}. Now it is “all that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart” {2 Tim. 2:22}. The Church should have been the witness for the glory of Christ on high, and is now mixed up with all that witnesses against Him here below.

In 2 Tim. 2:24, “patient” should be “bearing evil.” “In meekness instructing those that oppose” (see New Trans.), that they might be recovered to God’s will from the snares of the devil.

The profession of Christianity has become the reproduction, under the name of Christ, of all the horrors and wickedness of heathenism. (Compare 2 Tim. 3:1-4 with Rom. 1:29-31.)

We are never able to judge rightly as to what we have to do and to meet in the last days, unless we are conscious that we have to do with Satan’s power actually; the “Jannes and Jambres” referred to were mere instruments of Satan. But their folly will be shown up, perhaps now, perhaps by and by.

The expression “silly women” is applicable to men of effeminate mind as well as to women. It is the turn and bent of the mind of the persons who are thus beguiled.

We here get Paul’s doctrine (2 Tim. 3:10) and the manner of life which flowed from it. “Thou hast fully known” -- i.e., had perfect understanding of it. It is a like expression to that in Luke 1:3: “Having had perfect understanding,” &c. He had fully followed up his teaching, as having learned it thoroughly. The manner of life goes with it.

In 2 Tim. 3:12 the emphasis is on “godly”; they will suffer. Things would get worse and worse. It was the old story with the world -- either deceiving itself or being deceived.
He now casts us upon Scripture specially. In 2 Tim. 3:15, it is the Old Testament Scriptures which Timothy had known. In 2 Tim. 3:16 he embraces “all Scripture.” Scripture is the point -- that which was written. Peter stamps Paul’s writings with the authority of the other Scriptures. He says they are Scripture (2 Pet. 3:16). The man who can do this was conscious he was writing Scripture himself.

One may say, “How do you know that Scripture is the Word of God?” I reply, “How do you know that the sun shines?” If you say “It does not,” you manifest the ground you are on, as denying it. If you say “It does,” you admit it. God has spoken so as to make Himself known, and to make people know He is speaking.

In the New Testament the Holy Ghost comes down and vitalizes all the circumstances through which the new man has to pass. He takes up the little things of everyday Christian life. It is a mistake to suppose the Holy Ghost only engages Himself with great ecclesiastical things. As there is nothing too great for God to give us, so there is nothing too little for God to take up and interest Himself in for us. There is nothing so common as eating and drinking and dress. These things are here taken up most strongly. Even these things become an opportunity for the glory of God. God would never have us to act as a man; but always, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to act as a Christian. Thus the Holy Ghost enters upon the circumstances of daily Christian life, and vitalizes them. When the apostle writes of these things therefore, the words in which he wrote are the words of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 2:13), as much as when the prophet of old uttered his magnificent strains with “Thus saith the Lord,” and then sat down to study his own prophecies, to see what they meant and of whom they spake. (See 1 Pet. 1, 2).

The man of God is prepared unto every good work, in his having departed from iniquity and purged himself from the vessels of dishonor {2 Tim. 2:21}. In ch. 2 he is equipped; in ch. 3 furnished unto every good work; in ch. 4 he goes to war. He is to “reprove, rebuke, exhort.” This shows the signs of failure which the wisdom of the Spirit foresaw. It was not so much evangelizing as preaching “the word” amongst professing Christians who would not endure sound doctrine. All was to be done in view of His appearing and His kingdom. Then faithfulness would be manifested.

We should be more earnest than ever in living to Christ, as we are now in the shaking of all things, and the Lord may come at any time now. Worldliness amongst us is a sign and a source of weakness. It must be “with all long-suffering and doctrine.” These are the elements that must give character to our service. If men were left to their own responsibility, they would never come in.
So he concludes, “I am now being poured forth” (2 Tim. 4: 6). In Phil. 2 it had been, “If I be poured forth.” Things have gone further here. “My release,” is the thought, because he had been in the combat as an athlete. He can say, “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.” It was the finishing of his race and wrestling of 1 Cor. 9:24-27. The Lord would preserve him to His heavenly kingdom, if he was not to be preserved on earth (2 Tim. 4:18). Earlier, his desire was that he might finish his course with joy (Acts 20). Here he had done it: “I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”

May we covet the same grace!

* * * * *

Our prayers, our praises and our services are so poor and worthless, and yet we are proud of them. We seek praise from our fellow-men for the very things we have to confess as tainted with sin before God. What need, therefore, to bare our hearts and say, “See if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

ETERNAL LIFE
MANIFESTED IN JESUS,
AND IMPARTED TO US

1 JOHN 1 - 2:2

The Epistle of John has a peculiar character. It is eternal life manifested in Jesus, and imparted to us -- the life which was with the Father, and which is in the Son. It is in this life that believers enjoy the communion of the Father, that they are in relationship with the Father by the Spirit of adoption, and that they have fellowship with the Father and the Son. God’s own character is that which tests it; because it proceeds from Himself.

The first chapter establishes these two latter points: namely, communion with the Father and the Son, and that this communion must be according to the essential character of God. The name of Father is that which gives character to the second chapter. Afterwards it is that which God is, which tests the reality of imparted life.

The Epistles of Paul, although speaking of this life, are in general occupied with setting before christians the truth respecting the means of standing in the presence of God justified and accepted. The Epistle of John, that is to say, his First, shows us the life that comes from God by Jesus Christ. John sets God before us, the Father revealed in the Son, and eternal life in Him. Paul sets us before God accepted in Christ. I speak of what characterizes them. Each respectively touches on the other point.
Now this life is so precious, manifested as it is in the Person of Jesus, that the epistle now before us has in this respect quite a peculiar charm. When I, too, turn my eyes to Jesus, when I contemplate all His obedience, His purity, His grace, His tenderness, His patience, His devotedness, His holiness, His love, His entire freedom from all self-seeking, I can say, That is my life.

This is immeasurable grace. It may be that it is obscured in me; but it is none the less true, that that is my life. Oh, how do I enjoy it thus seen! How I bless God for it! What rest to the soul! What pure joy to the heart! At the same time Jesus Himself is the object of my affections; and all my affections are formed on that holy object.  

But we must turn to our epistle. There were many pretensions to new light, to clearer views. It was said that Christianity was very good as an elementary thing; but that it was grown old, and that there was a new light which went far beyond that twilight truth.

The Person of our Lord, the true manifestation of the divine life itself, dissipated all those proud pretensions, those exaltations of the human mind under the influence of the enemy, which did but obscure the truth, and lead the mind of men back into the darkness whence they themselves proceeded.

That which was from the beginning {1 John 1:1} (of Christianity, that is, in the Person of Christ), that which they had heard, had seen with their own eyes, had contemplated, had touched with their own hands, of the Word of life -- that was it which the apostle declared. For the life itself had been manifested. That life which was with the Father had been manifested to the disciples. Could there be anything more perfect, more excellent, any development more admirable in the eyes of God, than Christ Himself, than that Life which was with the Father, manifested in all its perfection in the Person of the Son? As soon as the Person of the Son is the object of our faith, we feel that perfection must have been at the beginning.

The Person then of the Son, the eternal life manifested in the flesh, is our subject in this epistle.

Grace is consequently to be remarked here in that which regards life; while Paul presents it in connection with justification. The law promised life upon obedience; but life came in the Person of Jesus, in all its own divine perfection, in its human manifestations. Oh how precious is the truth that this life, such as it was with the Father, such as it was in Jesus, is given to us! In what relationships it sets us by the power of the Holy Ghost, with the Father and with the Son Himself! And this is what the Spirit here first sets

68. And this is morally very important; while it is in Him, not in myself, that I rejoice and delight.
before us. And observe how it is all grace here. Farther on, indeed, He tests all pretensions to the possession of fellowship with God, by displaying God's own character; a character from which He can never deviate. But, before entering on this, he presents the Savior Himself, and communion with the Father and the Son by this means, without question and without modification. This is our position and our eternal joy.

The apostle had seen that life, had touched it with his own hands; and he wrote to others, proclaiming this, in order that they also should have communion with Him in the knowledge of the life which had been thus manifested. Now, inasmuch as that life was the Son, it could not be known without knowing the Son, that is, that which He was, entering into His thoughts, His feelings: otherwise He is not really known. It was thus they had communion with Him -- with the Son. Precious fact! To enter into the thoughts (all the thoughts), and into the feelings of the Son of God come down in grace: to do this in fellowship with Him, that is to say, not only knowing them, but sharing these thoughts and feelings with Him. In effect it was life.

But we cannot have the Son without having the Father. He who had seen Him had seen the Father; and consequently he who had communion with the Son had communion with the Father, for their thoughts and feelings were all one. He is in the Father, and the Father in Him. We have fellowship therefore with the Father. And this is true also when we look at it in another aspect. We know that the Father has entire delight in the Son. Now He has given us, by revealing the Son, to take our delight in Him also, feeble as we are. I know, when I am delighting in Jesus -- in His obedience, His love to His Father, to us, His single eye and purely devoted heart -- I have the same feelings, the same thoughts, as the Father Himself. In that the Father delights, cannot but delight, in Him in whom I now delight, I have communion with the Father. So with the Son in the knowledge of the Father. All this flows, whether in the one or the other point of view, from the Person of the Son. Herein our joy is full. What can we have more than the Father and the Son? what more perfect happiness than community of thoughts, feelings, joys, and communion, with the Father and the Son, deriving all our joy from themselves? And if it seem difficult to believe, let us remember that, in truth, it cannot be otherwise: for, in the life of Christ, the Holy Ghost is the source of my thoughts, feelings, communion, and He cannot give thoughts different from those of the Father and the Son. They must be

69. The life has been manifested. Therefore we have no longer to seek for it, to grope after it in the darkness, to explore at random the indefinite, or the obscurity of our own hearts, in order to find it, to labor fruitlessly under the law, in order to obtain it. We behold it: it is revealed, it is here, in Jesus Christ. He who possesses Christ, possesses that life.
in their nature the same. To say that they are adoring thoughts is in the very nature of things, and only makes them more precious. To say that they are feeble and often hindered, while the Father and the Son are divine and perfect, is, if true, to say the Father and the Son are God, are divine, and we feeble creatures. That surely none will deny. But if the blessed Spirit be the source, they must be the same as to nature and fact.

This is our christian position then, here below in time, through the knowledge of the Son of God; as the apostle says, “These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

But He who was the life which came from the Father, has brought us the knowledge of God. 70 The apostle had heard from His lips that which God was -- knowledge of priceless value, but which searches the heart. And this also the apostle, on the Lord’s part, announces to believers. This then is the message which they had heard from Him, namely, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness. With regard to Christ, He spoke that which He knew, and bore testimony to that which He had seen. No one had been in heaven, save He who came down from thence. No one had seen God. The Only begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, He had declared Him. No one had seen the Father, save He who was of God; He had seen the Father. Thus He could, of His own and perfect knowledge, reveal Him. 71 Now God was light, perfect purity, which makes manifest at the same time all that is pure, and all that is not so. To have communion with light, one must oneself be light, be of its nature, and fit to be seen in the perfect light. It can only be linked with that which is of itself. If there is anything else that mingles with it, light is no longer light. It is absolute in its nature, so as to exclude all that is not itself.

Therefore, if we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice truth: our life is a perpetual lie.

But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we (believers) have communion with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. These are the great principles, the great features of Christian position. We are in the presence of God without a veil. It is a real thing, a matter of life and of walk. It is not the same thing as walking according to the light but it is in the light. That is to say, that this walk is before the eyes of God, enlightened by the full revelation of what He is. It is not that there

70. It will be found that, when grace to us is spoken of in John’s writings, he speaks of the Father and the Son; when the nature of God or our responsibility, he says God. John 3 and 1 John 4 may seem exceptions, but are not. It is what God is as such, not personal action and relationship in grace.

71. He who had seen Him had seen the Father; but here the apostle speaks of a message and the revelation of His nature.
is no sin in us; but, walking in the light, the will and the conscience being in the light as God is in it, everything is judged that does not answer to it. We live and walk morally in the sense that God is present, and as knowing Him. We walk thus in the light. The moral rule of our will is God Himself, God known. The thoughts that sway the heart come from Himself and are formed upon the revelation of Himself. The apostle puts these things always in an abstract way: thus he says “he cannot sin, because he is born of God” {1 John 3:9}; and that maintains the moral rule of this life; it is its nature; it is the truth, inasmuch as the man is born of God. We cannot have any other measure of it: any other would be false. It does not follow, alas! that we are always consistent; but we are inconsistent if we are not in this state; we are not walking according to the nature that we possess, we are out of our true condition according to that nature.

Moreover, walking in the light, as God is in the light {1 John 1:7}, believers have communion with each other. The world is selfish. The flesh, the passions, seek their own gratification; but, if I walk in the light, self has no place there. I can enjoy the light, and all I seek in it, with another, and there is no jealousy. If another possess a carnal thing, I am deprived of it. In the light we have fellow-possess of that which He gives us, and we enjoy it the more by sharing it together. This is a touchstone to all that is of the flesh. As much as one is in the light, so much will we have fellow-enjoyment with another who is in it. The apostle, as we have said, states this in an abstract and absolute way. This is the truest way to know the thing itself. The rest is only a question of realization.

In the third place, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

To walk in the light as God is in it, to have fellowship with one another, to be cleansed from all sin by the blood; these are the three parts of christian position. We feel the need there is of the last for, while walking in the light as God is in the light, with (blessed be God) a perfect revelation to us of Himself, with a nature that knows Him, that is capable of seeing Him spiritually, as the eye is made to appreciate light (for we participate in the divine nature {2 Pet. 1:4}), we cannot say that we have no sin. The light itself would contradict us. But we can say that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us perfectly from all sin. 72 Through the Spirit we enjoy the light together: it is the common joy of our hearts before God, and well pleasing to Him; a testimony to our common participation in the divine nature, which is love also. And our conscience is no hindrance, because we know the value

72. It is not said “has” nor “will.” It does not refer to time, but to its efficacy. As I might say such a medicine cures the ague. It is its efficacy.
of the blood. We have no conscience of sin upon us before God, though we know it is in us; but we have the conscience of being clean from it by the blood. But the same light which shows us this, prevents our saying (if we are in it) that we have no sin in us; we should deceive ourselves if we said so; and the truth would not be in us; for if the truth were in us, if that revelation of the divine nature, which is light, Christ our life, were in us, the sin that is in us would be judged by the light itself. If it be not judged, this light -- the truth which speaks of things as they are -- is not in us.

If, on the other hand, we have even committed sin, and all, being judged according to the light, is confessed (so that the will no longer takes part in it, the pride of that will being broken down), He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all iniquity. If we say that we have not sinned (as a general truth), it shows not only that the truth is not in us, but we make God a liar; His word is not in us, for He says that all have sinned. There are the three things: we lie; the truth is not in us; we make God a liar. It is this fellowship with God in the light, which, in practical daily christian life, inseparably connects forgiveness, and the present sense of it by faith, and purity of heart.

Thus we see the christian position (v. 7); and then the things which, in three different ways, are opposed to the truth -- to communion with God in life.

The apostle wrote that which relates to the communion with the Father and the Son, in order that their joy might be full.

That which he wrote according to the revelation of the nature of God, which he had received from Him who was the life from heaven, was in order that they should not sin. But to say this is to suppose that they might sin. Not that it is necessary they should do so; for the presence of sin in the flesh by no means obliges us to walk after the flesh. But if it should take place, there is provision made by grace, in order that grace may act, and that we may be neither condemned, nor brought again under the law.

We have an Advocate with the Father, One who carries on our cause for us on high. Now this is not in order to obtain righteousness, nor again to

---

73. When speaking of sin, the apostle speaks in the present tense, "we have": when speaking of sinning, he speaks in the past. He does not take for granted we are going on doing it. It has been a question whether the apostle speaks of first coming to the Lord, or subsequent failures. I answer, he speaks in an abstract and absolute way: confession brings through grace forgiveness. If it is our first coming to God, it is forgiveness: it is in the full and absolute sense. I am forgiven with God: He remembers my sins no more. If it is subsequent failure, honesty of heart always confesses, then it is forgiveness as regards the government of God, and the present condition and relationship of my soul with Him. But the apostle, as everywhere, speaks absolutely and of the principle.
wash our sins away. All that has been done. *Divine righteousness* has placed us in the light, even as God Himself is in the light. But communion is interrupted, if even levity of thought finds place in our heart; for it is of the flesh, and the flesh has no communion with God. When communion is interrupted, when we have sinned (not when we have repented, for it is His intercession that leads to repentance), Christ intercedes for us. Righteousness is always present -- our righteousness -- “Jesus Christ *the Righteous*.” Therefore, neither the righteousness nor the value of the propitiation for sin being changed, grace acts (one may say, acts necessarily) in virtue of that righteousness, and of that blood which is before God -- acts, on the intercession of Christ who never forgets us, in order to bring us back to communion by means of repentance. Thus, while yet on earth, before Peter had committed the sin, He prayed for him; at the given moment He looks on him, and Peter repents and weeps bitterly for his offence. Afterwards the Lord does all that is necessary to make Peter judge the root itself of the sin; but all is grace.

It is the same in our case. Divine righteousness abides the immutable foundation of our relationships with God, established on the blood of Christ. When communion, which exists only in the light, is interrupted, the intercession of Christ, available by virtue of His blood (for propitiation for the sin has also been made), restores the soul that it may still again enjoy communion with God according to the light, into which righteousness has introduced it. 74 This propitiation is made for the whole world, not for the Jews only, nor to the exclusion of any one at all; but for the whole world, God in His moral nature having been fully glorified by the death of Christ.

These three capital points -- or, if you will, two capital points, and the third, namely, advocacy, which is supplementary -- form the introduction, the doctrine of the epistle. All the rest is an experimental application of that which this part contains: namely, first (life being given), communion with the Father and the Son; second, the nature of God, light, which manifests the falsehood of all pretension to communion with the light, if the walk be in darkness; and third, seeing that sin is in us, and that we may fail although we are cleansed before God so as to enjoy the light, the advocacy which Jesus Christ the righteous can always exercise before God, on the ground of the righteousness which is ever in His presence, and the blood which is shed for our sins, in order to restore our communion, when we have lost it by our guilty negligence.

* * * * *

74. Here the subject is communion, and hence actual failure is spoken of; in the Hebrews, we have seen, it is access to God and we are “perfected for ever,” and priesthood is for mercy and help, not for sins, save the great act of atonement.
To be truly restored the Christian must recognize the point of departure where his soul gave up communion with God and sought its own will . . . Communion with God is not thoroughly re-established, self and its will are not thoroughly broken, as long as the Christian has not found the point where his heart began to lose its spiritual sensibility, for the presence of God makes us feel that.
We get three things spoken of here: one that we have not got, and two that we have.

The thing we have not got is rest: There remaineth a rest for the people of God. The prophet says, “Arise ye, and depart, for this is not your rest, for it is polluted” (Micah 2:10). We are partakers of the divine nature, and we must rest where He rests.

The other two things are the word of God and the priesthood of Christ. Also I wish, in speaking of this help by the way, to refer to that in which all is absolute perfection, to show the difference between our standing before God, and that which is a help more for infirmity than for sin. We have to learn -- if we have not yet learned -- the place in which we are set through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first exercises of the heart do not come in in this portion at all, those which we have when we do not know our place, when we try to do good, and do it not; but that is not the path of the people of God as such. It may be the way into it, but the place of the Christian is in perfect acceptance before God, with every question of sin perfectly settled. Just as with Israel: they were delivered from the place they were in, God’s judgment met by the blood upon the doorpost, and they brought through the Red Sea to Himself: “I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself” (Ex. 19:4). That is where the Christian is; the veil is rent, and we are now before God without any veil at all, though it may be on our hearts through unbelief. I do not speak of that now.

As far as God’s government goes, all are in relationship with Him, but I speak now of the relations of the heart. Every possible trial of man has been made, and it only came out that those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Christ has been rejected, and the world has no place before God at all, though His love goes out towards it, for He has had His purpose and thought of grace ever since Adam fell, and souls get into a place in which they are in relationship with God. We have to see where we are, when the whole world is lying in wickedness. Men own Christ outwardly, that He died on the cross, etc., and go on just as they did before. You cannot call that relationship -- there is none.

There remains a rest even for God’s people, just as Israel were journeying on to Canaan; they cannot have rest in a world which is contrary to Christ. We are exercised in the wilderness, we are in conflict, too, with wicked
spirits in heavenly places; and that is not rest. Israel will get their rest in time; but I drop that for the moment, and apply it to ourselves. It is a blessed thought, that there will be rest and joy for this poor sin-stricken world, but for us it is a heavenly rest -- we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ.

Where God can rest in His love, we can rest. If God rests in His love, there is nothing wanting. He is active now in His love, seeking to save that which was lost; but that is not rest; He rests in His love when those whom He has brought by His love are there, and no single thing is lacking to their enjoyment. It is ours, that rest, but we are not there yet. Christ is waiting too, He does not yet see the full result of the travail of His soul, but He will do so, and be satisfied. That rest, of course, is according to God’s nature. He brings us now, “holy and without blame, before him in love,” having the adoption of children, knowing God as our Father, and the blessed rest of God’s people is also according to His nature. And it is all revealed now, the veil is rent, and all that is revealed which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. The Father fully revealed in the Son, the essence of all the blessing. The more spiritual we become, the more we learn what it all is. We get the figures of it in Revelation, where the spiritual apprehension lays hold of it, so that we can live in it, but it is clear we have not come to it.

It is a mistake to speak of this rest as rest of conscience. “We that have believed do enter into rest” only means the character of those who enter; as I might say, Men come in by this door, and women by that. I do not say that any are coming in now. We have rest in the sense of ceasing from our own works for righteousness, but not in the heavenly sense.

But then, beloved friends, all has been completely brought out now -- they are not promises, the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared. The work is all completely finished and revealed. The moment the Son of God was rejected, all that could be done to test man’s heart had been done, and He says, “Now is the judgment of this world.” For when Christ was there, in perfect love and goodness, revealing the Father, He had to say, “The world hath not known thee, but I have known thee.” He appeals to the righteous Father to judge between them.

We get Man then -- Christ in the divine glory, because He had finished the work His Father gave Him to do: there, when He had finished it, and because He had finished it. And Paul says he did not know the Christ who came to be Messiah among the Jews; they had forfeited all the promises, and it was all over with Jew and Gentile, and there was no relationship that God recognized at all. Man was cast out of the first paradise, but was set in Christ in the heavenly paradise, and between the two there is nothing really that God owns. “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19). Satan was the prince of the world before, but he was never called it until the cross, where the world proved what it was: it
was not a question of the responsibility of man, but the proof that he is enmity against God, and that he will not have Him on any terms. But in that, God wrought His own work, the work He had always had in His mind before the foundation of the world, and as the fruit of which, Christ is in heaven. (Of course, He always was there, but I speak now of Christ as Man.)

The more we dwell upon it, the more we shall see the whole question of good and evil definitively settled at the cross. The perfect wickedness of man was fully brought out there; the disciples run away, and all the rest were delighting in getting rid of the Lord, saying, Aha! Aha! so would we have it. We get here, man entirely rejecting the Lord, and that is what we are ourselves, our natural state. On the other hand, when the wickedness of man’s heart is brought out, then I get man perfect (in Christ, of course), absolute obedience at all cost, even to the cup and the curse, perfect love to the Father: “that the world may know that I love the Father, even so I do.” That love was shown really and perfectly where He was made sin. I get man in His perfectness here, glorifying God at all cost: God revealed in His Majesty -- He could not let His own Son be spared when He had put Himself in that place -- His judgment against sin, the thought of which made the Lord sweat {as it were} great drops of blood; and all this was done for us: He suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Morally speaking, the whole question of good and evil was resolved: Satan’s power, the wickedness of man, the perfection of Man, and the nature of God all fully brought out. It is not now a question of probation, but of belief in a thing that is so settled, that God has set the One who did it at His own right hand. He was perfectly glorified in the place where Christ was made sin, and Man is sitting at the right hand of God in glory. It is all done, and that is what the Holy Ghost comes down to reveal to us.

Exercises of heart there will be, finding out what we are, that in our flesh dwells no good thing -- that we are the very persons who were thus manifested at the cross; but I find, too, that being one of those persons, and having that evil nature, it was all met at the cross -- a settled thing. He would not have the twelve legions of angels, He went on to the end. “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

When, beloved friends, I have been thoroughly convinced of sin and sins, I find then, when I get before God in the full conviction of what I am, I get Christ instead of myself; He is before God for me. Not that all the sin is nothing, but that Christ has borne it all for me; God has accepted it as meeting it completely and absolutely, not giving me a legal righteousness -- it is infinitely beyond that -- but giving me a place in glory, in virtue of the work which has perfectly glorified God. I do not believe we get the sense of that until we have done with all confidence in self; it is a very subtle thing. A man does not set about saying there is something in him to trust, but he
goes on as if there were, and he will not get that liberty spoken of in Rom. 7.

I am utterly condemned, and taking my place under the righteous judgment of God, I find Christ is not on the cross now. He is sitting at the right hand of God, after He has been on the cross. All I was as a child of Adam is done away, and I am sanctified by the will of God, “through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.” He is sitting there at rest, because He has finished the work. (I do not speak now of the grace He is daily ministering to us.)

If I am looking for anything to put away my sins, I do not believe in the finished work of Christ, and therefore the apostle says, in Heb. 9, “then must Christ often have suffered.” There is not a thing to be done; but it is done—“no more conscience of sins.” It is not that I do not fail, but when I look up to God, faith cannot have a thought that God imputes anything to me. And why so? Because Christ is sitting at the right hand of God when He had purged our sins.

If I go in faith, I go through the rent veil -- His flesh -- into the holiest of all, in boldness, because He who has accomplished the work is there. I find Him there when I go. I press that, beloved friends; because you are not on the full, true ground of liberty before God, until the thought of imputation, when you put yourselves in the presence of God, has completely disappeared. It is well to put yourselves there to test your souls. Supposing I stand before the judgment seat. Why, the One who is there is the One who bore my sins! I see it more every day, that the whole question of the church’s ruin hangs upon this; whether or not the worshipers once purged have no more conscience of sins. People speak of Christ bearing their past sins, but there is no sense in saying Christ bore my sins up to the 16th of July! He was there before God meeting the whole question of sin, and He sits down because it is all settled. God has made death and judgment, like the Red Sea, to be a wall on my right hand and my left.

What, then, comes of our present life? The first thing to get quite clear is, that my place before God is Christ’s place every instant. “No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” How can you condemn one who is in Christ? It is absurd, and the apostle says it triumphantly.

But what do we get as to what is going on now? It is not a question of imputation at all, but we have to do with the same Christ who is the perfect Witness to God’s satisfaction.

I am here, a poor weak creature, exposed to all sorts of snares and temptations, and we have the word of God, sharper than a two-edged sword, which comes and judges; it runs right through, and says, What is this in your heart? Is that in accordance with the light? No buts, no buts, there is no excuse, you are brought into the light. It shows me things I never suspected before -- all things naked and open; the word is God’s eye; prying into my
heart, and showing me what suits that eye, judging not merely acts, but the thoughts and intents of the heart.

But, supposing all the thoughts and intents of my heart were as perfect as possible, still I am a poor weak creature, and then I get the Priesthood of Christ. There are snares all around -- the world, Christian friends who are not spiritually-minded -- and I have to go through all that, all the difficulty and trial that comes from those who do not wish the cross to be quite what it is. We are in danger in passing through this world, and so I have Christ, who has met every difficulty and temptation, and ten thousand times more than we do, and understands it all, not only in the divine, but also in the experimental, way. But for the evil movements of my heart, I want the hatchet: for the difficulties, trials, etc., I have the throne of grace -- God Himself, the perfect and adequate supply of all grace to overcome.

The Priesthood of Christ does not apply to sins. Many a one who does not quite know that he is perfected for ever, if he gets into a low state, goes to Christ, just as if he could not go to God. I have a High Priest there, and I go to the throne of grace; it is for help in time of need, not for sin.

If you go to Christ about your sins, as if He were to go about them to God, that is not what He does as Priest. The Priest is to obtain grace for me, that I should not sin; He is always there to obtain every needed grace, to help in time of need. It is impossible that a temptation can be too strong for us, for He is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, and we have all the strength of God. We go to the throne of grace, and get what is needed to help in time of need.

The epistle {of Hebrews} never connects the priesthood with sin; it is well you should feel it, that you may not think you may sin, and then run to the Priest to get it set straight. But supposing I fail, and sin (which we all do), then I have an Advocate with the Father {1 John 2:1}; it is not then going to God to get grace and strength, but that fellowship with the Father must be restored. Fellowship is interrupted if I even allow a sinful thought; it were blasphemy to say He could have fellowship with that. I go, then, not doubting His love, but not cheerful and happy as if nothing had happened; while the righteousness in which I stand is not touched, communion is destroyed. If I allow anything that is not of God, communion is interrupted: and “if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father”; that is about our sins. But mark how he speaks, that there may be no cloud—“Jesus Christ, the righteous.” Why bring in that word? Be cause our righteousness is not touched, it all remains in unalterable value.

But it has brought me, too, to walk in the light, as God is in the light, and after communion is broken, He interferes to restore it. If I look at the sins as interrupting my standing before God, Christ is not my righteousness, but the effect of His work is to put me into the light, there to judge of everything, as
He does there is no other place for a man except that of being *in his sins*.

The moment there is anything inconsistent with the presence of God, in the measure in which I release it, communion is interrupted. Then do I go out of the position of grace? Not at all. He interferes to break me down about my sin, to make me judge the root, the place where I got away from the path. My soul has to go through the judgment of all that, and there I do get the question of sin raised, but then it is as Advocate with the *Father*.

If I think of the Priesthood, I am before God perfected for ever. But though this is true, I am a poor weak creature going through the wilderness and there is infinite strength for me, and He is my Priest, representing me before God. We never can excuse ourselves if we fail, because He is faithful. There may be negligence, and we may not have power at the time to overcome; negligence in prayer, and in using the means God has given, but I never can excuse myself.

Have your hearts *right open* before God. Do not leave any chambers locked up before Him, or you cannot have joy and liberty. You may walk well outwardly, not scandalize anybody, but if you have anything in your heart not open before God, you have lost your communion, and there is that which tends to weaken your whole path.

There are two things: the full and distinct apprehension that before God there is no more conscience of sin: if you have not reached it, never rest till you do: He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Here comes the fact that we are poor, weak, infirm creatures, and we are put through all sorts of things to exercise us; and He is my Priest where the *intention* is right. I have to have my will broken, things I do not suspect brought out, and, even if I fail, the advocacy of Christ is founded on His righteousness, and in that there is no progress, and no change.

I press upon you distinctly and definitely -- for the loss of it was the very ruin of the church -- and for your own souls, not to rest till you have no more conscience of sins. Then, not only watchfulness against evil, but growing up unto Him in all things. But there is no *perfectness* till we are like Him in glory. I press toward the mark.

The Lord give us diligence and earnestness of heart thus to follow Christ!

---

**Subject Index**

A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs Selected 1856 for The Little Flock ........ 221
Aaron’s rod ................................................. 121
Aaronic piesthood ............................................ 110
Abba Father ............................................. 50, 322
Abel ..................................................... 271
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Index</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>229, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adamic standing, all that I was in Adam, to faith, is annulled</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address at the Funeral of Augustus James Clarke</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administered as being governmentally a present</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration of forgiveness</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration of forgiveness on earth</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrative forgiveness</td>
<td>314, 318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrative forgiveness by the church</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrative forgiveness, that was administrative too on earth</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrative forgiveness, governmental if you like, I called it administrative</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advocacy of Christ</td>
<td>13, 121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate</td>
<td>119, 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate with the Father</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananias and Sapphira</td>
<td>334, 335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anointing oil</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antichrists, many</td>
<td>137, 138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antichrists, we are to judge the many</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apocrypha</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollos</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apostles, I know people call Paul the twelfth</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apostolic succession</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atonement</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atonement, A Letter on</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atonement-day</td>
<td>285, 286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baptism for the remission of sins</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood and the water flowed from a dead Christ</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood and water</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood which expiates</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of Jasher</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>born again, being, is not righteousness before God</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>born of God</td>
<td>151, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breastplate of righteousness</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burnt-offering was not for sin</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cain</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cain and Abel</td>
<td>135, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calling each other “Brother”</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canaan and the Armor of God</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canon of Scripture</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecil, {A. P.} brother</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherubim</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children and sons, difference between</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children, cry to Jesus for your children</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, acted by the Holy Ghost as a risen Man</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, as a well of water springing up within</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, committed all judgment unto the Son</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, Dwelling in the Heart</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, entered as Man into God’s glory</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, He suffered being tempted</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, He was made sin</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, His judicial manifestation</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ, I ascend</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Christ, identifies Himself with the Church ........................................ 256
Christ, incarnation, the Person into which the man was brought ............ 59
Christ, is all, and in all ..................................................................... 386
Christ, is never said to have been baptized with the Holy Ghost .............. 322
Christ, perfect manifestation of the divine nature in man ..................... 122
Christ, presenting His moral manifestation ....................................... 130
Christ, sympathy, not sympathy in our lusts ..................................... 124
Christ, This Man is My Beloved Son ............................................. 400
Christ, touch me not ....................................................................... 306
Christ, we never find in Scripture that Christ is called our Elder Brother .... 162
Christ's ascension in Psa. 68 .......................................................... 325
Christ's intercession ........................................................................ 122
Christendom, modern, in its main characteristics makes the vain .......... 244
Christian, a risen state is a new thing ............................................. 311
Christian, has no right to have a will of his own .................................. 137
Christian, He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous .................. 388
Christian, I have to mortify my members ......................................... 171
Christian, if I love the Father .......................................................... 164
Christian, in the Beloved .................................................................. 353
Christian, in His Son ....................................................................... 167
Christian, is dead ........................................................................... 171
Christian, look at Christ in glory ....................................................... 268
Christian, must I do everything to Christ? ........................................ 166
Christian, my feet in the narrow way -- my heart as large as Christ's. .... 369
Christian, nearness to Christ would keep us from sectarianism ............. 226
Christian, nearness to Christ and its Effects ...................................... 225
Christian, obedient as a child ............................................................ 126
Christian, overcome the world in my heart ....................................... 165
Christian Place and Power .............................................................. 235
Christian position, he does not speak of our life being on the earth ....... 171
Christian position, I have got a new place ........................................ 302
Christian position, we are delivered from Satan's power ..................... 387
Christian position, our .................................................................... 414
Christian position, our life is hid with Christ in God ............................ 167
Christian, present fellowship with His sufferings ................................ 144
Christian, saw you laughing just now at foolishness in the street ......... 13
Christian, so ought men now to read Christ in us ................................ 263
Christian, that communion with Christ be as strong as all the doctrines we 304
Christian, the young ....................................................................... 132
Christian, then comes conflict in the land ......................................... 384
Christian, walk worthy, three ways in which we are told to .................. 386
Christian, we suffer with him ........................................................... 26
Christian, What Characterizes the Christian and Secures His Blessing ... 21
Christian, your yieldingness ............................................................. 32
Christianity, blessings which characterize ........................................ 15
Christianity, but at the dark end ....................................................... 163
church, calling of the ..................................................................... 79
church, cannot depart from its standing with God ................................ 91
church, I will build .......................................................................... 365
curch, not to lose personal courage in a time of ruin ......................... 407
curch of the living God is the ......................................................... 364
curch, one body ............................................................................. 78
church, pillar and ground of the truth ................................ 350
church, ruin and evil that is now in the house ...................... 106
church, ruined condition, is he to labor and pray for its restoration 372
church, so much was made of the way the thing was dealt with .... 227
church, state of confusion in which the church is now ............. 278
church, the church of God administering forgiveness ................ 313
church, union of the church with Christ ................................ 49
church, was never revealed in the Old Testament ...................... 358
church, what is the church of God? .................................. 363
church, what is the church, and in what sense is it now in ruin ...... 361
Closing Days ................................................ 407
collective .................................................................. 320
coming of the Lord ................................................. 35, 100
commandment of God ................................................ 98
communion and fellowship ............................................ 146
communion in the glory ............................................ 38
communion with God ................................................ 418
compromise, where sin is manifested there must be no compromise with it 230
conscience .................................................................. 97
conscience, a good .................................................. 379
conscience must be brought into contact with God ................. 147
continuing in sin ................................................................ 237
conversion .................................................................. 290
conversion and salvation, difference between ......................... 341
Cornelius .................................................................... 341
Cornelius was a converted man .......................................... 340
covenant, no covenant made with man in Gen. 3:15 ................. 111
covenant is not promise; diatheekee, is just covenant ............... 111
covetousness ................................................................ 140
cross, nothing like the ................................................ 283
cross shows that man’s nature is ...................................... 168
daily expecting Christ .................................................. 295
Daniel’s 70th week .................................................... 325
David ........................................................................ 97, 106
dead to sin in Romans, to the world in Colossians ................. 356
death, I am not seeking to die ........................................ 171
death, I am never told to die .......................................... 171
death is the starting-point for practice .................................. 238
devil, are not told to overcome, but to “resist” the devil .......... 381
devil opposes Christ .................................................... 164
diatheekee, is just covenant, -- anything revealed for all ........ 111
Disappointments of Life ................................................ 76
discouragement ................................................................ 368
dispensation, before the proper dispensation of God, we get the world before 107
dispensation is ............................................................... 107
dispensation, the close of the ........................................... 109
dispensation, world before the flood; not exactly a dispensation 107
divine Person ................................................................ 153
Egypt, in their bondage .................................................. 261
elders, 24 ...................................................................... 273
elders are chosen ......................................................... 342
elders now? .................................................................. 343
emulation ...................................................................... 140
Epaphras .................................................. 382
epistle of John is very abstract ................................................. 114
epistle of John, the gold of the gospel is in the ................................................. 265
eternal life .................................................. 173, 411
eternal Son .......................................................... 1, 160
eternal Sonship .......................................................... 58
eternal Sonship, if we say He were not the Son till the incarnation .................. 61
every family .......................................................... 359
ever evil and the assaults of the enemy ................................................. 227
ever, if any one speaks of separation from evil, without being humiliated ............... 276
faith .......................................................... 348
faith, is a greater energy of faith in some than in others ................................................. 228
faithfulness is called for with reference to the evil ................................................. 107
faithfulness, the real place of .......................................................... 108
Father, seen the .................................................. 311
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost .......................................................... 60
Father, the .......................................................... 301
Father’s house, His .......................................................... 295
Father’s name .......................................................... 49
fathers, the .......................................................... 132
fathers, young men, and little children .......................................................... 134
first love .......................................................... 36
First Epistle of John .......................................................... 113
flesh opposes the Spirit .......................................................... 164
flesh, we have the flesh to contend with .......................................................... 260
forgiveness .......................................................... 416
forgiveness as regards the government of God .......................................................... 416
forgiveness of his sins .......................................................... 316
forgiveness of sins .......................................................... 313
forgiveness, the old nature, could not speak of God forgiving ................................. 235
fornication .......................................................... 344
fruit bearing .......................................................... 271
Gethsemane .......................................................... 382
Gideon .......................................................... 373
John brings out the nature of God in the saints .......................................................... 152
John Mark .......................................................... 344
John the Baptist .......................................................... 128
John was the last writer, not Paul .......................................................... 349
gifts .......................................................... 325
gifts, two kinds of, entirely distinct .......................................................... 327
Gilgal, a call to .......................................................... 227
glory of Christ and the saints .................................................. 165
God hates pride above all things .................................................. 288
God having provided for us .................................................. 78
God is for me .......................................................... 27
God is all in all .......................................................... 386
God Manifested and Glorified .......................................................... 43
God of glory .......................................................... 336
God of peace .......................................................... 33
God’s government .......................................................... 419
God’s holiness and majesty, .......................................................... 286
God’s love is without motive .................................................. 159
God’s ways of acting, in all times of blessing .................................................. 276
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gog</td>
<td>325, 327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gospel, the gold of the gospel is in the Epistle of John</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>government of God, as a father with his family</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>governmental if you like, I called it administrative</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grace, transforming power inherent in</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heaven will be when I have entirely forgotten myself</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalems</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenes</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenists</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helmet of salvation is still defensive</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermas</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His Praise Shall Be Continually in My Mouth</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Ghost</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit of promise</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the Lost Sheep Was Found</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human authority</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humanity of Christ, the Person into which the man was brought</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymns</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if we have passed the Red Sea</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if’s</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ifs, we get heaps of warnings and “ifs” when it is a question</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Christ</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incarnation, the Person into which the man was brought</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infidelity</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infidels</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inheritance</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irving</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel, restoration of the ten tribes</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel, take the Jews in the millennium</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jannes and Jambres</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerusalem, destruction of</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish remnant</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan, cross</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan is death and resurrection with Christ</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joy, is your joy full?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>judicial blindness</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just God and a Savior</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justification</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justification and righteousness</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>king of the north</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>king of the south</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kingdom of heaven</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kingdom of God in the Acts</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kingdom, preaching the</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowing the perfect will of God</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of being dead with Christ</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last time, the</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last week in Daniel</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latter rain of the Spirit, the</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law and grace, the vain attempt to unite the principles of</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law can never get the better of sin</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law comes to tell man what he ought to be</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law itself was a prophecy</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law of liberty</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law, prophetic character of the</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laying on of hands</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leper in the Old Testament</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liberty</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liberty, true ground of, before God</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liberty, a person in liberty with God</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light, the</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo-ammi</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord's host, the</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord's table</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot showed love to the world</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love of the truth is a great matter in subjection of spirit</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love your enemies</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love is the inner development of the divine nature</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia was a proselyte</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintaining nearness to Christ</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man, first thing which man does</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man, the human heart is enmity against God.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man, was lawless without law and a law-breaker under law</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man’s probation history ended in the cross</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man’s Heart and Christ’s Heart</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manna</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthias</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mediation of Moses</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attack, meet such an</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melchisedec priesthood a higher than the Aaromic</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melchisedec priesthood</td>
<td>110, 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life, might have it more abundantly</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennial Israel</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium, Most High in the</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium, take the Jews in the</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium, temple be set up in the</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium, when Christ takes the earth</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minister the sacraments</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morning star</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moses</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moses’ face, the people fear the glory in the face of Moses more than the two</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most High in the millennium</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mount of transfiguration</td>
<td>160, 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>murmurings</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mystery</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mystery, did the other apostles get their knowledge of the mystery from Paul?</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mystery of God, the</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>names of God, Most High in the millennium</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan</td>
<td>97, 313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nearness to Christ and its effects</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
nearthness to Christ would keep us from sectarianism ............................................. 226
new creation .............................................................................................................. 236, 404
new nature is a dependent nature ............................................................................. 154
Nicodemus .................................................................................................................. 254
no will of our own ........................................................................................................ 123
Notes on Revelation .................................................................................................. 273
obedience of faith, the .................................................................................................. 253
old corn ........................................................................................................................ 377
old nature, could not speak of God forgiving the ......................................................... 235
ordain ............................................................................................................................ 342, 343
Origen ........................................................................................................................... 351
orthodoxy ..................................................................................................................... 147
Paradise ........................................................................................................................ 47
path of the Spirit of grace .............................................................................................. 104
patience of hope ............................................................................................................ 81
Paul, as a servant .......................................................................................................... 377
Paul, this one thing I do, ................................................................................................. 404
Paul, was Paul right in saying, “Is it lawful to scourge a Roman”? ............................... 338
Paul’s doctrine ............................................................................................................ 409
Paul’s having the “keys” ............................................................................................... 339
Philadelphia, we have been exalted with the idea that we are ...................................... 229
Philippians is a pattern of Christian experience as it ought to ....................................... 391
Philistine, uncircumcised ............................................................................................. 105
popery ........................................................................................................................... 253
power ............................................................................................................................ 277
power of our final deliverance ..................................................................................... 24
prayer ............................................................................................................................ 383
pride is the greatest of all evils that beset us .................................................................. 288
Priesthood .................................................................................................................... 419, 424
Priesthood of Christ does not apply to sins .................................................................. 423
promise, no promises to man as man ........................................................................... 340
prophet, there is a, now ................................................................................................. 325
Protestants, the mass of the, when they read the Holy Scriptures ............................... 254
Psalms facilitates the understanding of the .................................................................. 370
purchase ....................................................................................................................... 288
purify ourselves even as He is pure .............................................................................. 269
Pythoness ...................................................................................................................... 345
rapture, caught up. ....................................................................................................... 92
rapture, daily expecting Christ .................................................................................... 295
rapture, never speaks of His coming as being beyond the life of the person .......... 73
rapture, our spiritual testimony ready for the Lord’s return? ...................................... 313
reckon myself dead ....................................................................................................... 356
reconstruction, I should feel disappointment at the thought of .................................. 373
reccrimination, spend the time in foolish ................................................................. 229
Red Sea ....................................................................................................................... 422
redemption .................................................................................................................. 261, 288
remnant, in every dispensation the faithful were the remnant all through .......... 108
repentance .............................................. 347, 348
responsibility ........................................... 259
rest ...................................................... 419
rest of conscience .................................... 420
revelation, whenever God gives a revelation, man is responsible to receive it .... 173
righteous, 1 John 2:1 ................................... 119
righteousness, divine .................................. 266
righteousness, divine, and divine love ......................... 266
righteousness, imputed .................................. 232
righteousness, is having no will of one's own ..................... 140
righteousness, is man's, and not Christ's righteousness ............... 140
righteousness, through God's righteousness is the basis of our ............. 232
ritualism ................................................. 384
Romanist ................................................ 350
ruin of the church ....................................... 361
safe for heaven .......................................... 341
salvation ................................................ 266, 290
salvation, NT doctrine of saved, or salvation ......................... 341
salvation, transition state ................................ 341
Samaritans in Acts 8 ........................................ 321
Samson ................................................... 390
Samuel ................................................... 364
Satan is the god of this world .................................. 166
Satan, since Satan was called the Prince of the world before the cross ....... 378
Satan, the god of this world (i.e., age) after the cross ................. 378
Satan the Prince ........................................... 138
sealing is individual ...................................... 320
second coming; never speaks of His coming as being beyond the life of the person ... 73
second coming ............................................ 71
secret of the Lord ........................................ 382
seductions of the Antichrists now in the world ......................... 138
selfwill ................................................... 169
separation from evil, without being humiliated ......................... 226
shadows ................................................... 248
shield is defensive ........................................ 381
shield of faith ............................................. 380
signs .................................................... 327
silly women ................................................ 409
Simon Magus ............................................. 316
Simon's administrative forgiveness .................................... 337
sin ...................................................... 281
sin and trespass offerings ................................... 46
sin is never mentioned in this epistle Phil. ......................... 259
sin is lawlessness ........................................ 269
Son of man ............................................... 89
sorrow, more than half the sorrows of man are made up of anticipated sorrows ... 268
space, I cannot realize the thought of infinite space ..................... 360
Spirit ................................................ 24, 25, 28
Spirit, coming of the Holy Ghost .................................. 23
Spirit is personally present on earth ................................ 323
Spirit, same Spirit that dwells in Christ, dwells in us .................... 405
Spirit, the things of the Spirit ................................ 24
Spirit, the other Comforter ....................................... 297
Spirit, unction in John’s First Epistle .............................. 321
Spirit, we shall have the Holy Ghost for ever in us. ............... 292
spiritual affections, great difference between spiritual desires and .................................................. 161
spiritual intelligence ........................................... 263
Standing and State of the Believer .................................. 12
Stephen .................................................................. 335, 336
Stephen’s death which is the turning point ............................. 325
stoned, all should be ........................................... 53
Stoney, brother, said to Dr. Wolston ................................. 268
strife between Protestants and Catholics .............................. 253
substitution, personal ........................................... 267
Syrophenician woman ................................................ 340
tempt God .................................................................. 123
testing man, the position is never fully brought out until the first man is .................................................. 395
testing of man, man’s probation history ended in the cross .......... 233
the best robe ................................................................ 290
the Father’s heart ............................................. 35
The Dispensations and the Remnants .................................. 107
The Father’s House ............................................... 294
The Glories of the Cross ........................................... 279
The moment I see a pierced Christ .................................... 169
The Word of God, and the Knowledge of It .......................... 96
Thessalonians were but newly converted ............................ 72
thief, poor .................................................. 68
thief, poor, in Luke 23 .............................................. 67
time of trial for the beloved brethren gathered to the name ......... 275
to Live -- Christ ............................................. 258
touch me not ................................................ 306
transition state ................................................ 341
treason is in keeping away God’s message from His servants ... 173
trials and difficulties of “brethren,” .................................. 361
ternity ..................................................... 59
ternity is revealed .................................................. 63
True Grace of God Wherein Ye Stand ............................... 3
True Greatness ............................................... 77
trump of God ................................................ 41
truth, love of the truth is a great matter in subjection of spirit ...... 62
truth, the girdle of truth ........................................... 378
types .................................................................. 248
unction in John’s First Epistle ................................. 321
union and mediation, we should recognize the two principles of .................................................. 111
Vail Done Away in Christ ........................................... 245
Vail on Moses’ Face ............................................... 240
Vail on the Heart of Israel ........................................... 249
vine and the branches ........................................... 358
voice of the archangel ........................................... 41
walk, practical holy walk in any child .................................. 269
walk worthy, three ways in which we are told to ................... 386
walking in single-eyedness ........................................... 363
water and blood, an interval between .................................. 340
water and the blood ........................................... 167
water and blood flowing out of the pierced side of Christ ......... 169
Subject Index

water which purifies ........................................... 170
who mind earthly things ........................................ 405
whole armor ................................................ 378
wilderness ................................................ 124
wilderness and Canaan ......................................... 376
will, the .................................................. 122
witnesses of God on the earth are three ....................... 172
Word, the name Word be applied to our Lord ................... 61
world, am I to get under the power of this world ............... 165
world comes in in such a subtle way ............................ 404
world, dealings of God with the ................................ 235
world is opposed to the Father .................................. 164
world, the .......................................... 125, 164, 167
world, thinking to make the world better with their brotherly love, the ...... 124
young man ................................................. 136
young men and children ........................................ 133
Zerubbabel .............................................. 226, 277
# Scripture Index

## Old Testament

### GENESIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen. 7:1; 6:8</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXODUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 2:14</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 3:5</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 12</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 14:14, 15</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 14, 15</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 18:11</td>
<td>149, 159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 19:4</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 20:18, 19</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 21</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 32</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 32:15, 16</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 32:19</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 32:30, 34, and 33:1-3</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 33:11</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 33:15-18</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 33:19</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 33:19, 22</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 34:28, 29</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 34:5</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 34:6</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LEVITICUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lev. 16</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lev. 16:14</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DEUTERONOMY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deut. 9:24</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deut. 27:26</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deut. 31:27</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deut. 32</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### JOSHUA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Josh. 2:9-24</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh. 5:15</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### JUDGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judg. 6:28</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg. 13:12</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg. 20</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg. 21</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SAMUEL, KINGS, JOB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sam. 18</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sam. 22, 23:1-7</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Kings 12:24</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job 38:3</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PSALMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 8</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 21:8</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 22</td>
<td>47, 286, 309, 371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 32</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 34</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 44</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 68:23</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 78:34-39</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 91:9</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 109</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 110</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 124:6</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 126:5</td>
<td>227, 278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 139</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psa. 145</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROVERBS - S OF S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 8</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 8:31</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 8:9</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 30:1-6</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ISAIAH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 1:18</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 6</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 6:5</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 14</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 42:21</td>
<td>51, 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 49:6</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 53:10</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 53:12</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 53:8</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### JEREMIAH - EZEKIEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jer. 2</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ezek. 20 ........................ 326
Ezek. 36:25, 26 ................. 252

HOSEA
Hos. 6 ........................ 245
Hos. 13:9 ..................... 243
Hos. 14 ...................... 229

JOEL
Joel 2 ........................ 326
Joel 2:17 ..................... 325
Joel 2:28 ..................... 323, 324, 326
Joel 2:30 ..................... 324
Joel 2:30, 31 ................ 325

NAHUM - ZECHARIAH
Nahum 1:15 .................... 379

Zech. 2:8 ..................... 76
Zech. 4:6 ..................... 250
Zech. 6:13 ..................... 287
# Scripture Index 429

## New Testament

### MATTHEW
- Matt. 3 .................................. 63, 397
- Matt. 3:15 ................................ 398
- Matt. 3:16, 17 ............................ 287
- Matt. 4 .................................. 303
- Matt. 4:1-10 ............................... 300
- Matt. 5:1 .................................. 398
- Matt. 10:5 .................................. 332
- Matt. 11:29 .................................. 380
- Matt. 16:20 .................................. 352
- Matt. 17:24-27 ............................ 299
- Matt. 17:25 .................................. 389
- Matt. 18:17 .................................. 349
- Matt. 18:18 .................................. 315
- Matt. 18:18-20 ............................ 347
- Matt. 18:20 ................................. 225, 276, 367
- Matt. 24:14 .................................. 90
- Matt. 24:15 .................................. 102
- Matt. 24:48 .................................. 295
- Matt. 25:6 .................................. 295
- Matt. 26:38 .................................. 283
- Matt. 26:46 .................................. 282
- Matt. 27:46 .................................. 283
- Matt. 28 .......................... 101, 331
- Matt. 28:19 .................................. 329
- Matt. 28:20 .................................. 331

### MARK
- Mark 2:10 .................................. 317
- Mark 6:3 .................................. 74
- Mark 9:24 .................................. 83
- Mark 13:32 .................................. 63

### LUKE
- Luke 1:3 .................................. 409
- Luke 1:35 .................................. 270, 397
- Luke 2 .................................. 397
- Luke 2:51 .................................. 397
- Luke 3:2 .................................. 245
- Luke 7:50 .................................. 307
- Luke 8 .................................. 357
- Luke 8:48 .................................. 307
- Luke 10:42 .................................. 382
- Luke 12 .................................. 71
- Luke 12:8 .................................. 65
- Luke 12:34 .................................. 74
- Luke 15 .................................. 289

### JOHN
- John 1:1-4 .................................. 128
- John 1:14 .................................. 128
- John 1:17 .................................. 241, 244
- John 1:18 .................................. 141, 157, 296
- John 1:29 .................................. 288
- John 1:33 .................................. 310
- John 3 .................................. 354
- John 4 .................................. 69, 97
- John 5:24 .................................. 16
- John 5:26 .................................. 167
- John 5:45-47 ................................ 250
- John 6:27, 28 ................................ 251
- John 6:36 .................................. 251
- John 6:63 .................................. 254
- John 7:38, 39 ................................ 18, 23
- John 7:46-49 ................................ 251
- John 8:32 .................................. 276
- John 9:19 .................................. 246
- John 10:10 .................................. 17
- John 10:17, 18 ................................ 287
- John 10:18 .................................. 280
- John 10:28 .................................. 388
- John 12:24 .................................. 16, 301
- John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11 .................. 378
- John 12:37 .................................. 251
- John 12:41 .................................. 99
- John 13 .................................. 74, 399, 402
- John 13 and 17 ................................ 233
- John 13:1-17 .................................. 4, 5
- John 13:31 .................................. 280
- John 14 .................................. 72, 239, 291, 294, 299, 301
- John 14:1-3 .................................. 75, 284
- John 14:2, 3 .................................. 37, 282
- John 14:2, 3, 16 ................................ 72
- John 14:9 .................................. 285, 287
- John 14:16 .................................. 301
- John 14:16, 17 ................................ 18
- John 14:18 .................................. 292
- John 14:20 .................................. 18
- John 14:21 .................................. 293
430 Scripture Index

John 14:23 ........................ 293 Acts 13 .......................... 305, 342
John 14:30, 31 ....................... 280 Acts 13:38, 39 ..................... 250
John 16 ......................... 234 Acts 14 ............................. 342
John 16:3 .......................... 265 Acts 14:26 ....................... 344
John 16:29, 30 ..................... 49 Acts 15:10, 11 .................... 247
John 17 ......................... 43 Acts 15:25 .......................... 343
John 17:3 .......................... 141 Acts 16 ............................. 345
John 17:4 .......................... 44, 48 Acts 17 ............................ 345
John 17:5 ..................... 43, 103, 233 Acts 18 - 20 ..................... 346
John 17:17 ....................... 378 Acts 19 ......................... 322, 346
John 17:18 ...................... 144 Acts 19 :2 ......................... 321
John 17:19 ...................... 24, 260, 269 Acts 20 ......................... 343
John 17:21, 22 .................... 291 Acts 20:11 ......................... 352
John 20 .......................... 300 Acts 20:29 ......................... 335
John 20:22 ..................... 17, 312, 313 Acts 26:16 ....................... 338
John 21:22 ....................... 349 Acts 26:9 .......................... 246
Acts 28 ............................ 305

ACTS

Acts 1 ............................ 305
Acts 1:3 .......................... 318 Rom. 1 ............................. 232
Acts 1:5 .......................... 319 Rom. 1:4 .......................... 234
Acts 1:14 .......................... 319 Rom. 1:16 ........................ 305
Acts 1:20 .......................... 310 Rom. 2 ............................. 270
Acts 1:22 .......................... 312 Rom. 3 ............................. 65, 233, 348
Acts 2 ............................ 319, 327 Rom. 3:22 ....................... 267
Acts 2:23 .......................... 401 Rom. 3:31 ........................ 247
Acts 2:29 .......................... 324 Rom. 4 ............................. 233
Acts 2:32, 33 ...................... 23, 310 Rom. 5 ............................. 21
Acts 2:33 .......................... 328 Rom. 5:6 .......................... 266
Acts 2:38 .......................... 305 Rom. 5:8 .......................... 280
Acts 2:47 .......................... 108 Rom. 5:12 ........................ 356
Acts 3 - 17 ....................... 333 Rom. 5:12-21 ..................... 236
Acts 3:21 .......................... 334 Rom. 5:21 ........................ 249
Acts 3:25 .......................... 333 Rom. 6 ............................. 235
Acts 3:26 .......................... 250, 333 Rom. 6:11 ...................... 171
Acts 5:12 .......................... 333 Rom. 6, 7 .......................... 21
Acts 5:31 .......................... 335 Rom. 7 ............................. 3, 271
Acts 6 ............................ 334 Rom. 7:4 .......................... 356
Acts 7:2 .......................... 336 Rom. 7:12 ........................ 247
Acts 7:51 .......................... 251, 336 Rom. 8 .......................... 19, 21, 356, 395
Acts 8 ............................ 321 Rom. 8:1 .......................... 233
Acts 8:16 .......................... 340 Rom. 8:2 .......................... 18, 21
Acts 8:22 .......................... 337 Rom. 8:2, 3 ....................... 230
Acts 9:5 .......................... 338 Rom. 8:3 .......................... 16, 21
Acts 11 .......................... 342 Rom. 8:11 ........................ 25, 28
Acts 11:15 ....................... 320 Rom. 8:14, 15 ................... 26

ROMANS

Rom. 1 ............................. 232
Rom. 1:4 .......................... 234
Rom. 1:16 ........................ 305
Rom. 2 ............................. 270
Rom. 3 ............................. 65, 233, 348
Rom. 3:22 ....................... 267
Rom. 3:22, 23 .................... 240
Rom. 3:31 ........................ 247
Rom. 4 ............................. 233
Rom. 5 ............................. 21
Rom. 5:6 .......................... 266
Rom. 5:8 .......................... 280
Rom. 5:12 ........................ 356
Rom. 5:12-21 ..................... 236
Rom. 5:21 ........................ 249
Rom. 6 ............................. 235
Rom. 6:11 ....................... 171
Rom. 6, 7 .......................... 21
Rom. 7 ............................. 3, 271
Rom. 7:4 .......................... 356
Rom. 7:12 ........................ 247
Rom. 8 ............................. 19, 21, 356, 395
Rom. 8:1 .......................... 233
Rom. 8:2 .......................... 18, 21
Rom. 8:2, 3 ....................... 230
Rom. 8:3 .......................... 16, 21
Rom. 8:11 ........................ 25, 28
Rom. 8:14, 15 ................... 26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scripture Index</th>
<th>431</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 8:20-22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 8:23</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 8:29</td>
<td>293, 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 8:33</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 8:9</td>
<td>18, 19, 25, 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 9</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 9:9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 9:15</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 9:35</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 10</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 10:4</td>
<td>244, 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 11</td>
<td>369, 371, 372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 11:4, 11, 26</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 11:26</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 13:11</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 15:8</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 15:16</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 16:17</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 16:25, 26</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 CORINTHIANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 1:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 1:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 1:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 2:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 5:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 6:9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 9:24-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 11:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 11:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 12:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 12:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 13:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15:25-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15:28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15:43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 15:49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GALATIANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galatians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 3:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 3:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 4:1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 4:4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal. 4:6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPHESIANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:12, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:17, and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 1:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 CORINTHIANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 1:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 2:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 3:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 2:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:14-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:18, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:12, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 6:10-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 6:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 6:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eph. 6:19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PHILIPPIANS**

Philippians 262, 258, 391
Philippians 1 392
Philippians 2 394, 396
Philippians 3 395, 399
Philippians 4 29, 396
Phil. 1 392
Phil. 1:1 393
Phil. 1:6 393
Phil. 1:9-11 393
Phil. 1:15 and 16 392
Phil. 1:18 393
Phil. 1:19 393
Phil. 1:28 393, 407
Phil. 2 231, 391, 392
Phil. 2:3 394
Phil. 2:5-11 287
Phil. 2:6 394
Phil. 2:6-9 394
Phil. 2:8 281, 392
Phil. 2:12, 13 394
Phil. 2:12 and 13 396
Phil. 2:12 392
Phil. 2:14, 16 50
Phil. 2:14-16 391, 394
Phil. 2:17 394
Phil. 2:29 395
Phil. 3 391, 392

**COLOSSIANS**

Col. 1 385, 59
Col. 1:8 385
Col. 1:9 386
Col. 1:11 387
Col. 1:12 307
Col. 1:26 358, 359
Col. 2:9 287, 396
Col. 2:11 262
Col. 2:17 246, 248
Col. 3:1 18
Col. 3:4 16, 145
Col. 3:13 157
Scripture Index

1 THESSALONIANS
1 Thess. 1:3 ........................ 36
1 Thess. 1:8 ................................ 80
1 Thess. 1:8-10 ....................... 36
1 Thess. 2:19, 20 .................. 72
1 Thess. 3:13 ........................ 38, 72
1 Thess. 4 ............................. 39
1 Thess. 4:3, etc. .................. 72
1 Thess. 4:13-18 .................. 40
1 Thess. 5 ................................ 42
1 Thess. 5:8 .......................... 231
1 Thess. 5:13 ....................... 343
1 Thess. 5:23 ......................... 42

2 THESSALONIANS
2 Thess. 1:10 ....................... 39
2 Thess. 2 ................................ 138
2 Thess. 2:11 ....................... 253

1 TIMOTHY
1 Tim. 1:11 .......................... 244
1 Tim. 1:15 .......................... 250

2 TIMOTHY
2 Tim ................................. 407
2 Tim. 1:7 ............................ 407
2 Tim. 1:8 ............................ 407, 408
2 Tim. 1:9, 10 ....................... 408
2 Tim. 1:10 .......................... 401
2 Tim. 1:12 .......................... 408
2 Tim. 1:13, 14 ..................... 408
2 Tim. 1:15 ......................... 408
2 Tim. 2:16 .......................... 409
2 Tim. 2:19 .......................... 230, 409
2 Tim. 2:21 .......................... 410
2 Tim. 2:22 .......................... 409
2 Tim. 2:24 .......................... 409
2 Tim. 3 ................................ 349
2 Tim. 3:1-4 .......................... 409
2 Tim. 3:10 .......................... 409
2 Tim. 3:12 .......................... 410
2 Tim. 3:14-17 ...................... 407
2 Tim. 3:15 .......................... 410
2 Tim. 3:16 .......................... 410
2 Tim. 4:11 .......................... 344
2 Tim. 4:6 ............................ 411

TITUS
Titus 1:3 ................................ 401
Titus 1:5 ............................... 343
Titus 2:11-13 ..................... 4

Titus 2:14 ............................. 403

HEBREWS
Heb. 1 ................................. 59
Heb. 10:12 ............................ 89
Heb. 10:14 ............................ 89
Heb. 11:40 ............................ 78, 395
Heb. 2 ................................. 354
Heb. 2:3 ............................... 253
Heb. 2:14, 15 ....................... 284
Heb. 3:1 ............................... 125
Heb. 4 ................................. 419
Heb. 5 ................................. 231
Heb. 5:8 ............................... 287
Heb. 9:8, 10:19 .................... 291
Heb. 9:26 ............................. 235
Heb. 9:26-28 ....................... 282
Heb. 9:28 ............................. 282

JAMES
James 4:8 ............................. 269
James 5:14, 15 .................... 174

1 PETER
1 Pet. 1:2 ............................. 356
1 Pet. 2:24 ............................ 16, 68
1 Pet. 2:3 ............................. 248
1 Pet. 2:4, 5 .......................... 248
1 Pet. 4:17 ............................ 407
1 Pet. 5:10 ............................ 1

2 PETER
2 Pet. 1:4 ............................. 416
2 Pet. 1:5 ............................. 228
2 Pet. 1:19 ............................. 71, 73, 99
2 Pet. 3:16 ............................ 410
2 Pet. 3:9 ............................. 284

1 JOHN
1 John 1 - 2:2 ...................... 411
1 John 1:1 ............................ 115, 412
1 John 1:1-4 ........................ 118
1 John 1:2, 3 ......................... 19
1 John 1:3 ............................ 116
1 John 1:4 ............................ 117
1 John 1:5 ............................ 114
1 John 1:6 ............................ 119
1 John 1:7 ............................ 117, 415
1 John 2:1 ............................ 125, 423
1 John 2:6 ............................ 266
1 John 2:7, 8 ....................... 130
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scripture Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:8 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:9 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:12 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:12-14 ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:13 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:14 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:16 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:18 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:20 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 2:28 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3 .............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:1 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:2 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:3 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:4 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:6 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:7 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:9 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 3:16 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4 .............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:1 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:2 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:4 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:7 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:8 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:9 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:10 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:11 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:12 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:13 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:14 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:15 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:17 ........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:18 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:19 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:20 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:21 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:1 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:2 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:6 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:6-10 ........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:7 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:8 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:10 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:11 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:12 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:13 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:14 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:16 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:19 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jude 4 ................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jude 21 ..............</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REVELATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revelation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 1-20 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 1:5, 6 ........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 4 and 5 ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 4:1 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 5:9, 10 ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 6 ............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 7 ............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 9 ............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 12 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 13:1-11 ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 14 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 15 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 19 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 20 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 21 ...........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 21, 22 ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 22:5 ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. 22:7-17 ......</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JUDE**