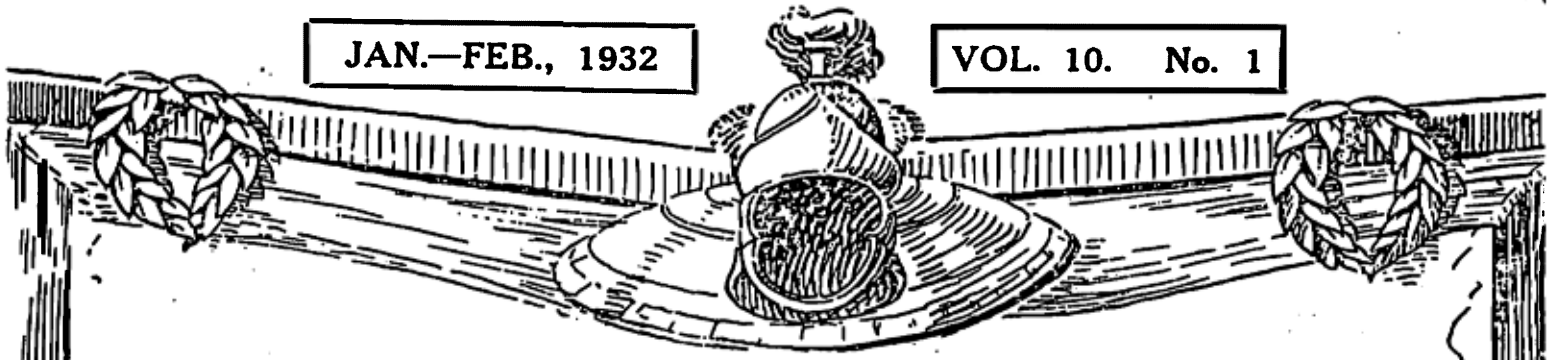


Witness and a Testimon

JAN.—FEB., 1932

VOL. 10. No. 1



“HE
MEASURED * *
AND BROUGHT
ME THROUGH

Ezek: 47, 4.

2. Cor: 2.14.



TABLE OF CONTENTS (In Order of Occurrence) 1932

The Rule of the Heavens (cont'd from 1931)	4,
Faith - Its Nature and Necessity	7
The Secret of the Shining Face	11 <i>AK</i>
For Boys and Girls	14, 37, 67, 99, 122
The Blood of Jesus and Resurrection Life	16, 39 <i>AK</i>
The Servant and Service of the Lord	20
The Rainbow	23
The Offence of the Cross	26
Christ the Power of God	32, 60, 93, <i>AK</i>
Intercession	42
The Overcomer At the End-time	44 <i>AK</i>
Position and Power	49 <i>AK</i>
Love, Spiritual Intelligence and Worship	69
The "Overcomer's" Pathway to the Throne	72 <i>AK</i>
The Meaning of Union with Christ	76 <i>AK</i>
The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Glorified Christ and the Believer	80, 101 <i>AK</i>
The Food Question	87
- The Cross and Higher Ground	105
Taking Responsibility for the Testimony	110
The Power of His Resurrection	117, 145 <i>AK</i>
The Secret Strength of the Lord's Servant	124
Christ Crucified, the Wisdom of God and the Power of God	128
"The Laying On of Hands"	134 (cont'd in 1933)
For Our Younger Believers	149
Controlling the Situation	151
Definiteness in Prayer	153 <i>AK</i>
Things That Differ	155
A Gospel Hymn	156
Dr. F. B. Meyer and the fuller message of the Cross	157
"Schism" a Breach of Sympathy	158

"A Witness and A Testimony"

EDITORIAL

The January Conference and Workers' Conference.

We feel that we have real cause for praise as we look back upon this time of fellowship with the Lord in His Word. Again all available room was taken for the weekend and we realised that the Lord was speaking with great definiteness to our hearts. The company gathered represented the Lord's strategy again for the nations, for some seven nations at least were represented by His servants. The Workers' Conference for the four subsequent days was well justified. Three times daily the Lord led us into the deeper meaning of service and ministry, and there were those who afterwards confessed to having had their entire conception and outlook completely revolutionised.

This latter conference was a new departure, and although we had felt led of the Lord to have it, we confess to having faced it with some wonder as to what the Lord might do. We now realise that it was right and well worthwhile, and we have confidence strengthened concerning the next on February 20, God willing.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Foster.

Our latest report from our brother and sister is just an intimation of their having reached their destination and found a seemingly suitable residence. They speak of tokens of Divine favour, and of settling in to master the language and fulfil all possible ministry while doing so.

Mr. and Mrs. Gresham Speedy.

It gives us peculiar joy to be able to announce the departure of our brother and sister for Africa. They left us on Wednesday, January 20. Some sixty friends gathered at the train and gave them a real New Testament send-off. On the Sunday evening previous our brother gave an account of the Lord's dealing with and leading of him. These had been strange, sometimes difficult both to understand and to bear, but the end had justified all, and he now would not have had it otherwise. He had come to know the Lord in a new and far more wonderful way. We do ask prayer for these two dear servants of the Lord. They have gone,

just as Brother and Sister Foster went, not connected with a society or mission, but out from the assembly, trusting the Lord for all, but looking to us for spiritual backing. Let us not fail the Lord in this.

Married in the Lord.

On Saturday, January 16, our brother Frank Brignal and our sister, Mary Townsend, were married at Honor Oak. These two dear children of God have been with us for spiritual preparation for the Lord's work for some time, and as this period was felt to be drawing to its end it became realised that the Lord was drawing them together for their life-work. Thus we rejoice in two more of our number going forth immediately in the heavenly business, and we believe that their lives will—by the Grace of God—be very fruitful in the building up of the Body of Christ.

The Scottish Centre.

The work of preparation at Kilcreggan is steadily going ahead. We have to mention the Lord's gracious provision for the business side of things there in the person of our brother Taylor. Brother Taylor has been with us from the first. He has been experimentally through the deep history—spiritually—of the past eleven years, and after much testing has been found faithful, and—we are confident that we are right when we say that—he is approved of God. Our brother has given up a good position in this world's business in order to devote his whole time to this work, trusting the Lord to meet all his needs. He will shortly be joined by his wife and family at Kilcreggan and he will deal with all business matters in relation to the work there. Elsewhere we give again the dates of conferences if the Lord wills, and those interested can obtain fuller details from Mr. A. G. Taylor, Christian Conference and Fellowship Centre, Kilcreggan, Dumbartonshire, N.B.

Miss Sinclair.

We are sorry to learn that our sister, so soon after her arrival at Badajoz (Spain) has been laid aside with a severe attack of influenza. Her letter also speaks of an all-round pressure of the enemy, and much difficulty being caused by the bitter and active opposition of priests. There is a sense of gathering storm-clouds spiritually, politically and economically, and our friends appeal for strong prayer fellowship. The God of this age will not let go any of his possessions without a bitter contest, but we know that victory is already with the Lord, and the saints *will* take the Kingdom.

Forthcoming Conferences and Special Gatherings
(*God willing*).

EDINBURGH.—Gartshore Hall, George Street.
Tuesday, February 16, at 3 and 8 P.M.
March 15 " " "
HONOR OAK.—February 20-21.
Workers' Conference, February 22 to 25.
March 25 to 28, inclusive (Easter).
May 14-16. Whitsun Conference.
July 2-9. Holiday Conference at Slavanka.
July 31—Aug. 2.
Oct. 1-2.

Scottish Conferences.

May 21-24.
June 18-25.
July 16-23.
Aug. 5-12.
Sept. 3-12.

**KILCREGGAN
CONFERENCE CENTRE.**

Acknowledgments

WE gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following gifts towards the expenses of this paper (December 1, 1931, to January 31, 1932) apart from local gifts:—

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Chattanooga, Tenn., 14s. 9d.; Melrose, Mass., 5s. 1d.; New York, 5s.; Paterson, N.J., 5s.; Pittsburgh, Penn., 5s.; Swarthmore, £2 14s. 11d.; Cardiff, 3s.; Aberdare, 3s.; Dunoon, 10s. and 5s.; Edinburgh, 2s. 6d. and 3s.; Glasgow, £1. 10s.. 6s., 5s., and 5s.; North Berwick, £1; Bandon, 2s. 3d.; Belfast, 15s.; Comber, Co. Down, 2s. 6d.; Dunmurry, Co. Antrim, 9d.; Dublin, 2s. 6d., 2d., £1. 5s., 5s., and 3s.; Cork, 3s.; Limerick, 5s. 4d.; Blackpool, 1s. 9d.; Bognor Regis, 2s. 6d.; Birkenhead, 3s.; Birmingham, 1s.; Bedford Row, 3s. 3d.; Caversham, 2s. 6d.; Chichester, £1; Carlisle, 5s.; Crawley, 3s.; Deal, 10s.; Dunston-on-Tyne, 6s.; Enfield, 2s. 6d.; Earl's Court, 5s.; Eastbourne, 4s., 10s., 5s., and £1; Epsom, 10s.; Esher, 1s. 6d.; Finchley, 5s.; Goudhurst, 2s. 6d.; Herne Hill, 3s. 6d.; Hayling Island, 5s., 1s. and 5s.; Henfield, 5s.; Herne Bay, 1s. 6d.; Kingston Hill, 3d.; Liverpool, 2s.; Lewisham, 5s.; Leyton, 1s.; Leamington Spa, 5s.; Lowestoft, 3s. and 2s. 6d.; Loughton, 5s.; Mears Ashby, 1s.; Muswell Hill, 3s.; Malvern, 3s. 6d.; Neasden, 2s. 6d.; Newcastle-on-Tyne, 10s.; Parkstone, 2s. 6d.; Sandown, 3s. 6d.; Southgate, £1 4s. 6d.; Swindon, 5s. and 2s. 6d.; Southampton, 2s.; Shoreham, 3d.; Southport, 2s. 6d. and 1s.; Stony Stratford, 1s. 11d.; Stroud Green, 3s.; Salisbury, 2s. 2d.; Swinton, £1; Tunbridge Wells, 2s.; Wolverhampton, 1s. 6d. and 9s. 8d.; W. St. Leonards, 3s.; Wimbledon Common, 2s. 6d.; Wimbledon, 2s. 6d.; Willesden, 5s.; Willesden Green, 5s.; Worthing, 2s.; Upper Norwood, 10s.—Total, £32 17s. 10.

Sailed for Africa, January 20th

"FOR THE
SAKE
OF THE
NAME



THEY
WENT
FORTH"

3 John 7, R.V.

Mr. and Mrs. GRESHAM SPEEDY

The Rule of the Heavens

Continued.

Romans viii. 3-6, 9; 1 Cor. ii. 6-15; xii. 1;
Eph. vi. 12, 13.

CONTINUING our meditation on the rule of the Heavens, we have in part seen two of the great symbolic meanings of the heavens—that is, universality and sovereignty or ascendancy. Now we come to a third significance of the term “the heavens,” and that is spirituality. It is an exceedingly important matter. It is really basic to all else. If it is true, as we have been seeking to show, that the last word from God’s standpoint in every matter is the heavenly word and the heavenly meaning and the heavenly interpretation of a thing—the Divine thought about it, not men’s thought or judgment or conception or presentation, but what God means by it—if that is final, it is then clear at once that spirituality in that sense is the great governing factor—the ruling thing.

We at best, even the Lord’s children, are very materialistic in our conceptions, in our judgments, in our appraisals, in the way in which we receive things and measure things. We are so tremendously governed and dominated by these soul-senses of ours, by how things effect and impress others naturally, what their reaction is to them, just how far they carry weight amongst men. So the bulk, the size, is a very great factor in the eyes of men. It is just how it impresses the world, and what others think about it. It is a part of the real work of the Cross in us to bring us to the place where it does not matter what the world thinks. It sounds easy and it sounds as though we ought to be there, and yet there are times when we are all found out in that matter. Just how it appears to men, how it affects them, how it stands before them, just whether it would carry weights with men, what we have been trained to call “success,” all judged and decided and determined by this soul-life of ours. This is all materialism and all relates to the senses, and we have to come to the place where these things cease to influence us at all and where we get the heavenly viewpoint about everything—where we come to see that two or three gathered in the Name of the Lord Jesus in the Holy Spirit represent a mightier factor in this universe

than a thousand or five thousand gathered together in some earthly cause.

Spirituality is a tremendously potent factor, and it is true that we are tremendously materialistic even in our spiritual lives. It sounds like a contradiction, but there is no doubt about this; and what the Lord is seeking to do with every child of His who is going on with Him is to make Him spiritual, to develop spirituality. The Lord seeks most definitely to add to the spirituality of His children. The new birth is a spiritual birth, and “that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.” You have in a truly born-again child of God two entities, not what the natural man calls the good and the bad but you have got this outer man, this “old man,” this man who is still the man of natural reasoning, natural feeling, natural choosing. He is still with you, but inside of him there has been brought to birth by the quickening of the Holy Spirit another man, “the inner man of the heart,” a new entity, and he is spiritual. That which is from God is there.

God’s Focal-point of Interest.

It is with that “new man” that God is concerned. All His interest is in that. What He is after is to develop that and to bring that into a state of maturity. He knows that He can deal with the rest of the man through that. The soul and the body, while having their place in redemption which is in the Lord Jesus, God begins with the spirit, the new creation man, and works out through that to the rest of the man to bring his natural man into captivity. It is with this new man, with a new set of faculties, that God is concerned. The natural man has his faculties of reasoning and understanding and feeling, of expressing himself, of acting, of choosing, all these things are connected with this outer man. He has none of the spiritual faculties until he is born again, born from above, and the new man comes in. This new man is endowed with a whole new set of faculties which the natural man has not got. He has a faculty of understanding which is spiritual understanding. He has a new sense of value of things Divine. The Lord’s attention, by the

Holy Spirit, is given to the development of those faculties. The writer to the Hebrews speaks about our "child training" which the Father of our spirits brings us into and brings upon us. It is in order that we may have our senses exercised thereby to discern good and evil, but those senses are the senses of our spirits—to bring our spirits to full-grown manhood.

Having seen this, we are able to understand a good deal of the Scriptures. "We walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." "The mind of the flesh is death, the mind of the spirit is life and peace." That is one of the great governing principles in guidance, how to know whether a thing is of God or not. If you are walking in the Spirit, you decide whether a thing is of God or not by whether you have life and peace, or whether you are without it. If the thing is not alive, and if you have a good deal of unrest about it, you leave it alone. But, if walking with God, you have peace and life about that, then you have the mind of the Spirit. It is not the reasoning of the natural man as to whether it is right or wrong. It is because the Holy Spirit is resident within your spirit giving life. It is more than an enlightened conscience it is the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the things of God.

What Spirituality is.

Spirituality is that which is signified by the heavens, and it is that which governs. The measure of spirituality is the measure of finality, certainty, definiteness and power from God's standpoint.

What do we mean by spirituality? We have met so many people who have thought that when you speak of being spiritual you mean that you are other-worldly, unreal and only imaginary: that you have become an abstraction and have lost all that is practical. It is not that. It is a very practical thing indeed. There are others who think you are only using another term for mysticism. But there is a vast difference between mysticism and spirituality. It is a dangerous thing to use the word "mysticism" and we ought to make it clear what the word "mystery" when used in the New Testament means. "Mystery" in the New Testament only means a thing which up to a certain point was covered and a secret, but which has now been brought out to light. "Mysticism" is another thing entirely. It is always trying to find some hidden, psychical reason for things, getting back behind things that appear just to give them some kind of suggestion that

is not apparent. Many a saint has been called a mystic, and it has spoiled his ministry entirely. It is a different thing entirely from spirituality. It is often on the imaginary side of things. Spirituality is real. One is purely a soul thing. You can have "mystics" who can produce the most beautiful presentations of things, and they may be evil to the core of their moral characters.

Coming then to the matter of the increase of spirituality as the governing thing. You will remember that Paul said, "I could not write unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, as unto babes. I fed you with milk, not with meat." And yet Paul's letter is full of the spiritual. "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren" (ch. 12). The significance of this is that these people were exceedingly interested in spiritual things. They were perfectly fascinated with spiritual things. The "spirituals" were the things which occupied them tremendously. Speaking with tongues, and many other things called the spirituals. Yet Paul says, "I could not write unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal." It is possible to have a carnal interest in spiritual things. A good many people to-day are interested in speaking with tongues, but carnally interested. It is something you can demonstrate. If you want spiritual things for display purposes that is carnality. If it is because they are evidences to your senses, that is carnality. If you want just to be able to prove things in that realm, that is carnality. And so you can be interested in spiritual things, and yet be carnal. And you know what follows, how he speaks of their saying "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos . . . are ye not carnal, and do ye not speak as men?" The spiritual man cannot speak as man, but as God. You are commanded not to speak as men. Interest in those things is no mark of spirituality. It may be just the opposite.

The proof of spirituality is that you are able to walk with God without any demonstration at all. When He hides Himself, when you have to walk in sheer faith and you do. Like Abraham, when everything was seeming to deny God, not when all the time you are wanting something to demonstrate God. He is seeking to bring His children to the place where He can count on them to walk with Him by faith without His giving a multitude of evidences to their senses that He is there. It is infancy when we have to depend on God to give us proof. Very often in the history of God's work among the unenlightened

He has done wonderful things to demonstrate His power. But, as soon as they begin to really stand on their spiritual feet, gradually those things were withdrawn and God called on them to trust Him for Himself. That is growing up and increase in spirituality.

And are we not being brought to that place in these days? Where He can wean us from signs and wonders and the satisfying of our senses? Where we will walk with Him by faith? Where He will not always be saying to our senses, "It is all right, I am here?" And you notice where the Apostle lands them at last. He says, "Now, concerning the spirituals, brethren," and went through the whole catalogue of them, and then he said that when all that was said, and when you have dealt with all that which you are so interested in, after all there is a spirituality which transcends that (ch. xiii). Though I have all these spiritual gifts and be lacking in love, I am not complete. So the spirituality presented is the presentation and manifestation of the love of God according to 1 Cor. xiii. When you have read that through carefully, you will see that represents spiritual growth. If only we could come up to that standard, we would be growing spiritually. Of course, love is not a substitute for spiritual gifts, but an indispensable foundation and governing principle of them.

So these Corinthians represented retarded spiritual growth, even while they were so interested in spiritual things. Thus you have to go on to see more of the meaning of spirituality, which is getting God's side of things. It is, to begin with, matter of state. "He that is spiritual." It is the condition of our life, and we never apprehend spiritual things only as we are in the spiritual state. And after a spiritual state, it is a matter of spiritual things.

The Nature and Power of Spiritual Knowledge.

Take the matter of knowledge. Men say that "knowledge is power," but they mean natural knowledge. They mean intellectual knowledge. Amongst men it may be power, but there is a spiritual knowledge which is far more mighty than natural knowledge, and Paul says again that the wisdom of this world is so foolish that it crucified the Lord of Life. That is wisdom at its highest development in this world; the rulers did it, the wise people did it. "We speak a wisdom . . . of God." Spiritual knowledge is a tremendous thing. It is the rule of the heavens. The knowledge of the

Lord Himself is the most mighty thing that has ever been given to men—true, personal, inward knowledge of the Lord.

Ultimately it is going to be spiritual understanding that counts. Men are going to be at their wits ends, and they are fast approaching it. They do not know how to solve the problems of this world, they do not know how to cope with this world's situation. And when that day comes, when men have been utterly defeated in the matter of the wise government of this world, then it will be those who know the Lord who will be strong, who will be at rest. They will be the ones that count. And when men's hearts fail them for fear, it will be those who know the Lord to whom they will turn.

But do you see that the whole universe is going to be governed by spiritual understanding and knowledge. If the heavens rule now, how do they rule? How do angels and archangels know the will of God and run to do His bidding? We see them co-operating with God in the government of this world. They do not know because they are told, and they do not know because they sit down and reason it out. They know intuitively. Intuition is a faculty of the spirit, not of the soul. They know the same as you would know if you had lived with a person and come to perfect understanding of that person. You would be one with them by long living with them, and you would not need to be told what to do, and it would not be necessary for you to sit down and puzzle it out. You would intuitively know what their mind about a thing was. If God is going to govern the universe through the church, it will be through the intuitive knowledge of His will. We will know what He wants done next. This is the outcome of a close spiritual walk and fellowship with the Lord.

Are we not coming under the hand of God in His dealing with us? Are we not coming in a minor way to sense what the Lord would have done at a certain time? You know in your hearts what the Lord wants and what He does not want, and you know when the Lord wants it. It has come to you by the Spirit. It is spiritual discernment, spirituality which is spiritual knowledge. But we will get these heads of ours into things and try to bring Divine knowledge down to human understanding, and the Lord has to bewilder us and stun us and bring us to the place where we are in a fog because we try to deal with spiritual things by natural equipment. He wants us to

come where He is able to bear witness *in us* of His will.

"The Word of God must dwell in us richly in all wisdom and *spiritual understanding*."

This reaches out to a large number of other things. The world thinks of force as power, the Lord thinks of love and meekness as power. It is love that has conquered; faith that overcomes. It is meekness that has brought God's great victory again and again. And God would develop those. One of the mightiest forces in this universe is holiness. The Lord will go on to add spirituality if we will go on, but His trouble with us is that we do not go on. We still walk in and cling to the flesh and try to bring over all this natural equipment of ours to do spiritual things. We have thought that our zeal and our passion and our energy and our thinking out of all this thing was counting for God. Whatever has been accomplished by that has got to stand the test of the fire yet. What abides for eternity is that which is done by the Holy Spirit, and only that. Only the

Holy Spirit can do God's work, and unless the Holy Spirit is doing God's work through us, all that we are doing for God is going to be in vain

T. A-S.

The Book-room.

The inset on the cover of this issue of the WITNESS AND TESTIMONY—'He measured and brought me through,' can be had printed in two colours on an art card, price twopence.

In the Press. 'The Body of Christ,' two messages as spoken, combined by T. A-S. Price fourpence.

A new and better edition of 'The Divine Reactions.' Price ninepence.

Reprints from WITNESS AND TESTIMONY:

1. 'The Rainbow,' by T. A-S. Price one penny.
2. 'The Shining Face,' by T. A-S. Price one penny.
3. 'The Offence of the Cross,' by T. A-S. Price one penny.
4. 'Faith,' by P. W. F. Price one penny.

Faith—its Nature and Necessity

THE whole of human life and society involves the exercise of faith. In the every day world, however little the fact may be recognised, man lives by faith. Every journey we undertake, every purchase we make is actually the practice of faith. Accepting some statement or virtual promise made to us we venture to act as though that promised thing were actual. All life, therefore, is in one sense, an exercise of faith.

Faith is the spiritual activity at the core of creation. By faith, we understand, the worlds were made—the ages were framed, prepared—by the word spoken of God; so that visible things have come into being not from causes that are apparent.

The faith of God brought the limitless universe into tangible existence, raised His Son Jesus Christ from the dead in the energy of His Spirit, and will bring into perfection of glory the whole reconciled universe when, finally, every rebel is reduced to subjection or else destroyed.

The definition given in the Epistle to the Hebrews is true both of natural faith, which is a faculty of every human being, and also of that

which alone can bring human life into conscious relation with the Divine.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It is that activity of the human spirit working in and through the mind and will which makes real to the soul things not tangible to the senses.

The possession of this inherent faculty of the human spirit is evidenced in such a man as Columbus. By some means or other he came to believe that across the heaving breast of the Atlantic lay a continent. It was this internal evidence in him, giving substance to an unseen and unknown world, which gave energy to his will. So that, in spite of storm and threatened famine and revolt among his crew, he kept the bow of his little ship steadily facing the setting sun. To those lacking that inward vision and conviction his venture was rash madness—the risking of life both of himself and his men by launching out into the unknown. This was faith acting in a human enterprise. Precisely comparable is that faith without which it is impossible to please God. Such a man was Abraham spiritually—I mean, Godward. When

he was called by God to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, by faith he obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went.

Saving Faith.

In the first experience of salvation it is thus that the heart, made conscious of God and of its own need of Him and of His redeeming grace, dares to venture out. This venture, however, is not upon some spontaneous inward conception or conviction, but upon the declarations coming to us with the claim of being God's own word. Faith—this saving faith—cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The source and inspiration and strength of faith is God. It is God who must be its first objective. He is the great invisible Reality.

In one sense our life is a voyage to Him: Christian experience is a venture to find and come to God.

A Moral Necessity in Man.

Faith in God is the prime moral necessity, divine requirement, condition demanded by His sovereign decree. He that cometh to God *must* believe that He is; and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Faith is not only a belief in the existence of God: faith without works is dead. It is not a mere passive credence, it is an active, diligent, expectant seeking of Him by the spirit of man. As Wisdom, He says: They that seek me early shall find me. Seeking is activity; it is the *expression* of faith. Faith, therefore, is not a passive grace, it is *an energy of the human spirit Godward*. It reaches out to God until it touches Him, holds Him, takes from Him what it has been promised He can give.

Morally, faith must be the prime requisite to human salvation because it is the honouring of the Divine Word. When humanity fell it was because the woman, not holding to the very words of God, gave ear to another's contradiction of her Maker's declaration; and so sin in disobedience sprang from unbelief. Man fell through unfaith; there he left God and there he must return to find God.

In its first attitude towards God, faith is believing His Word; then it is trusting Him. "In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust," is David's cry. It is the activity of will so continually necessary—I choose to trust the Lord! "I believe God" was the simple testimony of Paul in the storm tossed ship. The secret of faith is to remember God. Jonah

says, "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord"; and David stirs himself up to the same exercise in Psalm xlii. 6, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me, therefore will I remember Thee."

When the waves beat high and the storm howls—remember God. There is a God in the universe. He is not dead nor deaf. He cannot die, cannot fail, cannot lie, cannot deny Himself. He is just and righteous. His might is infinite. He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him and the remainder of wrath will He restrain. His love is eternal and unquenchable. He gave His Son for your redemption, laid your iniquities on Him, executed in Him His righteous judgment on your sinful flesh and put it to death; and then raised you together with Him from the dead and seated you with Him in the place of ascendancy which His mighty victory obtained over principalities and powers. Remember God, remember Jesus Christ your Lord, and trust Him. "Believe in God" might be the rendering of John xiv. 1, "and believe in Me."

This first simple trusting in the Lord must be the first condition of our salvation because of the nature of our need and because of the nature of redemption in which God our Saviour has met that need.

Because of our Need.

Our need consists in our condition as utterly alienated from the life of God. We are estranged and separated in our very nature from the heavenly spiritual realm of God because of sin. The strength of sin lies in pride of heart and will revolting against this law of God; so that our nature has become constitutionally rebellious. Paul describes it thus: "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God *neither indeed can be*, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." There is no basis in man, nor capacity inherent in him, to build up a bridge across the moral chasm between his fallen state and his Maker. Salvation, reconciliation, re-union between God and His creature must therefore be initiated and procured by Himself. Man must consequently be in the attitude of the recipient of divine grace. Further, the manner and method in which God has sovereignly designed to exercise His grace to us is by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. He has ordained His Son as a Mediator. By the sacrifice of His out-poured life on our behalf His own righteous

claims are met, His own righteous character vindicated, and judgment executed upon the prince of this world by whose malevolence man's estrangement had been encompassed. He now proclaims pardon and reconciliation freely to the whole world upon condition of repentant faith.

Obviously the Sovereign who has been offended is He who only has the right to dictate the terms upon which He can receive offenders into favour! The Creator who gives alone has the right to decree the conditions of His gift. The Sovereign Creator in His love to the world, gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should have eternal life: He has conditioned the gift of eternal life upon faith in the Name of His Son.

All this, of course, is purely elementary, but we need to see it clearly.

An Essential Condition to God.

As well as being a moral necessity, faith, living faith, is the essential condition to experiencing here on earth the spiritual blessings which the bounty of God has stored up for us in the Person of His glorified Son—in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Spiritual blessings can be received only spiritually. Faith is the act or energy of the spirit which takes, appropriates, these spiritual benefits. It is the opening of the casement to let in the fresh air and sunshine; it is the lifting of the sluice gates which admits the stream of life-giving water; it is the closing of the circuit switch which makes possible the flow of current to light the lamp, to drive the motor. It is the reaching forth of the hand of the soul to lay hold on eternal life.

"According to your faith, so be it unto you" is a principle of spiritual life and not merely the condition upon which one or two people received miraculous healing from the Lord Jesus.

This principle or condition imposed by the Sovereign Lord, is the means by which, as it were, God compels our strangely sluggish spirits to co-operate with Him. He wills to have our co-operation with Himself, for He has called us into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This surely is one characteristic of sonship—intelligent entering into His purpose and working with the Father. We are workers together with God. The infant has everything done for him, but as progress is made and intelligence develops, the son enters actively into understanding of and assistance

in his father's life and business. Just so in the spiritual life, the faith which to begin, could only trust the unseen Saviour for its own bare salvation, having been tested and instructed and disciplined, can enter into the eternal purpose of God: can share in the activities of the Holy Spirit for the fulfilling of the Divine will, and is thus a necessary factor to the pre-determined operations of God.

Co-operation with God.

We conclude therefore not only that faith is necessary to man for the apprehension of personal salvation but that faith in man on earth is necessary to God for the realising of His will. Such faith co-operation with God essentially works in prayer. The Word of God is full of evidence to this. Yet we are strangely slow to appreciate it: or at any rate to enter practically into it.

Prayer on earth by men of faith is evidently a sovereignly determined condition or factor in the development of the divine purpose. To Ezekiel the Lord says (xxxvi. 37) "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." He has promised many blessings to His back-slidden people, has assured them that the only reason for His benevolence is in Himself—"For My holy Name's sake"—yet for all this, He will be enquired of. He waits to fulfil His promises until they rise to ask Him for them.

The Son of God Himself says to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest"—Pray ye.....that He send forth!

There are certain men who stand out in the Scriptures as men of faith who entered very deeply in co-operation thus with God in the working out of His will. In some cases their work of faith found tangible manifest expression, as when Noah built the ark. In others, it is a more spiritual testimony to which the Word of God gives witness, as Enoch and Daniel. In all alike, however, in one form or another, there was entailed fellowship with Christ in His sufferings.

Think of Abraham and Elijah, Daniel and Nehemiah in the Old Testament, and particularly Paul in the New!

These men had revelation from God's Word and directly from Himself of what He would do, and they entered into co-operation with Him

in faith and prayer and obedience; and so became actual factors in its fulfilment.

Let us take as an example Elijah. He was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

Why did Elijah pray thus? What business of his was it to pray for such a judgment as this with all its consequence of suffering and distress? From Deut. xi. 17 he knew that the Divine decree was that if Israel turned aside to serve and worship other gods, then Jehovah's wrath would be kindled against the people and He would shut up heaven that there be no rain. Elijah lived in an apostate day. He saw around him prevailing the very conditions which the Lord had pronounced worthy of the judgment of drought. He does not sit down and wait for the thing to happen. He does not go just one step further than that and warn his people of their danger, but, upon the basis of the Word of God Whom he believes, he goes earnestly, strongly to God and *prays for the thing God had threatened*. Here is a man on earth so entering in spirit and heart and mind and will into faith communion and co-operation with the Sovereign of the universe that he shuts up heaven by prayer. Later, when once again by his own faithful bold witness the sovereignty of his God has been established and the people have turned again to the Lord, he prays and prays. God answers, and the heavens give rain.

The faith of Elijah that worked in prayer was thus an active factor; we may say it was an essential factor in that act of God.

The ninth chapter of Daniel shews us another man of God similarly entering by prayer of faith into the dispensational purpose of God. From the following chapter it is evident that his was the kind of praying which set things moving in heaven.

The principle we need to see and to embrace is that in the fulfilment of God's sovereign

purpose He chooses not to do without man's active faith co-operation; but requires it and, apparently, *works only with it*.

A Factor in the Divine Purpose.

It is comparatively easy to recognise this in the details of one's own individual life; but do you see that the same principle obtains with regard to the eternal and universal purpose of God? With regard, that is, to the overthrow of the power of Satan as the prince of this world; to the coming of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom of peace on earth; and with regard to the translation of the Church?

It was by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death! Enoch's faith was a factor in his translation! By faith he walked with God in the midst of a generation of giants of wickedness. Strong souled men of tremendous physical and psychical capacity they were; men centuries old in rebellion against the will of God. When Enoch was translated the only one who had died of his forbears mentioned in Genesis v. was Adam. He had died forty-five years previously; all the rest from Seth on were alive. No easy family in which to bear a heavenly testimony and walk a heavenly life! But this one man, Enoch, walked in faith with God and he saw right through to the end, and prophesied—Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all. Enoch walked with God; he saw into the future; his life was lived in the unseen things of God; and one day he was not on earth. God translated him in accordance with his faith.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. And surely not apart from such faith will be translated that company that is to be "caught up" when the Lord Himself shall come.

To what extent may *that* coming be hastened or hindered by the faith activity or its lack in the children of God?

P. W. F.

The Secret of the Shining Face R

Ex. xxxiv, 29, 30 ; Daniel i. 8-16 ; Acts vi. 15 ; vii. 56 ; 2 Cor. iii. 18.

You will notice the common feature of all these passages is the shining face. We have been gathered together for a season up here on the mountain with the Lord and we have to go back, to be scattered in different places, and meet the difficult situations, and we want to go back with shining faces. But we want to know the secret of the shining face. That does not need to be taken literally. We may not always have a countenance that is cracking with mirth, but there is that which even in the midst of adversity and difficulty and suffering and trial speaks of something within the heart that is God's peace, God's rest, God's joy. It is possible to know the peace that passeth understanding. It is possible to know joy unspeakable and full of glory even amidst very great pressure and suffering. It is possible for there to be recognised, even in a pain-marked countenance, something that is of God.

What one is speaking of is not necessarily just a shining of our faces, but something shining *through* our faces; something which our faces indicate which is more than merely human endurance, human bravery and courage ; something of the deep strength and grace of God. That is what I mean by the shining face, and in these four instances of which we have read we have the secrets of the shining face in this sense. You know it is that that is the testimony. It is not always the things that we say, but that which is expressed through us in times of stress and trial and provocation and opposition and antagonism and suffering. It is then that that which is caught, as it were back of our faces, that is the testimony. When it is known that we are undergoing trial, when it is known that we are in suffering, when it is known that others in a different realm would act and speak and react to things in the flesh, as men would react; there is just that betrayal of something of the Lord Jesus. That is the testimony. It is the betraying of the Lord Jesus in the right sense. And it will be very little good to the Lord, very little gain to Him or us, if as we go back and continue in the scenes of our life, and when there is a test, there

is not some fuller indication of the Lord Himself in our hearts and lives. People will come to their conclusions on that basis—what we reveal under pressure, under trial.

That is the proof of the thing, not what we know and what we say. But when we pass through intense difficulties and adversity, what is revealed at such times. And in order that the testimony may be maintained, we want to understand what the secrets of the shining face are. They are four-fold.

“MOSES WIST NOT THAT HIS FACE DID SHINE.”

The first is in the case of Moses. Moses had been up in the mount with the Lord and the Lord had spoken with him. Moses had come to see that upon which the eye of the Lord was resting. He had stood by the side of the Lord and he had looked with the Lord's eyes as the Lord brought before him his own vision, and that vision was expressed in the type, in the tabernacle. It all passed before the eye of Moses in the most minute detail. From the ark, out to the Holy of Holies, to the Court and all its contents, and the priesthood and the sacrifices, and he saw what God's eye was resting upon. And by reason of the Lord's speaking to him about that, he became alive with the very glory of the Lord. It is a wonderful thing to recognise that the Lord's glory became imparted to Moses by reason of that which became the common object of their eyes. What the Lord was looking at, Moses was looking at, and as they both looked at it together they shared the same glory. When does the Lord's own face light up with glory ? When is the Father's face full of glory ? When He looks upon the Lord Jesus. The tabernacle was only the Lord Jesus in a representation, and it was the Lord Jesus in all His Mediatorial, Priestly Person and work gathered up in a great system, but it was the person of the Lord Jesus as relating to man's fellowship with God—the place, the sphere where God and man come into oneness, where God can, without sacrificing His holiness, have fellowship with man and where man can, without being consumed by the very holiness of God, have fellowship with God. From Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, with a centralmost reality of the mercy seat He will

speak with you face to face. God has set forth Christ as a propitiation. God sees beyond the pattern to the reality, His Son, and it was Christ Who was in the eye of the Father in all His wonderful, mediatorial work to bring men nigh to God and God nigh to man. When that is in the eye of God, His face is full of glory, and when we get what is in His eye, we partake of the glory of the shining face of God. Simply, it just means that when we are occupied with the Lord Jesus in all that He is from the Father to us and to the Father for us, when we are occupied with Him, then we know the shining face. Be occupied with anything else and you lose the shining face. Be occupied with yourself and your own spiritual life and condition, so that you are always self-analysing, and it will not be long before you have lost the shining face. Keep your eye upon Jesus and you will know the secret of the shining face. Look around on things as they are in the world and you will lose it. The secret of the shining face is to get God's thought about the Lord Jesus, to get your eye where God's eye is. That is tremendously important.

The only hope for God of the ultimate realisation of His purpose is to look at the Lord Jesus. He has all the guarantee in Him. And He says, "Because He is what He is, my end is secure, I have My Sabbath, My rest, My eye is upon Him." And until we have seen that God has reached His end in Christ, and our eyes are upon Him, we have not got the secret of hope and confidence and rest and satisfaction. It is the secret. It is a wonderful reality. I cannot tell you what a blessing this brought to my own heart when the Lord showed me what He had made the Lord Jesus to Himself on my behalf. I was always craving to bring to the Lord something that would satisfy Him in myself. If I could bring to the Lord a perfect life, that would please Him and satisfy Him, and He could be perfectly satisfied with me! But it was impossible and it seemed no good trying. The more you try, the further away you seem to be, and the longer you live the more you know the utter deceitfulness of your own heart. Oh, to be able to come before the Lord with something that would please Him! And now the Lord says, "I have made the provision for all that. I have provided you with absolute spiritual and moral perfection. I have found those in One, and I have put them into your hands. I accept you in Him, I am satisfied with you in Him, you are accepted in the

Beloved." You cannot bring perfection to God, and that is the only thing that will satisfy Him, but the Lord Jesus fulfills—fills full—all the Divine requirement.

In Leviticus, God speaks about the offering. "If any man *desires* to bring an offering," then the Lord provides as to the offering. You have got to desire to bring an offering. And you know quite well it is no use bringing to God anything that is not absolutely perfect, and where will you find that? That only which is according to Christ satisfies God. When this breaks upon us, it is rest. It is the shining countenance. When we get to the perfections of His Son, we have found the good pleasure of God and we stand, not looking at God askance, but we stand by the side of God and we are both looking at the same thing and sharing the same glory. God's objective is the Lord Jesus.

Moses did not know that his face was shining. It is a great thing to be occupied with the Lord Jesus inside, and people will take note of it. "He wist not that his face shone," but others did, and that is the important thing.

Daniel's Secret of the Shining Face.

Daniel has learned the secret of the shining face, and there is something deeper here, more testing. Daniel is in Babylon. Babylon is in the ascendancy. Jerusalem is in ruins. We know what these things mean spiritually. We know that that which really is wholly according to God, that which was at the beginning, is not to be found to-day—that where the Holy Spirit absolutely governs and where it is all the Lord Jesus. You do not find that in the ascendancy to-day. It is the other religious system made by man that is in the ascendancy. That is Babylon. And the mass of the Lord's people are in captivity to it, a man-made Christian system.

And here is Daniel, seeing that which is according to God broken, ruined, and he sees this other thing, that is not according to God, holding sway and engulfing the mass of the Lord's people. The wonder of it all is that Daniel did not accept Babylon. He repudiated Babylon and clung to Jerusalem. If Jerusalem is literally in ruins, to Daniel it is not so. He does not accept the things seen. He knows that Babylon is only a temporary thing and that God is going to have His testimony again. And God is going, through a remnant, to get His house again. He knows that God cannot be defeated and so he will not defile himself with the king's dainties. God is his life and he

repudiates that which seems to have the upper hand for the time being and clings to God.

Daniel also sees beyond and sees when Babylon and all the other kingdoms will be shattered. If you accept Babylon you will lose the shining face. If you accept religion as it is to-day and say, "It is the best there is," you will get involved in something that is not of God. And people more and more to-day are revolting and are not satisfied. People say, "Oh, to be out of it, to find the real thing." God is going to have His real thing. God cannot be robbed of that thing which He has set His heart upon. Let us set our hearts upon it, and not accept anything else. It is so easy to say, "Christianity is in a mess, but we must make the best of a bad job." But there is no joy along that line. God is working to-day secretly even in Babylon. And when we come to the book of Ezra, we find that God acts sovereignly. He stirs up the spirit of Cyrus and he makes a proclamation. That is God's outside action. But there is a company with whom God has secretly worked in Babylon.

And God is seen working in Babylon to-day with His own remnant and they are gradually moving in a detachment from this system so that when God's time comes He will have that which is after His mind. But Daniel was the first one. He represented that company. He stood for what was of God although it might not be manifested at the moment. Do not accept anything less than what God has set His heart upon. Daniel's secret of the shining face was in that He looked on to God's sure end and believed that in a dark day the ultimate purpose and thought of God was certain of realisation.

Stephen's Secret.

Stephen — all that were in the council looking upon him, saw his face as it were the face of an angel. What is the secret? I believe the second passage is the secret. "And lifting up his eyes he said, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God." Stephen was a man full of the Holy Ghost and faith, and the Holy Spirit had drawn Stephen's attention to the Lord Jesus in glory. Read Acts vii. It is almost matchless in New Testament literature, and see the place that he gives to the Lord Jesus. He heads it right up to the Lord Jesus in glory and, while he is under the test, that is the thing that sustains him, and when he comes to the last moment he sees literally with his eyes what he had been

seeing with his heart all the way through. And that just moans this—when we see the Lord Jesus in glory we have seen this, that God having got Him there, the Son of Man, having got one all-inclusive Man there, it is all right for us. He can get us there. That One has simply fathomed all judgment, all death, all the power of Satan and the grave. He has exhausted all and God has got Him there. He had all the sin of all the creation from Adam onward heaped upon Him, and then that One came to glory. He had all the power and fury of the devil heaped upon Him, and God got that One to glory; the power of Death and Hades being liberated upon Him, and God brought that One to glory. We will never have to go through all that He went through. Stephen saw that one man in the glory, being such a One as He was, is the guarantee that God could get him there, let all hell rush upon him. It is the secret of the shining face. Sometimes we may, by reason of many things, wonder if we shall get to glory, if we shall hold out to the end, but, blessed be God, he is capable of getting us there. It is not our doing, it is the Lord's doing. Why? Because He has already got our forerunner in His presence. That bears you up in the time of opposition. And men filled with the Holy Spirit are especially the object of the stones.

Paul's Secret.

And now, finally, what Paul says about himself and about us. "We all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory"—transformed. It is by the Lord, the Spirit. And what is the secret of this shining face? 2 Cor. iv 6. God hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The secret of the shining face in this case is not Christ objectively but Christ subjectively. It is a blessed thing to realise that the One Who has gone up there in His great triumph is within us. It does not depend on what is outside of us. But the Lord is inside us, who has already overcome. We are familiar with the terms but it is a great day when suddenly we wake up to know what Christ is in us. Has it ever come to you by a sudden flash of light? Christ *in* you! "Know ye not, as to your own selves, that Christ is in you." "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Get that, spiritually apprehended, and you have got the shining face. All that which is around

(Concluded on page 28.)

For Boys and Girls

The Gospel in the Farmyard (No. 14)

"He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.....Matt. xxiv, 13."

Are You an Overcomer?

ONE day last summer an unexpected visitor came to our farm. When crossing one of his fields the farmer found a young, but nearly full-grown, swan lying on the ground in an exhausted condition. It was too tired even to flutter away as he approached, and he picked it up, carried it away and shut it up in a hen coop. He guessed what had happened. The time comes in the life of all young swans when the parent birds drive them off to make a home for themselves elsewhere; and doubtless a company of young birds had been flying across the countryside, seeking a suitable place in which to establish a new home. They had probably flown some distance and our swan, after struggling hard to keep up with the rest of the party, had grown weary and had dropped out; and before it could recover its strength the farmer had found and imprisoned it.

The swan was kept for some days in the hen coop, until it had quite recovered from its trying experience, the farmer meantime wondering what to do with it. He thought it would be good to have the swan to live on the pond at his own farm, but was afraid that as soon as the bird was released from the hen coop it would fly away. He therefore clipped off the tip of its wing—not hurting it, but enough to prevent it from flying—and then set the swan down upon the water. All went well for some days. The bird could not fly away and it spent its time on and around the pond as any other swan would have done. But there was a deep ache in its heart—something had been lost—and after a fortnight the farmer was dismayed to see his swan looking more and more unhappy; until one morning he found it dead. His belief was that it had died of a broken heart, for swans are birds that are hardly ever known to live alone—they must have companionship, or "fellowship" with others like themselves, or they cannot live.

And thus our swan, by falling out of the flight, lost first of all its liberty, then its power to fly, and last of all its life. How much better if it could have received new strength to fly when its own was exhausted, so that it could finish its course and come with its companions to the desired end.

Now there are many things we might stay to note from this story, but we can deal here with only one main thought.

The One Great "Overcomer."

I want you first of all to think of the One of Whom it is said: "Consider Him that endured" (Hebrews xii. 3)—our Lord Jesus Christ. He came into this world with one very definite purpose in view, and His earthly life was, as it were, a steady persistent flight towards a certain end. That end was the redemption of the world. He came to deliver us from the guilt of sin and the power of Satan, and to bring us to God; and He knew that there was only one way by which this could be done—such a hard and costly way, too. Only by Himself, Who knew no sin, becoming sin for us, bearing the penalty of our sin in His Own body, and dying upon the Cross could He deliver us sinners (and we are all sinners, even those whom we might think were the best among us). How He was tempted at times to choose an easier way. Satan did his utmost to turn Him from His purpose (read Matthew iv, 1-11, and xvi. 21-25), and often the suggestion must have been made to Him to give up the difficult way in which He was going and take an easier one but "*He endured.*" Thank God, He did not give up, or there would have been no salvation possible for any of us—He endured unto the end and triumphed gloriously in His Cross over all the power of sin and Satan and death; and now it can be said not only that *He* triumphed (Colossians ii. 14 and 15) but also

"Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. xv. 57).

God needs "Overcomers."

Now we also are called into a way in which endurance is necessary. We are here in this world for the purpose of being witnesses of the Lord Jesus—those who show forth His praises (I Peter ii. 9) despite the fact that we are surrounded by so much that is unlike Him and by so many who are against Him. Not one of us can do this of ourselves or by simply trying to copy His example. There is only one way—we must receive Him into our hearts, to live His life in and through us, and thus show Himself forth in the words that we speak and the things that we do, and in all that we are. Have you come to that starting point? If not, you cannot fulfil the purpose for which He placed you here; but you may begin *now*, by receiving Him just where you are, if you will open your heart to Him. And then we can go on with our talk together.

Why You need to be an "Overcomer."

When we set out with the Lord Jesus, to serve and honour Him, how many difficulties we meet in the way, and how hard it sometimes seems to press on, so that we feel at times inclined to "take things easy" and drop out. "Don't read your Bible or say your prayers to-night" whispers Satan, "It won't matter just for once. Don't stand true to Jesus and let these other children know that you belong to Him—it will make things so much easier for you, and besides, look how you will spoil the fun for the others if you do": thus he may cunningly speak at another time. Or perhaps in many other ways the temptation comes to us to drop out as the swan did and rest for a while—and we tell ourselves (and mean it, too) that we will go on again, later on. Oh, take care!—you may get your wings clipped and not be able to fly again! Satan is watching and will be only too ready to seize you and make it so hard for you to go on again. Beware of the little beginning that takes you out of the way of faithfulness to the Lord Jesus—the first sign of love growing cold. It is a moment full of peril. If we yield we may lose very much that God has for us—and *He* will be grieved too. There are some solemn passages in the Bible which contain the little word "if." They are precious promises for us to enter into, but only *if* we endure to the end. You will find some such

"ifs" in Col. i 23; Heb. iii. 6 and 14; 2 Tim. ii. 12; and Rom. viii. 16 and 17. Will you find them and carefully notice what God says?

How You may be an "Overcomer."

But perhaps you will be thinking that I am a very unreasonable person—blaming a poor swan for dropping out of the flight when it was too tired to go on. Supposing it was not a very strong bird, or for some other reason not able to keep up with its companions? Why, you will tell me that I ought to praise, not blame it, for having made such a gallant effort and continued until it dropped from sheer exhaustion! Yes, quite right as regards the swan—but the same argument does not apply to boys and girls! They may be ever so weak in themselves but *they need not depend upon their own poor little strength*. They can change it for the mighty, enduring strength of the Lord Jesus! Oh, what a glorious exchange to make! It says in God's Word "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah xl. 31). This actually means "they that entwine themselves with the Lord shall change their strength to endure." Have you noticed how a runner bean plant, or a convolvulus plant, twines itself round and round a stick or another plant and so climbs upward? Without such help it would lie helpless on the ground, but by twining around it is able to partake of the strength of the other. Oh, learn to entwine yourself, so to speak, around the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus change your weakness for His strength. He is not *outside* you, as the stick is outside the plant, but *within* you if you have truly received Him—He is your very life, and you may count upon Him every moment to make you strong with His strength, as you truly trust Him. Thus will Satan be defeated, thus will the temptation to give up and choose an easier way be overcome. You will be able, even though you feel never so weak in yourself, to "mount up with wings as an eagle" (or as our swan), "to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint." And you will be one of whom it can be said, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love Him." (James i. 12. R.V.).

"Are YOU an Overcomer?"

G. P.

The Blood of Jesus and Resurrection Life

(1) The Prevailing Paralysis.

To know the Lord Jesus in the fulness of His Person and the power of His resurrection as a functioning reality in life and service, was the consuming desire of the Apostle Paul. There is surely no greater need to-day than that the people of God should know the secret of resurrection life. How little real expression of life triumphant over death is there in the professing Church.

To the discerning eye, the present situation is tragic, almost beyond words. Instead of the power of the Holy Spirit being the normal experience in Christian assemblies, there is too often barrenness, paralysis, and death. Oases in the desert there are, thank God, places of wells of water and palm trees; but, sad to say, multitudes of the Lord's people can obtain no spiritual food in their own localities, despite the elaborate church organisation which abounds on every hand.

In one direction we have "Modernism" which is rapidly increasing. This is an attempt to eliminate from the body of revealed truth all that to which the mind of the natural man objects and to construct a religious system in accordance with the dictates of human wisdom. As all really vital truth is rejected, modernist churches are necessarily devoid of spiritual power, and it is small wonder that, lacking the real thing, worldliness in every form has come in, so that concerts, entertainments, theatricals, etc., etc., are the order of the day. The preaching, characterised by human eloquence and learning, is largely devoid of spiritual value. In the words of a recent newspaper paragraph, describing a sermon by a leading ecclesiastic, preached before a large and representative congregation, "It was a perfect piece of prose, unspoiled by a trace of unction."

In a second direction we have "Fundamentalism." This is a reaction from Modernism and the motto of these dear children of God is "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." While there is much in Fundamentalist churches that calls forth thankfulness to God, yet, too often, alas, it is found that the weapons of warfare used are not spiritual and "mighty through God to the

pulling down of strongholds," but carnal and, therefore, ineffective. Moreover, in many such churches, standing strongly for the Evangelical position, there is a strange lack of spiritual power, and a failure to go on into the deep things of God.

In yet a third direction there is found much true teaching as to the letter of the Word. Some of the Lord's people have become experts in doctrine. To "rightly divide the Word of Truth" is the aim in these assemblies. An aim altogether laudable; for it is very necessary in these apostate days to "hold fast the form of sound words." Faulty doctrine is never a good basis for holy living. Yet despite the most scrupulous care to maintain and proclaim "the truth" in words which cannot be impugned, there is here, also, very often, a lack of vital force. Sound doctrine can never be a substitute for spiritual dynamic, and the recovery of power is a great and crying need.

It is not difficult to trace the cause of the development of Modernism in the last half century. We are truly in the last days and the perilous times of which Paul spake to Timothy (2 Tim. iii. 1) are upon us. "Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (v. 13). "Many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John, iv. 1). What, however, are the reasons for the strange lack of spiritual power in churches which are loyal to the Scriptures and proclaim the truth as revealed therein? How is it that the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ in delivering the children of God from sin and the world is so little known? How is it that its power against "the spiritual hosts of wickedness" is so little understood?

The causes are many, but for our present purpose we will name but one. There is a great lack of experimental spiritual knowledge. Truth as set forth in the Word of God must not only be held as a system but known vitally in experience. The revelation in the Word must become revelation both to and in the believer. It is a blessed thing to know Christ objectively as Crucified, Risen, Ascended and Glorified. No believer will go far unless he habitually thinks of the Lord, not in terms of the human

Jesus of Nazareth, but as the Christ of God exalted in the throne, "far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named." (Eph. i. 21). But Paul had a further revelation. "It pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's wombto reveal His Son IN me." Hence he became a mighty preacher of the Gospel, a founder of churches and a man full of power. All spiritual truth must be wrought by the Holy Spirit into the very warp and woof of the believer's life, if it is to become power.

In order that truth may be thus inwrought a very definite attitude of heart is necessary. Mere passive hearing of the word must give place to a spirit of resolute faith. Every revelation of truth made to the believer, must be held before the Lord in a spirit of appropriating and co-operating faith so that it may be also revealed IN the believer. The Apostle goes to the very heart of things in Col. ii. 6: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." He says, every step of the Christian life must be the same in character as the initial one. Walking is taking one step at a time. Each step is like the first one, *i.e.*, marked by (1) Faith; (2) Surrender. That first step was a reception of Christ Jesus by faith and an absolute surrender to Him as Lord; faith that was definite and an act of appropriation accompanied by implicit obedience. Failure in Christian life always comes through lack of one of these elements in the walk. If obedience breaks down faith is paralysed. If faith fails, obedience cannot be rendered. The obedience of faith is the prime requisite for all progress and accomplishment.

It is not enough to have fresh truth set forth either in conventions or in the Christian Press. The truth as presented must be laid hold of in the power of an appropriating faith and made one's own. Each fresh revelation will demand a fresh act of appropriation and a new surrender.

The Christian life is really very simple and becomes increasingly blessed as truth is thus received, and becomes vital in life and testimony. But it follows that the greater the truth revealed, the more necessary will the exercise of naked faith become, and the more will such faith be tested. Truth will have to be laid hold of apart from all sensation. Feelings will be less and less the criterion. "We walk by faith and not by sight." A position taken in response to the unveiling of truth must never be surrendered, whatever the feelings of the

moment may be. "Faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. xi. 1). "I believe God," is the simple and sufficient attitude of faith. What God has said, faith lays hold of; and the Holy Spirit then proceeds to lead the believer through those experiences by means of which the truth, thus received, becomes wrought into the very life and constitution of the individual.

It is not for nothing that God has placed on record the experience of Abraham. Forsaking home, kindred and country at the call of God, he entered the land of promise, only to find that it was a land where famine prevailed. Full often has his experience been repeated in the history of God's people. It *seems* as if God's promise were vain. Where we looked for life, we meet death. God's answers to our cries of anguish are strangely delayed. But the land of famine became the "land flowing with milk and honey," and shall yet be the centre of blessing for the whole world. "Faith and patience" are required in those who would inherit the promises.

(2) The Power and virtue of the Blood of Jesus.

ONE of the most popular choruses in Evangelistic services is:—

"There is power, power, wonderworking power

In the precious blood of the Lamb."

If there is in all the range of Scripture teaching one truth more than another which needs to be taken hold of in the power of an intelligent, appropriating faith, it is that of the efficacy and virtue of the precious blood of Christ.

Leaving the Old Testament and all its typical teaching out of account for the moment, the New Testament makes it abundantly clear that everything the believer most values comes to him by reason of the Blood of Calvary. A simple list will bring this home to our hearts:

The Blood of Jesus is the Blood of the New Covenant.—Matt. xxvi. 28.

The Church of God was "purchased by His Own Blood."—Acts xx. 28.

We have "Redemption through His Blood."—Eph. i. 7.

Our sins are "remitted" through His Blood."—Heb. ix. 22.

God hath "set forth Christ Jesus, a mercy-seat through faith in His Blood."—Rom. iii. 25.

We are "justified by His Blood."—Rom. v. 9.

The Blood....."cleanseth from all sin."—1 John i. 7.

Our consciences are "purged from dead works by the Blood of Christ."—Heb. ix. 14.

We are "sanctified by His Blood."—Heb. xiii. 12.

He has "made peace by the Blood of His Cross."—Col. i. 20.

We are "made nigh" to God by the Blood of Christ.—Eph. ii. 13.

We have "boldness to enter the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus."—Heb. x. 19.

We are "elect unto the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus."—1 Peter. i. 2.

Our Communion is in the Blood of the Son of Man.—John vi. 53; 1 Cor. x. 16.

It is "because of the Blood of the Lamb" we have power to overcome the Devil.—Rev. xii. 11.

How joyous the experience of the believer who, in the power of an appropriating faith, lays hold of the truth thus set forth.

"We have come to Jesus and to the Blood of Sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24). We are "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 2). In 2 Peter i. 10 we are exhorted to "make our calling and election sure." In order to have a vital experience of the efficacy of the Blood of Jesus in its power over death and Hell it is necessary that we should enter into the blessed truth unfolded in these passages of the Word.

Two things are basic to any spiritual knowledge of the meaning of the Blood. First there must be a revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ; secondly an appreciation of the symbolical meaning of blood. "We are come to JESUS and the BLOOD OF SPRINKLING." The Person and His Redemptive Work are indissolubly bound together. There can be no experience of the fulness of redeeming power, except as there is a knowledge of the Redeemer.

Who then is Jesus?

It is not a little significant that in the passage taken from Hebrews xii. there are eight items (things or persons) to which we are said to "have come." While the order must not be unduly pressed, it cannot be without meaning that the fifth (5 is the number of grace) is "God the judge of all"; the seventh (7 is the number of spiritual perfection), is "Jesus" (Jehovah the Saviour) while the eighth (8 is the resurrection number) is "the Blood of Sprinkling."

The "modern mind" has no conception of the value of the Blood of Calvary because it has no knowledge of the Person of Jesus. He is the Divinely perfect One, the revelation of the Father. He is the "Effulgence (outshining) of His glory," the "express image (character) of His Person" (Heb. i. 3); He is "The Word" (*Logos*) and was both with God and was God in the beginning (John i. 1 and 2). On earth He was "The Word made flesh." Jesus of Nazareth, crucified through weakness, was, nevertheless "The Firstborn of all Creation." "All things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, were created through Him and unto Him." "In Him all things consist" (hold together) (Col. i. 15-17). He is at once the Creator, the object of creation, the sustainer and consummation of all created things. Conceive the universe without the Lord Jesus and you have a universe in complete disintegration.

Only such a one could be the Redeemer of mankind. No mere man could "redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him" (Psalm xlix. 7). But HE could. God manifest in flesh could accomplish that which was impossible to man.

It needs a divine revelation to know Who Jesus is! "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father, Who is in Heaven." God, the judge of all, can meet us, sinful men, in grace, because we have come to Him in simple faith in the atoning work of the Divinely perfect One, the God-Man; JESUS, the Christ.

In addition to an apprehension of the Person of the Lord Jesus there must be an understanding of the significance of blood, as revealed in the Word of God. It is interesting to notice that the first reference to blood in the Scriptures speaks of it as possessing a voice: "The voice of thy brother's blood CRIETH to Me from the ground." (Gen. iv. 10). This agrees with the New Testament revelation "The blood of sprinkling SPEAKETH better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 24).

It must be further observed that LIFE is in the blood: "But flesh with the life thereof which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 4). Blood was strictly and sacredly reserved under the old economy for sacrifice. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the Altar to make an atonement for your souls; it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11).

The LIFE is in the blood. That is the vital and all important fact. (The Hebrew word for life, *Nepshesh*, is translated "life" 119 times, "soul" 428 times, "person" 30 times, "self" 19 times). It is the LIFE OF THE PERSON poured out in the shed blood. Hence the inconceivable value, efficacy and power of the Blood of Christ. Well might the apostle say, "WHO gave HIMSELF a ransom for all" (Ransom is, Gr., *Antilutron* = a corresponding price). It was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Those sacrifices were but typical of THE GREAT SACRIFICE. "But HE, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb. x 12). The work was finished.

Can the value of HIS LIFE be comprehended? He is infinite, eternal, transcendent, and beyond all power of human apprehension. When the Blood flowed from His sacred veins, it contained all the inestimable value of the life thus poured forth. *ISA 53 10-12 / MATT 26 28, JN 10 10*

It is, then, to the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus we have come, with all that this implies in spiritual interpretation and experience. And to this, by means of His sovereign purpose, revealed in electing grace, in accordance with His foreknowledge; we coming into the good of it through the sanctifying work of the Blessed Spirit of God.

How mighty must be the purpose in view, if the electing grace of God is the cause and motive power, while the operation of the Holy Spirit in progressive sanctification is the process by means of which we arrive (1 Peter i. 2). The blood sprinkled.....His Blood..... denotes the application of all the virtue and efficacy of the Blood shed, to those upon whom it is sprinkled. It is not only that which is secured by the sacrifice on the Altar which is thus brought to us, it is the positive energy and power of the Life released in the Blood as poured out in sacrifice.

It has already been noted that the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus is the eighth of those mighty things to which the Apostle tells us we have come (Heb. xii. 22-24) and that eight is the resurrection number. Now Heb. xiii 20 tells us that it was "through" (in virtue of) the Blood of the everlasting covenant that our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, was brought again from the dead. Thus resurrection life is in the power of the Blood.

On the Cross our blessed Lord took upon His heart the tremendous burden of the world's sin. Nay, more, He, the spotless, pure, sinless Lamb of God, Whose very body, in its conception and growth in Mary's womb was miraculously preserved from the taint of sin, by reason of the overshadowing of the power of the Highest, was, at Calvary, made sin for us. His resurrection proves that the pouring out of His life in the "Blood-stream" at Golgotha, fully and completely atoned for sin. Sin is, therefore, put away or "disannuled" by the Blood (Heb. ix. 26).

The Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses from all sin (1 John i. 7). But that is not all. The Lord Jesus not only dealt with the sin question when nailed to Calvary's tree, but there met, and defeated, all the forces of Hell. The mystery of His experience during those three hours of darkness can never be penetrated by mortal man. No human intelligence can fathom its depth. But we are not left without some light in the Word. Psalm xxii tells us that alone.....forsaken of God (v. 1).....in utter weakness (v. 14, 15, 17) He was also surrounded by His foes who had gathered for His destruction. "Many bulls have compassed Me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion" (v. 12, 13). "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns" (v. 20 21). The weight and woe of a world's sin was not enough, but He must also meet all the hellish craft and malignity of Satan and his assembled hosts. Nevertheless He triumphed, blessed be His Name!

"By weakness and defeat.

He won the mead and crown:

Trod all our foes beneath His feet,

By being trodden down."

He dealt roughly with the hosts of evil. "He stripped away from Himself all trammels of Principalities and Powers: He paraded them unsparingly as He haled them in the triumph of His Cross" (Col. ii 15 Way). But not only Principalities and Powers. He dealt with the arch-enemy himself. "Through death He 'brought to naught' him that had the power of death, that is the Devil" (Heb. ii. 14). So when our Lord Jesus cried "It is finished," it was, truly, the triumph shout of a mighty conqueror. Not only was the work of redemp-

tion finished, but the Lord of Death was robbed of his power and became the captive, the slave, the tool of Him who overcame.

“ His be the Victor’s Name,
Who fought the fight alone ;
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
Their conquest was His own.”

The proof of His victory was the resurrection. Had He not triumphed, He could never have been raised from the dead. And the resurrection took place “ in ” (R.V.M.) i.e. in virtue of the Blood. Thus is the Blood of the Lamb proved efficacious and mighty over all the power of Hell.

Blessed doctrine ! Who would not sing the praise of such a Victor in such a victory. Who would not “ praise the precious blood.” Ah, but it is sprinkled upon us. Thus are we brought to the place where we may prove in experience the power of His resurrection. It is good to wonder, it is better to worship, it is best of all to “ triumph in His victory.” Thanks, a thousand thanks, for the precious Blood.

“ Oft as it is sprinkled
On our guilty hearts,
Satan in confusion
Terror-struck, departs.”
(To be completed).

S. A.

4/13/39

The Servant and Service of the Lord

The Servant’s Ear.

Exodus xxi. 1-6 ; Deuteronomy. xv. 12-17 ;
Leviticus viii. 22 ; 14-28 ; Isaiah l. 4-5 ;
Revelation iii. 20-22.

You notice the common feature in all these passages, that of the ear. We are occupied with the matter of the servants and the service of the Lord, and it is not a little impressive to note how in the Word of God the ear has such an important place in the service of God. We need, of course, always to get an adequate background for any subject under consideration. It is very easy to make a Bible Reading of “ ears,” to gather up the “ ears ” of the Bible and form them into some ordered arrangement, but that is not sufficient. We want to get the range of things from the Divine standpoint and see how these things are not just things in themselves, but they fit into something which is tremendous in its contemplation and application. We might be helped to get this great background by reminding ourselves that the ruin, wreckage, all the misery and wretchedness, sin and sorrow, pain and suffering of every kind, all that has struck home to the very heart of God, all that has been a hand against His throne, all that has stood in the way to arrest His great eternal purpose, all that necessitated God giving His only and well beloved Son, all that made essential the cross of Christ, and much more, is the direct result of an ear operating wrongly ; all that was brought about by the capture of an ear by the enemy. The enemy in laying his plans to capture the race and the world and the

place of authority for himself decided deliberately that the point of attack which would serve him best; would ever serve his interest most, would be the ear, and so he assailed the ear and made his insinuations by way of the ear. “ Hath God said.....” and all the rest followed. The ear was lent to the suggestion, to the insinuation ; the ear was surrendered with these far reaching terrible consequences.

Now, beloved, that is only half of the story. The other half is this, that in the redemption of the world, in the redemption of mankind, in the re-capturing for God and for man of the government of the universe, in the overthrow of all that power and the destroying of all those works, God does it by capturing an ear, and these passages which we have read this evening, in type, relate to the ear of the Lord Jesus, that God had His ear. It was because God had His ear as He *did* have it that the rest followed. You see you have got a tremendous principle there in this service and servant of the Lord, the Servant, greater than Whom there has never been a Servant of the Lord, the Lord Jesus. Himself fulfilled His marvellous service, commission, His wonderful work, firstly by a surrendering of His ear to the Father. It was the law of the ear in relation to God that governed this Servant to begin with. Other things followed, as we shall see another time, but this was where it began, and while in His case it is so much more than it could ever be in the case of any other servant, yet the principle

holds good for all the servants of God, that God is going to accomplish His heavenly purpose firstly by way of having an ear in His charge, under His control, in fellowship with Himself. And, if you and I are going to understand the nature of priestly ministry, we have got to come to know what it is to have our ear held by and for God. Now, of course, having established the background, or seen the range of this thing in principle, we can come down then to the illustrations of it, and can get the meaning of these various passages which have to do with the ear.

In the first of these passages in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the servant, the bondsman is brought in. Note one or two details. He is a Hebrew. He is not a stranger, he is a member of that race that has been delivered from slavery and bondage, whose covenant rights were liberty, but within the compass of a liberated people he is in bondage. He is a Hebrew. He is owned by a master. He serves that master for six years and then the seventh year, the year of jubilee, is the year of liberation. This bondsman comes to the day when his master is compelled to release him and let him go; he can hold him no longer so far as the law is concerned, and the bondsman is given his liberty. The master says to him, "Well, so and so, the time has come for you to take the liberty which is yours by right, to go out free, I can hold you no longer, there you are."

The bondsman turns to his master and says, "But there are stronger ties than law, there are mightier bonds than legalism, there are such things as heart ties, and it is those ties that hold me. I have long since ceased to be bound by law, I have become bound by love and I do not want to be released from that, I will not go out free, I choose deliberately on the basis of a heart relationship to be for ever, not for another six years, not for another term of the law, not for twelve or fifteen years, or any number of legal terms, I choose for ever, for the whole length of my life, to abide in this house and serve." That declaration must be formed into a covenant, sealed in blood. The master takes him to the threshold of the house and with an awl bores through his ear to the door-post and the blood falls upon the threshold, and that threshold has become an altar with blood sprinkled on it, and in that covenant of blood the master and the servant belong to the one household for ever. Now that is all very simple, all very beautiful, but you see it brings

in the true nature of the servant and of service as represented by the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus was under no legal obligation to come and fulfil that service, but He fulfilled it. He did not come because He was legally compelled or judiciously bound to it. He did not come in a spirit of independence, that He would do this thing but, of course, He would do it if He liked, but could resign. No! He came on this basis—for love's sake, on the basis of love. He was the bond slave of Jehovah to carry out this work in relation to the House of God, and that service and servant was sealed in His own blood. The shedding of that blood was the outpouring of His life, the token that life and death were bound up with this fact. It was a matter of blood, a matter of life and death, and love led to that, and that was the nature of His relationship to His Father. Now there are two things, beloved, to be noted. One, the significance of the ear in this matter. Why could it not have been anything else? Why not first of all let us give our hand upon it? When we make a pact we say we give our hand upon it. Why not some other member, or some other instrumentality, why should the ear be the basic thing in this? Well, the answer I think is obvious. That you can never do anything with the hand, that you can never express your service by any other means until you have come into an intelligent apprehension of what is in the heart of the one to whom you are giving your service, whose servant you are. The working of the hand is dependent upon the knowledge of his will, and this ear coming into evidence in this connection is simply saying this—for ever, voluntary, utterly, on the basis of the strongest possible tie, the basis of love. I have no ear for any one else, my ear as the gateway of intelligence is yours. You see this bored ear, beloved, stands right over against that free-lance, lawlessness of the Adam man who yielded to Satan. It was the lawlessness of the ear in Adam that brought the trouble, and when you take the awl and put it through the ear, the ear has become sealed in blood to another, and it is the taking back of this ear from the realm of lawlessness which has brought about all the ruin and given Satan all his power to do his work, taking it back completely and utterly, and putting it into the hand of God that the works of the devil shall never again have a chance along that line; from that moment the ear is God's ear.

Now, of course, we understand that we are not just talking about the physical ear, although that comes in. The believer must be careful about what the ear shall listen to. It is just that in the ordinary every day kind of way with the physical ear that the devil does get so many advantages. The gossip which we talk, the rumours and reports which in themselves are so often mistaken, distorted by the people who spread them, believing that they are very truth, and we believe them to be the truth, and when the whole thing is sifted out there is very little truth in them at all, and the whole thing has been mistaken. The Word of God tells us to "take heed how ye hear." In the physical sense it is true that our inner man is affected by our outward ear, but we are not only speaking of that, important as it is for us to safeguard our ears, the real service of the Lord is not just that physical realm, it is in that deeper inner ear which is open to the Lord and which is the Lord's. I mean that the Lord is given His place in the inner life to be allowed to speak, and other things are being shut out that the Lord may speak; and that is a thing which is basic to priestly service. The man or woman who has no inner ear, no inner silence, no inner place for hearing the Lord is never going to be of much use in the service of the Lord, and mark you, it must be the Lord, and we must be very careful that we do not give even good men and good writers the place that the Lord ought to have.

There is a time when we must sweep our books aside, when we must shut ourselves up from the voices of men, when we must get quiet with the Lord and listen, and more, we must seek to cultivate, by the grace of God, the ear that is always open to the Lord even when all the other sounds are around us. It is difficult, yet not impossible, that in the raging of the street and the rush of business life the Lord should say something; but He will only speak to those who recognise the value of listening to the Lord and who are giving Him His place of silence to speak when possible. The ear to hear the Lord when all other sounds and voices are around us is prepared and trained in these times of detachment which the Lord demands, and against which the devil is eternally active to capture the ear again. Now that is elementary (we are not seeking to be profound), but tremendously important. You and I know, never mind how spiritually mature we are—the one object of the devil is

to capture our ear from God, to make it impossible for us to have the silent hour and the silent ear for God. The pressing in, and all the things which happen just when you have decided to have a little quiet time; then it is you have to fight for the ear—you know, it is true. Do you see, there is something bound up with that; the undoing of the works of the devil, the registration of God's mind upon this universe, everything which is meant by priestly ministry, which is bringing God in, is bound up with this, God having the ear.

There are two things to note, this is one. The other is this: With this Hebrew servant it was a crisis. There came the day when he made a decision, the thing reached a point of decision and that decision was one which involved him for all time. A crisis. The voluntary decision. Now, beloved, the point is this. We have got to come, we shall be compelled to come to the place where we decide once and for all whether we are going to serve the Lord under compulsion, under a sense of legality, under a sense of duty, under some sense of conscience, and we go on day by day and year by year, but if only we could be exempt, if only it need not be; the groaning under it, the groaning in the service of the Lord. We have to decide whether it is going to be because we must, or whether it is going to be our delight to do His will, our joy. That is a crisis, and this crisis represents the position of appreciation of the Master to which we have come. Are we bondslaves in the sort of conscientious legal sense, yes, that we are afraid to do otherwise, we must do it, we are compelled to do it for various reasons, it would be a disastrous thing to draw out and give it up. Whether that is the spirit or whether it is "I love my master, I will not go out free," represents a point of our estimation of the Lord, our appreciation of the Lord, our sense of indebtedness to the Lord, our recognition of the value of the Lord; and, beloved, the service that the Lord is seeking is not service which we have to be coerced to do, the service which we will not render unless we are invited to do it, the service which is not spontaneous but which is organised, and unless we are asked to take it up we do not do it.

Oh, that we should get some better idea of what the service of the Lord is than that it is platforms and pulpits and open-air meetings. Beloved, service for the Lord is just as important when it is rendering some kindly act of helpful service to some rather de-

pressed child of God in the ordinary domestic things of daily life, just as valuable as getting on the platform and giving a message. You see it is strengthening the hands of the Lord's children, it is coming in to check the crushing overweight of the adversary, coming alongside to lift up the testimony in some life or home where the enemy is trying to crush the testimony out—and the testimony is something maintained in domestic relationships, in family life, private life. There are too many who want to give up their domestic service and go to Bible College, failing to recognise that that service there may be just as valuable to the Lord as their going out to the mission field. It is spiritual, not technical, not organised, and you may be as much a priest of the Lord in going round to some home to-morrow where the enemy is pressing in and giving a practical hand in helping with the washing as you may be a priest in standing on the platform. Let us revise our ideas of priestly service and not think it is bound up with public ministry in the service of the Lord. Not always, very often perhaps for the majority it is otherwise,

for more are called to fulfil priestly ministry in that realm than in this realm. Do not neglect it. Let it be the spontaneity of love for the Lord, not the compulsion or sense of duty, not merely for conscience sake, for when the heart is rightly related to the Lord these things become spontaneous. They are not forced, they simply flow out. Find the person who has most of the love of God in their heart, that person is most concerned for the other children of God. There are many priests of God whose voices have never been heard in public, who have never been seen in a public way, who are unknown, hidden very often in the assembly and yet in secret history fulfilling a most valuable ministry. Get adjusted over this thing. We have to come to the point where we deliberately decide as to whether the Lord is worthy of this, and abandon ourselves to it because of our appreciation of Him, the Master. You see this servant abandons himself freely, voluntarily, for all time to the service of his master because he has come to love his master.

T. A.-S.

The Rainbow

Genesis ix. 13-15. Ezekiel i. 28. Revelation iv. 3, x. 1.

"I do set my bow in the heavens, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." There is nothing profound about that—it is simple and beautiful, yet so full of meaning.

What is a rainbow? We gaze upon it, are entranced by it, held by it. It is sun rays shining through rain, or it is rain arresting sun rays and breaking them up, and showing us the inside of the sun rays, what the rays of the sun are made of—their composition, the rain acting as a prism to break up the white light into its component parts. That is all, but you have one of the richest symbols in the rainbow and we just want to understand the meaning of God's sign in the heavens by which He governs. He is ruling by this sign in the heavens.

In the passages above we see that in every case the rainbow is connected with judgment. In Genesis the flood; then afterward the renewed earth, the altar and the sacrifice of Noah upon it. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour" and

the Lord said, "I will no more judge the earth by water." "I will set my bow in the heavens and it shall be for a token of a covenant." Something has happened with which all future judgments will take place. They will be governed by a certain thing that has happened.

When you come to Ezekiel you know that in the first chapters of the book you are going to have judgments. Nations are going to be brought into view for judgments. First of all there is a revelation of a throne and of One as of the appearance of a Man above the throne, and then the rainbow, and then in relation to Him and that rainbow these judgments are going to take place—judgment of hostile nations, and then of God's own people in relation to him and His rainbow throne.

Now the rainbow is the symbol of incarnation and redemption—two phases of one thing, God manifested in the flesh, God in Christ the Son of Man. Note the words in Ezekiel, "and the likeness of a man above it." Incarnation, and redemption as the outworking and purpose of the incarnation. What that was intended to

meet was the force and unbearable blaze of the infinite holiness of God. God is an infinitely holy God—the perfection of holiness, righteous to the uttermost, with Whom there is no shadow or suggestion of unholiness, and God cannot tolerate unrighteousness, unholiness, sin. We have to reckon with a God like that. He made man for His own glory, and intended this earth to be full of holiness. He determined that everything that was to abide before Him should be holy, without stain or suggestion of sin. There is that fierce blaze of divine holiness to meet and we are sinners; we are all “an unclean thing” and if our “righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” what about our unrighteousness? Apart from redemption we should have to meet the full blaze of that holiness in our unholiness, and who could stand?

The story is told of an Indian who, for a wager, resolved to look at the noonday sun straight for a half hour, and when the half hour had passed he was a dead man. The sun of blazing holiness is too intolerable for man to come into that Presence direct; that holiness would burn and consume him; yet we must appear before an infinitely holy God. How can we do it and live? God has found a rainbow, He has put something in between which has arrested the full blaze of searching holiness and which has broken it up into His beauty. We can now gaze upon it. It is the same as with the sunset. We cannot look at the sun in full blaze at noon, but wait until evening when the rays are being broken up and you get a sunset. It is the same sun, but the mists of earth have laid hold of the rays and broken them up into their parts. There is One Who has come in between, made in the likeness of sinful man, in Himself spotlessly holy, and yet combined with that holiness of life our humanity, and was able to arrest the blazing sun rays of divine holiness and join Himself with us, bringing us to God in Himself. That is redemption—that is the rainbow.

Because there is One Who could bear that searching light by reason of His perfection in Himself, Who took our humanity and did not come to us only as infinite and almighty God but came to us as man, “God manifest in the flesh,” He brought holiness nigh to us in perfect humanity. The judgment, which after all is only the effect of holiness, is not just a matter of wrath, God being spiteful and cruel and hard; judgment is sin getting into the presence of holiness. Hell is not merely punishment for wrong doing, it is judgment upon a wrong state,

and it is based upon the fact that God has not abandoned His original premise or purpose for a state of holiness in His universe.

To have to reckon with God’s holiness without a Mediator is hell.

Noah had offered sacrifices on the altar and God smelled an odour of a sweet savour and then gave in the heavens forever the symbol of that sacrifice—the rainbow. That sacrifice was substitutionary, and because judgment was poured out on a substitute the spotless Lamb of God, God was able to make a covenant in relation to that substitute. All judgment is forever bound up with the person of the Lord Jesus and judgment for us will ever be according to our relationship to him.

In the Revelation it is the Lord Jesus Who is enthroned and Who is the rainbow, and all judgment carried out now is based upon redemption and our relation to it in Christ. Our relation to Him as God manifested in the flesh—that is where God’s covenant is. Must God judge sin? Yes, but He has judged it already in a substitute, and unless you stand in vital relationship to Him you have to bear that judgment yourself, but if you are in right relationship to Him you can come right into the presence of God.

In the rule of the heavens everything is being governed in relation to the Person of the Lord Jesus on the ground of His redemptive activity. Remember what He said of the Holy Spirit, “when He is come He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; of sin because they believe not on Me” (John xvi. 8,9). What is the basis of sin? Not whether we have committed so many sins more or less; and not according to where man would place us. If that were so then God would be unrighteous because we might inherit advantages morally that another might not inherit. God cannot judge us on that. Judgment is fixed on the basis of relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ—“because they believe not on Me.” God will call to account on this ground—“what is your relationship to My Son?”

“Of righteousness, because I go to my Father.” There is a wonderful reality back of that. No one has ever gotten to the Father yet who is unrighteous, and if He goes to the Father it is proven that He is righteous. Righteousness is a matter of relationship to the Righteous One Who stands in the presence of the Father and is not afraid before God.

Righteousness is a question of relationship to the Lord Jesus again.

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The prince of this world has been condemned, and if you have not taken sides with the Lord Jesus you have taken sides with him—either with the devil or Christ. If with Christ, no judgment: if not you are with that judged one—eternally judged and condemned. Here it is the question of relationship to the Lord Jesus again. Sin has been dealt with and put away because of oneness with Him Who put it away, and you are already in the presence of the Father in the Person of Christ. The basis of divine government from the heavens depends upon our relationship to Christ on the ground of what Christ was—the Son of God Who "loved me and gave Himself for me" and to do so became the Son of Man.

The rainbow is a symbol of God manifest in the flesh—taking the form of man and "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." The rainbow shows forth the beauty of the Lord—"let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." There is wondrous beauty in the light of the rainbow, perfections we have not seen or heard or detected. Let us, therefore, come boldly before the Throne of Grace.

The heavens do rule now by grace. It is grace that governs the Throne. The power of God in this age is grace. I hope the day never comes when I stand before that Throne and

know any other power than grace. The covenant in grace is the covenant in His blood, and we need never know the awfulness of divine power but may know the beauty of divine power—the love of God. The covenant is a covenant in relation to the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, and that is the covenant in which there is to be no judgment. The sin question has passed forever because of our relation to the Lord Jesus. The basis of divine government is that sacrifice on the altar. God has smelled a sweet savour: judgment has passed, His holiness, His righteousness, His standard is satisfied. Judgment has passed—it has been meted out upon the Substitute and the covenant sealed in that precious blood.

Could you bear to have all the evil thoughts, words, deeds, suddenly brought back in full remembrance? It is one of the mercies of God that we can forget. If we could not we could never sleep at night. The day is coming when every evil word, thought and sin committed will be brought up in the light of His Holiness but there is not going to be the remembrance of the sins of those in relation to the Sin Bearer. "I will remember them no more," and if God does not remember them, we need not. "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." It is hell to have them remembered and heaven to have them blotted out. Rejoice in the rainbow—it governs the Throne and controls heaven's dealings with us! T. A-S.

"In my body I bear about continuously the dying of Jesus, that in my body the life also of Jesus might be shown forth. For I, in the midst of life, am daily given over to death. . . . That in my dying flesh the life whereby Jesus conquered death might show forth its power."—II Cor. iv. 10, 11. (Conybeare).

"Counted a deceiver, yet being true; as unknown (by men), yet acknowledged (by God). As ever dying, yet behold I live: as chastened by suffering, yet not destroyed; as sorrowful, yet ever filled with joy; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things."—II Cor. vi. 9, 10. (Conybeare).

"Through. . . . the supply of the Spirit of Jesus, according to my earnest expectation and hope. . . . Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death."—Phil. i. 19, 20.

"Our light affliction. . . . worketh for us. . . . an eternal weight of glory."—II Cor. iv. 16.

The Offence of the Cross

GALATIANS v. 11.

It is a perfectly obvious fact that wherever the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has been most faithfully preached and presented—while bringing hope and new life to many—it has almost invariably been the cause of trouble.

Wherever it has gone it has aroused antagonism. As it was a stumbling block to the Jews and an absurdity to the Greeks in the first days, so, ever since, it has been unacceptable, not only to the men of the world as such, but to the religious communities also.

This we unhesitatingly affirm to be as true to-day as ever, in spite of the fact that it is the most popular symbol in the world. There is hardly a city in Christendom where the architecture, galleries of art, collections of literature conservatoires of music and religious institutions do not declare to the world a certain regard and honour for this sacred sign.

This may be a tribute to something deeper but it is that deeper thing which is absolutely unacceptable to the greater part of Christendom and the world.

It is found necessary even in certain phases of some missionary enterprise to-day to eliminate from the text-books and hymn-books, the mention of the Cross lest it offend.

Much of the preaching and teaching in the Christian Church is either confined to the "Historic Jesus" which presents a Crossless Christ, or gives a very modified meaning to His death.

And yet it is surely necessary to get rid of the Bible before we can get rid of the fact that it unites in all its parts to declare that the cross is God's way of salvation, God's sufficient and God's *only* way.

It is, further, surely very clear that the cross has proved to be the means upon which God has made to rest the full weight of His mighty saving power. It was dominant in New Testament days. The recovery of, or re-emphasis upon some vital and essential phase of that cross gave rise to such movements as are signified by the names of Luther, Moody, Finney, Jonathan Edwards, Whitfield, the Wesleys, Spurgeon, and many other especially God-honoured men.

Now we ask why has the cross always been such a maker of trouble and such a cause of offence? And why is it that it is to-day behind much of the upheaval even in many of our professedly evangelical institutions, and denominations, Christian homes, local churches and individual Christian lives?

This we will seek to answer, but first let us discriminate.

It is not the heroics of the cross or the æsthetics which cause the trouble.

Sacrifice, suffering, unselfish devotion, self-effacing service for the good of others, enduring the penalty of setting oneself against the evil current of the times, etc.; these are romantic elements and are seized upon as the themes by which multitudes are captured and captivated.

It is the deeper meaning which the Bible gives to the cross which causes the aggravation, this can be seen in one or two clearly defined applications.

(1) *The cross condemns the world.*

In His cross Christ created a great divide between the old world and the new, a divide which cannot be bridged.

Two distinctly different systems, scales of value, standards of judgment, sets of laws, prevail on the two sides of the cross, the system of each is not only entirely different but irreconcilable and for ever antagonistic to the other.

The cross demands an absolute distinctiveness of interests, and objectives, relationships and resources.

It draws the final distinction between the saved and the unsaved, between the living and the dead.

The apostle Paul said that by the cross "he had been crucified to the world and the world had been crucified to him."

The word of God emphatically declares that the age is evil, and that "the whole world lieth in the wicked one," and that its ways, motives, purposes, ideas, imaginations are all the opposite of God's and that it is utterly incapacitated from either receiving the revelation of the divine mind, growing of itself into the divine image, enjoying and appreciating real fellowship with God, or being entrusted with the privilege of co-operation with God.

These are alone the consciousness, capacities, relationships of the newly-born or regenerated soul. It is this verdict, condemnation, and demand of the cross which is unacceptable and irritating to a very great number of even professing Christians. Further, it is the presence of much that is called "worldliness" both in the individual Christian life and in the Church which absolutely neutralises their effectiveness in the realisation of the essential purposes of the cross.

(2) *The cross condemns the flesh.*

By it the word of God declares that "our old man has been crucified with Christ." "One died for all therefore all died in Him, that they which live should henceforth live no longer unto themselves but unto Him." We have tried t

bring some of the old creation life into the new creation and God won't have it. The history of the fallen race was concluded so far as God was concerned at Calvary. From that time onward, God's entire concern was the new creation, but alike our human capabilities as our infirmities, what we call our better human side, as our worse, our goodness and our badness have been included in that death. Henceforth we are called to live not on a human level but on a divine. Humanly we possess nothing which is acceptable to God. It is always the assertion of some human element, some like or dislike, some fad or fancy, some ambition, some personal interest, which paralyzes the real spiritual work of God. To regard not only our sins but ourselves as having been taken to the cross by Christ is the only way by which the purposes of God can be wrought out through our lives. It is strange that while we ourselves are the bane of our own existence, the trouble of our own lives, we are so slow to accept our crucifixion with Christ, to have the cross wrought out to our death in order that the life of Christ might be made manifest in us. Herein lies the offence of the cross, not only for the worldling but also for the Christian.

(3) *The cross casts out the devil.*

Here we touch, perhaps, the deepest cause of the offence, for the world and the flesh are only the instruments and weapons by which the great hierarchy of Satan maintains its hold and its existence as the controlling force. Christ said, as He approached the cross, "now is the prince of this world cast out," Paul reflecting upon that cross said that by it "Christ stripped off principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, and triumphed over them." It is perfectly natural, then, that the great hierarchy should by every means and resource seek to make the cross of none effect. By the "pale cast of thought" it will dilute the message of the cross; by pushing in the world's methods, its means, its spirit, it will tap the spiritual vitality of the church; by stirring up the flesh, the self and the old Adam, it will cause schism, strain and disintegration; or by making much of the human element in its artistic, æsthetic, heroic, humanitarian side, it will blind to the need of regeneration. Reputation,

(Continued on page 28.)

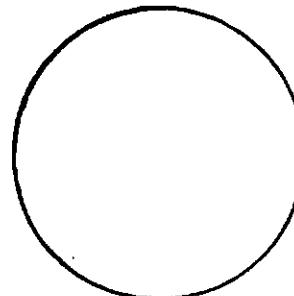
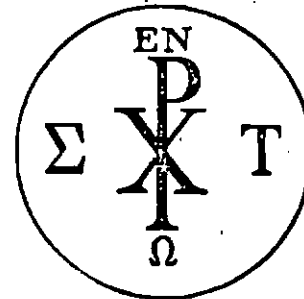
A Message on your Garment

SOMETIMES it is useful as a means of drawing enquiry and gaining an opening for the Gospel to wear on the garment a badge; not necessarily one which represents a society, a movement or institution, but one which is purely the

embodiment of a message or testimony. Such is the early Christian monogram which we here describe and explain and which we have had made into brooches and coat studs. The badge is executed in gold characters upon a blue enamel ground. Thus adding to the symbolism the gold of Divine nature and the heavenlies (blue) of the believer's birth, life, position, resource, and eternal home.

The badge costs one shilling and sixpence, plus postage, and a copy of the printed explanation is enclosed with each.

The "In Christ" (Enchrsto) Monogram.



The circle is:
 (a) The sphere of Christ.
 (b) An ancient symbol for eternity; without beginning or end.

<i>Greek.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Pronounced</i>	
Εν	= In	On	} In Christ
Χ	= Ch	K	
Ρ	= R	R	
Ι	= I	Ē	} <i>Greek pronunciation</i>
Σ	= S	S	
Τ	= T	T	} Onkreesto.
Ω	= O	O	

The Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, HONOR OAK ROAD, LONDON, S.E.23.

Meetings for Spiritual Edification, the Proclamation of the Gospel, Prayer and Fellowship

SUNDAYS at 10.30 A.M. (Lord's Table), 11.15 A.M., 3 P.M. (Young People), 6.30 P.M.

MONDAYS at 7.30 P.M. TUESDAYS at 8 P.M. (Young People).

WEDNESDAYS at 8 P.M. SATURDAYS at 7.30 P.M.

The Guest House is open to receive guests for the period of the conferences or at other times as the Lord leads.

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Editorial communications with regard to this paper should be addressed to Mr. Austin-Sparks.

"Witness and Testimony"

Literature

By T. AUSTIN-SPARKS.

'The Centrality and Universality of the Cross.' Price 9d. Postage 1½d.

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4. The Cross and the New Creation.

5. The Cross and the New Man.

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NEW BOOK

The Gospel in the Farmyard

Messages for Boys and Girls.

By G. PATERSON.

(Illustrated). Price 1s. 6d

(Continued from page 13.)

you is no match for Him. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."

Ask the Lord to make this live. To know this means a wonderful lot to the life. May the Lord take us back with that in our hearts which speaks of the Lord Jesus! That is the testimony. Our eye is upon what God's eye rests upon, our heart is set upon what God's heart is upon, our hope is set upon God's hope, our assurance upon God's assurance. And it is all the Lord Jesus. T. A-S.

(Continued from page 27.)

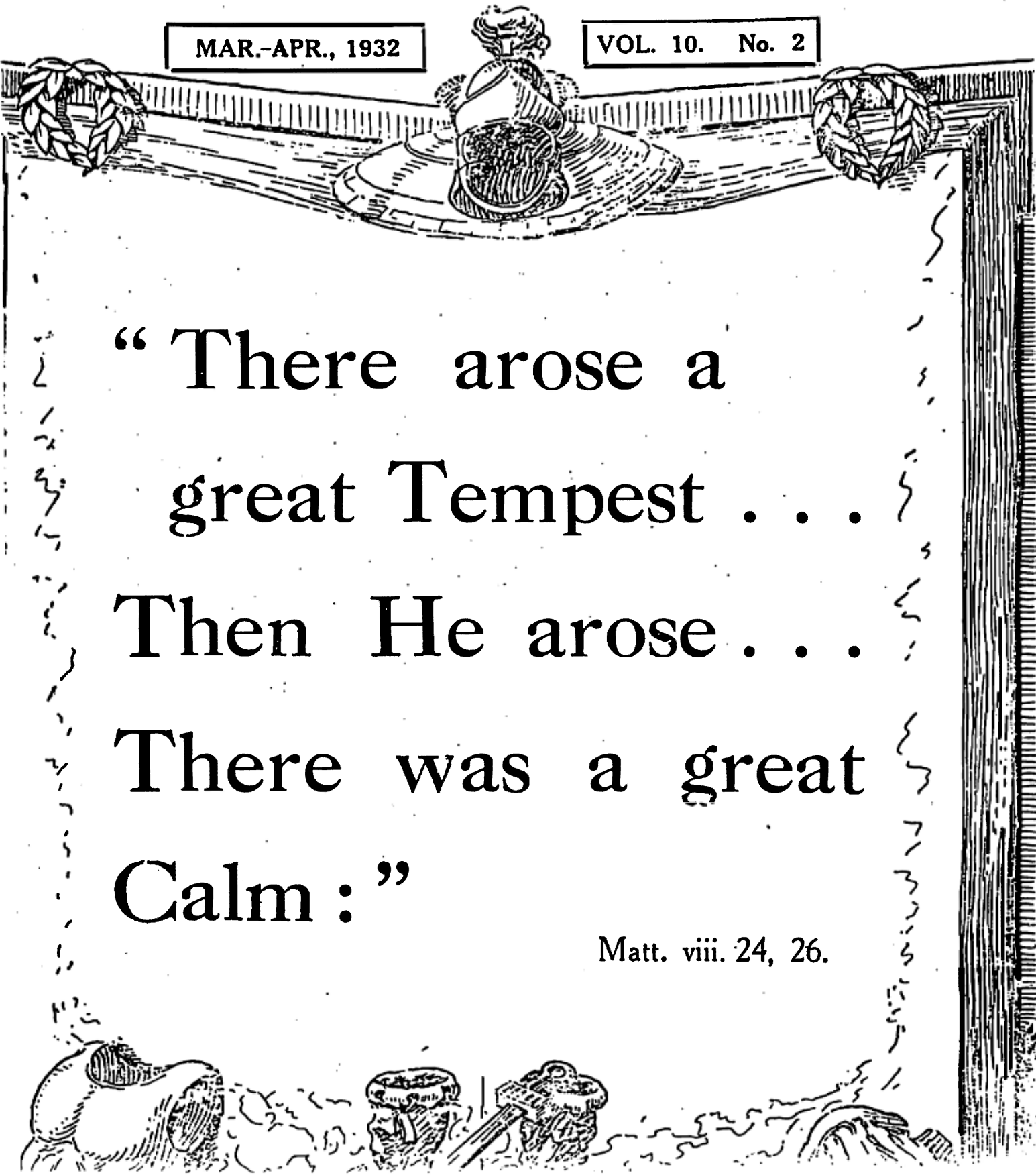
popularity, bigness, the world standard of success, are all contrary to the spirit of Christ, but they are the toys with which the enemy engrosses the minds of many, even Christian ministers. If, therefore, the cross is preached in its full victory over and emancipation from the world, the flesh, and the Devil, it is to be expected that by hook or by crook the intelligent forces of evil will leave no stone unturned to stop it, and will stir up every cause of offence to lay to the account of the cross.

In conclusion let us not forget that the enjoyment of the full life of God, the experience of victory, and the executive co-operation with Him that sitteth upon the Throne in the sure realisation of His eternal purposes are ours just in so far as we are one with the full and essential meaning of the cross as set forth in the word of God. "I have been crucified with Christ, henceforth . . . no longer I but Christ." "They overcame Him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they counted not their lives dear unto the death." T. A-S.

Witness and a Testimony

MAR.-APR., 1932

VOL. 10. No. 2



“ There arose a
great Tempest . . .
Then He arose . . .
There was a great
Calm : ”

Matt. viii. 24, 26.

“ A Witness and A Testimony ”

EDITORIAL

WE give below briefly the latest news from some of the Lord's servants who have gone forth from our midst :

Mr. and Mrs Speedy.

The letters received from our friends indicate that the same strong control by the Lord which was so evident in their outgoing from this country has continued in every detail of their movements. They were graciously prospered in their journey to Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. They went forth not knowing at all what provision the Lord had for them, and without any human guarantees to rest upon, but faith in them has been abundantly honoured by the Lord and He has graciously opened to them a little home of their own for the time being, through the loving fellowship of two of His servants from Sweden, who have been labouring for ten years in Addis-Ababa, and who have been crying to Him to send someone to strengthen their hands in the work. While maintaining an openness to the Lord for His leading of them elsewhere at any time, Mr. and Mrs. Speedy are remaining in Addis-Ababa for the present while they learn the language, and opportunities are being found for ministry by interpretation particularly amongst the native children whom the Lord has brought under the care of our Swedish friends. We commend all these dear servants of the Lord very earnestly to our readers for constant remembrance in prayer.

As a firstfruit of the ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Speedy in Ethiopia, they have been instrumental in the coming to this country of a young man, a native of Ethiopia, who is very zealous for the Lord and desires to give himself wholly to His service. This brother is now in Scotland and we solicit prayer for him, that this period of residence over here pending his return to Ethiopia may be greatly used of the Lord.

Mr. and Mrs Foster.

These friends have been continuing at their original place of abode at Palmira in Colombia, working hard at the language and ministering as opportunity has been found. They have now felt a definite leading of the Lord to move on to Quidbo, a town in the Choco region, and they

expect to be setting forth about the end of April. They ask especial prayer for the little group of Christians in Palmira, with whom they have been in touch, and particularly for the young men in training for the Lord's work. The Choco region is practically untouched by the Gospel and our friends will need the Lord's hand to be much with them both in their journey overland and on arrival. Please pray that they may enter into a place prepared for them by Him.

Miss Sinclair.

Our sister in Spain is still giving herself diligently to the study of the language and is using such opportunities as are offered by tract distribution, etc., for ministering directly to the people. Her heart is much burdened concerning the need in the land, and she greatly longs to be able to minister more effectively. There is a widely opened door for the Gospel in Spain at the present time, despite very much of conflict and stress, and those who are able to proclaim the Word are finding these to be days of unique opportunity for open air preaching. Let us uphold all the Lord's servants who are there and pray for the thrusting in of others as He sees fit.

Lady Ogle and Miss Gerster.

Our two sisters left us at the end of February under the consciousness of a divine call to Egypt, where both of them had formerly served the Lord. They have been occupied constantly since their arrival, in fellowship with others of the Lord's servants there, in relation to a special evangelistic campaign, and their letters indicate that a most intense spiritual conflict is in progress. The forces of darkness that lie behind Islam are contesting bitterly the challenging message of those who come in the Name of the Divine Son, Whose right alone it is to reign. This is a day in Egypt, as elsewhere, when the Lord's people need to know the weapons of their warfare, which are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. We learn that physical violence, as well as official hindrance, is being encountered as the ministry is carried forward and those who are engaged in the work have need of continual prayer for their protection. The authorities have now imposed what look like severe limitations upon the scope of the work that may be done, but we trust that this may prove to be only a narrowing that leads to greater depth and effectiveness. Let us pray much that the Lord may answer in His Own way the long standing

challenge of Islam and in the spiritual realm register such an impact that the forces of the enemy shall be compelled to recognise that Jesus Christ is Lord. This is the testimony to which the Holy Ghost ever gives His fullest witness.

Please seek guidance for our two sisters who expect to leave Egypt in the near future, that they may know what further ministry the Lord has for them before their return to this country.

Mr. and Mrs. Brignall.

In our last issue we reported the marriage of these friends. We are happy to say that the Lord has quickly thrust them out into ministry, and they are living for the time being in Newcastle, where a sphere of service both in and around the city is open to them.

Mr. and Mrs. Norman.

Our brother and sister left us at the end of February for Malvern, Worcestershire, where they are now residing. They believe that the Lord has called them there, and are quietly going on with Him, gathering in their house such as the Lord sends them. There are already indications of enemy activity directed towards the closing down of the ministry in the home, and our friends will value the prayerful co-operation of all that they, like Nehemiah, may be strengthened to continue in the work of the Lord and that the enemy shall be frustrated in all his devices against them.

Mr. and Mrs. Justin.

On Saturday March 19 we witnessed the marriage of our brother Herbert Justin and our sister, Mary Terdre. Our brother has been very much used of God in ministries amongst us and out from our midst, and our sister has been fellowshipping with us for some time. We have found true joy of heart in their union in the Lord, and believe that in His purpose they will mean much to the Lord's people as they go forth together in ministry. We very earnestly ask prayer for them especially at the present time as they are holding before the Lord the matter of their life work and the direction in which He would have them to move out.

It will save time if all *editorial* communications are addressed to—Mr. Austin-Sparks at

Christian Fellowship and Conference Centre,
Kilcreggan,
Dumbartonshire, N.B.

FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS

(D.V.)

Newcastle-on-Tyne

Friday, April 29.—Hood Street Institute, at
3 and 7.30 P.M.

Friday, May 27.—Do. do.

Kilcreggan (Dumbartonshire N.B.)

May 21-24. Aug. 5-12.

June 18-25 Sept. 3-10.

July 16-23.

Honor Oak

Whitsun, May 14-16.

July 30-Aug. 1.

"Slavanka" Southbourne

July 2-9.

Edinburgh (Tuesday May 10)

Gartshore Hall, George Street, 3 and 8 P.M.

We advise early application for accommodation.
at the HOLIDAY CONFERENCES.

Christ the Power of God

Reading ; Matthew xxvii. 38 - 50, 54 ;
1 Corinthians i. 24 ; 1 Corinthians ii. 2.

"But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

If I were asked, beloved, what, so far as I am concerned in the Lord speaking to me, is the theme of this conference, I should say that those two passages represent it. One, "Christ the power of God," the other immediately linked with it, and largely the explanation of it, Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

This morning we shall be occupied, I think, for a little while mainly with opening the way to a consideration of Him thus, "Christ the power of God," "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Two Kinds of Christians.

There are two kinds of Christian life which seem to me to very largely divide the Lord's people into two kinds of Christians. One, perhaps the more common, is that of an almost continuous struggle to live up to something which has been objectively presented, objectively seen. It is Christianity as a system, as a kind of life, as composed of a great many rules, laws and regulations ; things which ought to be, and ought not to be : something as apart from the individual, called The Christian Life, and the individual has seen that, had that presented and in a way apprehended it, and then from that time there has commenced and developed a great effort, endeavour, struggle to live up to it ; to carry it out objectively. It is christian endeavour—it is a striving, a putting forth of effort to attain unto a conceived level of life which would be the christian life. Very largely it is a matter of conscience ; very largely, therefore, it is a matter of fear, and therefore it is not always a matter of joy. It is a strenuous business, fraught with much disappointment and much failure. It is rather an existence than a life, characterised by up and down experiences. There may be from time to time a sense of having succeeded, and feeling very

pleased and very happy, very joyful, very glad, but then by all the strange changes of our soul life we do not always feel just like that, feelings change, conditions change, there are failures, there are collapses, there are mistakes, and we come down, and come down badly. Then a fresh effort has to be put forth to get up and to go on a bit more. And so that kind of Christian life is a somewhat burdensome one ; and we find so many of the Lord's children in that realm, just longing to know something about real victory, something about real overcoming, something about the abiding joy of the Lord, deliverance from the strenuousness of being Christians. Do you understand what I mean ? It is the experience of a very great many. The struggle life, the up and down life, and for the most part, the sense that this Christian life which is presented in the New Testament is something different from that which is experienced by these children of God, and either they have misapprehended the whole thing, or else the thing does not really work. And the enemy is never slow to pounce in upon such and harrass them and tell them Christianity is not a success, the Christian life is not what it is presented to be. Well, that is one kind ; we are all too familiar with it. It is the Christian life which is according to something objectively presented and accepted. But there is another kind and that is, the entering into something already completed in Christ. Not something to be attained unto, but something already accomplished ; not something at all to be lived up to, but Someone to be lived *with*. The vast difference between those two things in the outworking can hardly be measured. It is "Christ, the power of God." Now when we have said that, we have opened the way to see just what the Lord Jesus is, and we can never get outside of that and we never want to. But it is very important, beloved, that we should see exactly what that means.

The Peril in "Advanced Teaching."

Now there is no such thing as teaching which is an advanced system *as such*. Teaching is not departmental or sectional. What I mean is this. You hear of people talking about truth which has to do with the "more advanced

stages of Christian life," as though it were something in a water-tight compartment by itself, sectionalised, and, well, you can accept it or you can leave it; "that line of things," that particular teaching, regarded as something extra, something different, something that is more than the normal Christian life, something by itself, and you take it or you reject it, and it does not matter very much. If you are going to live the "higher life" then you must have the "higher teaching," but if you are not going in for that sort of thing well you just remain, as you say, "simple Christians" and believers and abide by the simplicities of the Gospel of Christ, and it does not matter very much, it is just a matter of your interest in teaching, and in truth. Now I want very emphatically, as the Lord enables, to undermine and undercut all such notions, because there is no such thing as "advanced teaching" as a separate system. There is no such thing! It does not matter with what you deal in the New Testament, you will never find it as a thing by itself, departmentalised, sectionalised, in a water-tight compartment, to be taken or left at your own will. Never! Never can you come to the New Testament in that way!

We have spoken much of the "Overcomer" for instance. The Overcomer of the book of the Revelation and the Overcomer company coming at length to the throne. Now it is quite easy to begin to take that as advanced teaching, as something which is for certain people and not for others. That is for some who care to go in for it; that need not be for all, and it is quite optional after all whether you do go in for it. Now what is the Overcomer individually, and collectively? The Overcomer of the Book of the Revelation is only the ripe and full product of the work of Christ in His Cross; it is only Christ in His fuller manifestation and expression. The Overcomer is still a matter of Christ the power of God. Just exactly as in salvation at its commencement, so in full triumph at its consummation. The most advanced point is vitally connected with the most elementary point. We are constantly brought back from the ultimate to the initial in the Word of God. You get to Revelation and you get to the throne, and you get to the triumphant Overcomer company, but even there you are immediately linked with the blood of the Lamb, and the Lamb slain, and that is initial and fundamental, basic. The two things, the end and the beginning are brought to-

gether, they are not separated, and you cannot take "Overcomer" teaching and departmentalise it and make a system of it and say that it is an advanced teaching for certain believers. No, beloved, it is the normal outcome of your initial faith in Christ. It is to be what God intended Calvary to be for *every* believer. It is simply the realisation of God's thought in forgiving us our sins right at the beginning. It is only the development, the normal development according to God's mind, of the elementary things of our salvation, and there is a very great peril in becoming taken up with, and fascinated by, advanced teaching, as though it were something in itself. A very great peril, for this reason, that very often that fascination causes an overlooking of the *steps* of advance. It is something out there, objectively, and people get into it with their heads mentally and take it up and are fascinated by it, and are always talking about it, but they have not advanced progressively into it in experience and spiritual development, and there is a failure to recognise that you cannot get to anything *only* by definite steps of spiritual advance, and those steps are always in relation to the Cross of Christ, for there is not one step forward in the spiritual life which is not first a step backward.

What I mean is this, that there has to be some undoing before there can be some up-doing; there has got to be some application of the Cross in some fuller way before we can go one step further; and all advance into the fuller things is by reason of the cross being progressively applied and wrought to release us from that which holds us back: that in the flesh which holds us back from that which is in the Spirit. So then we cannot come to anything by a mental process, and there is that peril of fascination with advanced things which overlooks the steps of advance to the higher, or deeper things of the Lord. That is the peril; and we can never reach the higher, or the ultimate, unless the beginnings are properly wrought in us, and in this sense we never do depart from the beginnings. It is a point which has often been noted, but which we do well never to forget, that when Israel went over Jordan, (a type of the Lord's people coming through identification union with Christ in death and burial and resurrection, and coming on to Ephesian and Colossian ground, that is the heavenlies) the base of all their operations from that moment was Gilgal, and they never

went out to battle, to an undertaking, to possess any fresh territory, but what they came back to their base immediately after, and moved back from their base again for the next bit of conquest. Gilgal is the place of the Cross, the cutting away, the circumcision of the flesh, and beloved, every bit of advance into new spiritual territory, apprehension, inheritance, is on the ground of coming back to a recognition of that fact; that is, we never move from our base finally, that the beginnings of our faith, the first ground which is the Cross of our Lord Jesus, governs every bit of progress. So, as we have just said, that when you get to the end, the consummation, and the Overcomer company in the throne, and the great cry from heaven, "Rejoice O heavens," the end of God-realised in that company, it is still in relation to the blood of the Lamb, still in relation to the Lamb slain, never have you got away from that, not for an instant.

Not "Teaching," but a Person.

Now then, that being true we must recognise that everything is bound up with the Person and must never be regarded as just truth. That is the thing. We must never look at things as truth, doctrine, teaching as such. Everything is bound up with the Person. It is Christ the power of God. It is Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The Person, though in the glory, though exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, though having ascended far above all principality and power, though now in the power of His mighty resurrection, the Person is still Christ as crucified. And beloved, you and I will advance spiritually just in the measure in which that is a practical reality in our hearts, in our lives, every day that we live. It is still a Person and the Person is still Christ crucified, in all the virtue of that. That has yet to be more fully explained, of course. The Person is Christ crucified, that is, Christ in relation to His cross. Now what is the Gospel then? Well, Paul tells us what the Gospel was, and is, so far as he was concerned. You look over at the Galatian letter, chapter one, verse eleven. "For I make known to you brethren as touching the Gospel which was preached by me"—now you notice what he is saying—"As touching the Gospel which was preached by me, I make known to you brethren, that it is not after man, for neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." Go back over that again.

"Brethren, the Gospel which was preached by me was by revelation of Jesus Christ," verse 15, "When it was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." You see the two things, the one note. "The Gospel which was preached by me was by revelation of Jesus Christ." "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him."

What is the Gospel?

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is Christ crucified, as revealed in the heart. The Gospel is not only attesting objective facts, even the fact of Christ crucified, but what constitutes, creates the Gospel is, that that which was true in the Lord Jesus, has been revealed by God in the heart. We are not constituted Gospel Preachers because we have read somewhere that Christ was crucified, raised from the dead and ascended, and all those historic facts, but because God has revealed in us, not facts but a Person in relation to the facts, and the facts in relation to the Person. There has come to our hearts by revelation of the Spirit of God Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and that has constituted us preachers, that has constituted the Gospel. There is no Gospel apart from that. Now you see how that brings us back to our initial position. It means this, that a struggling to reach, to attain, unto something conceived as Christianity, is a failure to see Christ. Christ has not been seen, He has not been revealed. Immediately the Holy Spirit reveals the Lord Jesus in us, we have come into the place where the work is done, and what we are doing now is to live out from a perfected position, instead of striving to reach a perfected position.

Now that wants making a little clearer. What happens is this. The Holy Spirit brings Christ in His completed work into our hearts, and then proceeds to conform us to Him as we co-operate and go on. Do we realise that if Christ is in us, He is not an imperfect Christ? He is not only the Christ Who has dealt with our sins. He has covered the whole ground of our perfection in the work of His cross. When the Lord Jesus wrought His Calvary work, beloved, He not only dealt with the matter of forgiveness or remission of sins, so that when we come to the Cross that is all we get; the Lord Jesus went right on by His Cross, right on to the perfection of redemption until He reached the throne of the absolute Overcomer. He swept the whole ground, everything and anything that ever believers

will encounter in the course of their Christian experience as an obstruction, resistance, difficulty, as a temptation, as something intended and calculated to hinder them reaching God's end—He met it all. There is no experience that can ever come to you or to me in the course of our Christian life which creates difficulty in our reaching God's end, but what Christ has already met that. In Him, the Person, from the remission of sins to the absolute victory over the dragon and all his hosts, in Him, the Person, the whole ground is covered, is finished, is completed. It is not something we have to struggle on to, it is done. Now the Holy Spirit brings that Christ into our hearts with all that He contains in His Person by reason of His Cross, and then, being brought into vital union with Christ indwelling the next thing is the Holy Spirit proceeds, as we let Him, co-operate with Him, as we consent and as we go on, He proceeds to conform us to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and to bring us into the fulness of Christ. So that overcoming is not something to be struggled unto, it is something to be wrought in us as we consent to the work of the Cross. You see the difference. Oh, such a difference! "Christ in you the hope of glory," and some people seem to think that their struggle is the hope of glory. It works out as the despair of glory. They have soon come to discover that there is not much hope of glory left along that line! So then the Christian life, according to God's thought, is Christ having His way in us and we going on in living fellowship with Him. There are enough tests in that because it is there that Christ and Him crucified is applied.

Now we are going to see what that means perhaps during this conference time. Just let us mention it now in an initial way. Going on with the Lord is the application of Christ crucified. It is the daily "bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus may be manifest." The dying of the Lord Jesus; and one very important aspect of the dying of the Lord Jesus was a dying to everything but the will of God. He took up that dying at Jordan, when the tempter came and tried to get Him to act in His own spiritual interests, in the interests of His great life work, but to act out of harmony with the will of God, and He died every time to everything but the will of God. That is Christ crucified, beloved, and that is in the dying of the Lord Jesus. There is enough room you see, in going on with

the Lord for testing, for trying, and that is what makes the thing so real. It is progress by death. It is life out of death. It is gain out of loss. But blessed be God—and we must keep our eyes on this—that Christ is there with the whole fulness, as it were, in His hand, and as we go on "of His fulness we receive, grace upon grace." So that what we have first of all to see, and I feel the Lord wants us to see at this time perhaps more than we have ever seen, with spiritual eyes, not mental eyes, is the meaning of Christ's death. Please do not say, O we know all about that. we have heard so much about that. You have not heard more about it than I have, at least I do not think you have. and yet if there is one thing that is more real to me to-day than ever it is the conscious need of knowing more of the meaning of the death of Christ. Oh, may the Lord open that to us in these days. Just-hints of what is in the death of Christ are sufficient to make us, if they are living hints, desire to look into this thing afresh. Beloved, there is something in the death of Christ that you and I have never seen, and my heart is just reaching out to get that at which the Lord has hinted, and I am praying that it may come through us livingly in this conference.

I do not know that I am going to say much more this morning. We can advance from that point as the Lord leads in other gatherings. But I would like to close on this positive note now. To remind you that the Holy Spirit has been charged with, and has accepted the full responsibility for all this. That is. His work is to reveal Christ in us and to produce Christ in us. Now that, on the one hand, is a blessed thing for our hearts. After we have received the Holy Spirit as One whose mission, Whose responsibility is to reveal and reproduce Christ in the believer, if that is not done, the Holy Spirit's work is not done. And the only reason why it will not be done is found in our own attitude towards Christ. The Holy Spirit will never fail in Himself because He cannot in Himself do the thing for lack of resource, lack of power, lack of ability, lack of patience and persistence, and all that is needed to do this. He will never fail on His own side; if He fails the cause of the failure will be with us, because we do not let Him, we do not co-operate. But we may rest assured that if the Lord, the Spirit has His way He will make everyone of us (not a little select company sitting in the throne)—Overcomers. That is for you, sim-

plest believer in the Lord Jesus, you who delight and glory in the great initial fact that you are saved from sin and hell and judgment. The Lord in that saving of you has bound up His throne, if you will let Him work it out. Of course, while this fact of the Holy Spirit's mission and work is a great and blessed thing to bank upon, it is a test also on the other hand. It is a test as to whether the Holy Spirit is having His way. It may be a test as to whether we have received the Holy Spirit. At least it is a test for believers as to whether He is having His way.

That is, are you living the up and down life, the struggle life? There is something all wrong with that. That is not the life of the Holy Spirit. That is not the life of the indwelling reigning Lord Jesus. So we must recognise this, that power in relation to the Holy Spirit is not some thing to be sought, to be had as an abstract force. It is related to the Person of Christ, especially in connection with His cross. When we speak about the Holy Spirit we usually get ideas of power, and when we are talking about power we usually think of the Holy Spirit, but so often in effect the thought of the Holy Spirit is without the article, it is "Holy Spirit" in a kind of power, element, force, some thing that comes and takes you up and does extraordinary things and effects certain issues, it is the working just of an element, a mighty element. That is foreign to the New Testament. Power in connection with the Holy Spirit is inseparably bound up with the Person of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and the Holy Spirit working as power only does so by revealing Christ and Him crucified. That has always been so, in New Testament times and ever since. The power of the Holy Spirit was manifested in the revelation of Jesus Christ

and Him crucified, so that Christ was the power of God, and Christ is the power of God. Now then beloved, what we need to see is the need for the Holy Spirit to make each part of Christ crucified real in us. And that must be daily. Each part—that is how I put it to simplify it—there are many parts of Christ crucified. There is the death of course, there is the resurrection, there is the exaltation; and the Holy Spirit has got to make the spiritual meaning of each one of these parts of Christ crucified real in us, but we have to recognise the need for the Holy Spirit to do it, and we have to come to the place where we count on the Holy Spirit to do it, where we definitely have an understanding with the Holy Spirit, that now it is understood that You make all the meaning of Christ's death real in me, and all that is implied and involved in His resurrection and ascension, real in me.

And so now the way is open for us to go forward to see something more of what is in the death of Christ, in the resurrection of Christ, in the exaltation, in the enthronement. But these are only different parts of the one Person and one work, Christ and His cross. Beloved, I want this thing to be gathered up in one practical word that you can grasp, and I want to say this as the closing sentence. That everything for a life of fulness, of victory is bound up with the fact that this Christ Who has accomplished and perfected all is in our hearts and is having His full way and full sway in our hearts, and that is very different from struggling to live the Christian life. It is the Christian life being lived by Christ, through the Spirit, in us as we obey, comply, co-operate, actively and not merely passively.

T. A.S.

(To be continued).

Is there a present crisis in the life and work of the people of God? Is the Lord holding His hand in the matter of blessing and power adequate to the need of the hour? Are the methods of years gone by succeeding now as then? Is there not a growing sense that something more than ever before is absolutely necessary for the present situation? Is there not a tremendously reinforced resistance on the part of the powers of darkness? If these things are true, shall we not recognise that in this way the Lord is calling His people on to higher ground?

For Boys and Girls

The Gospel on the Railway (No. 3)

“In Christ.....a new creation: the old things are passed away. Behold, they are become new. But all things are of God.....”—II. Cor. v., 17 (R.V.).

A Wonderful ‘New Creation.’

SOME time ago I was taken by some young railway enthusiasts to Paddington Station to watch the departure of the “Cornish Riviera” Express. There at the front of the train was the great engine—one of the “King” type, the biggest engine I think I had ever seen. It was waiting, with steam up, looking so mighty—as if there were nothing too hard for it to accomplish once it was allowed to start. The train itself was a very long one, made up of the latest type of coaches and Pullmans, and with all the comforts that we are familiar with on our modern railways. Why, even the third class passengers looked as comfortable as could be. If they wanted extra warmth in the carriage they had only to turn on the heater, and the cold would be quickly overcome. If they needed more or less air they had only to open or shut the windows or the ventilator. If hungry or thirsty they had but to ring a bell and the dining car attendant would be at their side in a moment, to bring them what they required: or they could go along to the dining car and sit in comfort and eat a four course lunch, with coffee to follow! If tired, they could settle snugly into the corner seat and doze; and if weary of sitting they could go for a stroll up and down the corridor. When travelling in the dark, at night time or through a tunnel, they had but to switch on the electric light; and if the sun shone too brightly in at the window they could have instant shelter by pulling down the blind. In fact, whatever the conditions might be, the passengers in that wonderful train could have every need supplied. And the most important fact of all was that the great engine at the head of the train would get them to their destination at express rate—225 miles to Plymouth non-stop in only four hours! That was something like a train! No wonder the engine looked so proud of itself.

A Dreadful ‘Old Creation.’

As we stood waiting for the train to start we looked across to some of the other lines, and

saw a little tank engine pushing a single truck along, and on the truck a very unusual load—an old-fashioned stage coach. (You know, of course, that before the days of railway trains people used to travel on the roads by stage-coaches drawn by horses). As we left the station later on we passed close to the coach, and were able to examine it. We found from the label on it that it was being sent to someone at Windsor—and we wondered whatever the owner would do with it when he received it. He did not want to ride in it, anyhow! You never saw such an uninviting vehicle! The very thought of travelling from London to Plymouth on *that* made us shudder. Not a trace of comfort anywhere. All the seats were of wood, with no cushions. The inside was so small that not more than four or five persons could have got into it—and I cannot think where they would have put their legs! Then there were seats outside as well—just hard benches with a wooden rail behind, which would have hit you in the middle of the back every time the coach bumped. Just imagine sitting there all day, especially on a cold or rainy one. No warmth, no protection, no comfort, no chance of resting, no opportunity of obtaining provisions just when you wanted them, no freedom except when the coach stopped and you could get out. Why, the coach would be almost like a prison and there would only be peace and rest outside of it. What misery to ride in that on a dark night, with no light to cheer you! And then think of the rate of progress, as compared with the train—only horses to pull you, and no doubt some stiff hills to climb.

A Welcome Exchange.

As I looked at the stage coach I comforted myself that that was a part of the old order of things which had passed away, and that I lived in a day when things had become new. I was quite sure that if I had been travelling in a stage coach, bumping along badly made roads, enduring all the trials and discomforts that must have attended even the best of coaches, and some one had invited me to step from the coach into a modern express train, I should not have hesitated a moment—would you? What a

grand exchange to make—light for darkness, liberty for confinement, rest for weariness, ease for discomfort, smooth and swift progress for hard and slow going!

Do you want to Transfer?

And now I am going to invite you actually to make that exchange. The poor old stage coach in which every one of us commenced our journey through life is called SELF—and a very dreadful old coach it is. Have you yet found how hard it is to make satisfactory progress heavenward in that “old creation”? It is so sinful—always breaking down, always failing to do and be what it ought, always getting you into difficulties and never able to supply your needs fully. But there is a “new-creation” express to which you may transfer, and it has on its name boards “IN CHRIST,” and the One Who is at its head, from Whom all the energy comes and from Whom all the rest derives its life and light and comfort is the Lord Jesus Christ. SELF will never give you a heart at rest, or bring you to the end for which God created you, for the Bible says (Romans viii. 8) “they that are in the FLESH cannot please God”—and FLESH is the Bible name for SELF. But in CHRIST you will find every need supplied. Your heart will be utterly satisfied and God will begin to find His pleasure in you.

I am afraid it is of no use your saying that in your case SELF is a very agreeable and capable one and that you do not want anything better. God's Word tells us that in our FLESH (that is, in our SELF life) dwells no good thing (Romans vii. 18) and that “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Isaiah lxiv. 6). So that all of us in ourselves are in the same unhappy position—we are all in the “old creation” stage coach, and God cannot receive us because of our sinful state. But listen—by His death upon the Cross, our Lord Jesus put away out of God's sight the old sinful SELF nature, bearing Himself the judgment due to us: and from that moment God ceased to have anything to do with the “old creation.” Then by His resurrection the Lord Jesus became the head of a “new creation”—not spoiled by sin this time—and all who will believe into Him may share with Him the joy and blessing and power of His Own wonderful resurrection life. Would it not be glorious to exchange your own sinful life, with all its failures and shortcomings, for His holy life? And you may!

How it is Done.

The way is so simple. If with all your heart

you want Him, and desire to share in the blessing of being IN CHRIST, give yourself entirely over to Him and ask Him to bring to an end the reign of SELF in you, so that it may be no longer *you* that live but Christ that lives in you. No more your own choice in anything, but as Saul of Tarsus said—“Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?” (Acts ix. 6). Thus will the “I” be ruled out, and Jesus Christ take its place in your life, and then I can promise you you will know what blessing is: the old things will pass away and all will become new.

And how your progress in life will improve when you thus transfer to the express! In every department of your life there will be a wonderful difference as you exchange your own poor resources for His: best of all, God's satisfaction in you and your fulfilment of the purpose for which He created you will then, and only then, begin to be realised. Oh it is a glorious escape to come out of what *you* are into what the Lord Jesus is! And not only glorious, but so very urgent and necessary, for only IN CHRIST is there salvation, and all that are not in Him will one day realise that they have suffered terrible loss which can never, never be retrieved: and we never know how soon our opportunity for choosing may pass.

Take your seats in the Express!

Now, before we part—are *you* travelling through life in the stage coach or the express? Is SELF ruling you or are you IN CHRIST, living in everything for Him and drawing upon His riches every moment? If you are in any doubt about the answer will you settle it now and with all your heart say to Him:

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus I come, Jesus I come!
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee!
Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my want and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin, and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee!

(Chapters vi, vii, and viii of the letter to the Romans are interesting ones for you to read now. Chapter vii shows you a man in the stage coach, one of the others (which?) shows a man in the express and the remaining one tells you how to transfer from the one vehicle to the other).

G. P.

The Blood of Jesus and Resurrection Life

Continued.

(3) The Sanctification of the Spirit.

That the Blood is mighty is thus established beyond dispute. How could it be otherwise seeing it is the Blood of Jesus. The purpose of God in His electing grace is to bring us to the knowledge of the power of that Blood, as it is sprinkled upon us. But we can only arrive at this blessed goal "through sanctification of the Spirit," i.e., the sanctifying work of the Spirit. The power of the Blood has to be known experimentally, and for this sanctification is a necessity.

It is important that the threefold doctrine of sanctification, as unfolded in the Word of Truth, should be intelligently apprehended, in order that we might yield ourselves to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit of God.

There are two original words used which bear on the subject, *Hagiozo* and *Hagios*. *Hagiozo* occurs 29 times and is thus translated:—"sanctify" (26 times), "hallow" (twice), "be holy" (once). *Hagios* occurs 236 times and is translated: "holy" (161 times), "saint" (62 times), "sanctuary" (3 times) and by several other words incorporating the idea of holiness. Both original words mean simply, "to set apart or separate" and this is the main thought in sanctification: to be separated unto God. Sanctification is depicted first as a position into which *all* believers are brought in Christ Jesus; secondly as a process which, in experience, may be either rapid or gradual; thirdly, as a consummation, depending for its realisation on the believer continuing in the faith.

The first point is basic and of supreme importance. All believers are sanctified (*Hagiozo*) in Christ Jesus, called saints (*Hagios*) (1 Cor. i. 2), i.e., "saints by calling"; they are holy (*hagios*) brethren (Heb. iii. 1). Into this position they are brought, in the will of God, by the once for all offering of the body of Jesus Christ (Heb. x. 10): and our blessed Lord is Himself made unto us sanctification (1 Cor. i. 30). This is part of our inheritance in Christ. Sanctification must not be thought of as something far on in the Christian life. In the thought of God it is something we enter into as and when we believe into Christ. The Scriptures know nothing of worldly Christians. They

are a complete anomaly. All "in Christ" are set apart to God, holy, partakers of the heavenly calling.

That which is true "in Christ" positionally has to be made good in experience, hence sanctification is also a process. The Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier as He makes the Cross of our Lord Jesus a reality in the life of the believer, so "that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Peter ii. 24). Thus it was that the Lord Jesus prayed for His disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth" (John xvii. 17). It is as the truth is applied to heart and life that the believer becomes sanctified, or actually, "set apart" unto God in a life that possesses all the elements of positive holiness. Self is progressively yielded to death, self-seeking renounced, self interest forsworn and the Holy Spirit forms Christ in the believer. "We all, with open face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

It is also a process leading to a consummation. "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 v. 23). He will do the work and assuredly bring us to the desired end: but we, on our part, must maintain an attitude of positive and appropriating faith. "Having made peace by the Blood of His Cross, He has reconciled us, in the Body of His Flesh, through death, to present us holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight, if we continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel" (Col. i. 22-3).

God's gracious purpose in our election will therefore be achieved as we submit ourselves to, and co-operate with, the Holy Spirit in His blessed inward work of progressive sanctification. So, and only so, shall we come to a true spiritual knowledge of the efficacy and power of the Blood of Christ in an experience of resurrection life.

(4) The Power of His Resurrection.

We have already observed that "the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus is the eighth of those mighty things to which we have "come" as

recorded in Heb. xii, and that eight is the resurrection number. This, together with the fact that it was in virtue of the Blood of the Eternal Covenant that the Lord Jesus Himself was brought again from the dead into His resurrection life and position; also, that the sprinkling of the Blood is that to which we "come" through the sanctifying process wrought in us by the Holy Spirit in accordance with the electing grace of God, surely suggests that it is as the believer lays hold of the positive powers and virtues of the sprinkled Blood that he too enters into resurrection life as an experience. So it was that the Apostle Paul, toward the end of his wonderful life, notwithstanding his manifold experience and knowledge of Christ, as, caught up into the third heaven, he had seen and heard unutterable things, is found in the fervency of his spirit, uttering the longing cry, "That I may know HIM and the power of His resurrection." Now this is an arresting phrase. What is the POWER of His resurrection? And how can one know it? For that for which Paul prays is the knowledge resulting from experience. It is knowledge issuing from demonstration. He is not desiring a theoretical knowledge but one which works in the vicissitudes of daily life.

Dr. Handley Moul's interpretive paraphrase of Phil. iii. 10 is both illuminative and suggestive in this connection:

"In order to know Him, HIM, my Lord, with an intuition possible only to the soul which accepts Him for its all; and the power of His resurrection, as that resurrection assures His people of their justification and of their coming glory, and yet more, as He, by His lifegiving Spirit, shed forth from Him, the risen Head, lives His indissoluble life in His members."

So the resurrection assures the believer, not only of his justification ("Being now justified by His Blood" Rom. v. 9), and his future glory, but also of the presence of the indwelling Christ, Who, by the Holy Spirit lives His indissoluble life in all who are members of Him. This life is resurrection life. It is His life, poured out in the Blood shed, which, having met and defeated all that the massed forces of Hell could bring against it, is now released, and made available and efficacious in the believer in every situation into which he is brought.

We are expressly told that, if we have been planted together in the likeness of His DEATH, we shall be also in the likeness of His RESURRECTION (Rom. vi. 5). Union with Christ is

the basic truth of our faith, but, as it is apprehended, we find it wrought out in experience, progressively. Death is the first thing, not our death, but His, and ours only as in and with Him. Then the old man, crucified with Christ, is seen as buried with Him, put out of the way and kept out of the way, in the place of death for ever. Resurrection follows, and it is to the experience and power of His resurrection that God desires to bring every one of His children. Sonship in experience is only possible as resurrection is known.

The Apostle declares that Resurrection Power is "to usward who believe." He prays that the Ephesian believers might know "What is the exceeding greatness of His 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, and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavens, far above all principality, and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 19-21). Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. His resurrection was far more than the reanimation of His dead body. The Christ of the forty days was the same, yet different, from Him Whom the disciples had known for three and a half years. His glory was still veiled, yet He possessed powers which had not been manifested previously. The full glory waited for His ascension, for resurrection and ascension are closely linked. The "energy of the strength of His might" raised Christ from the dead, and set Him on the throne of glory, as universal Sovereign. And it is the power which accomplished so mighty a work which is "to usward who believe." God would lead us on from faith which is general to faith which is specific. Abraham came, at long last, to faith in "God Who quickeneth the dead" (Rom. iv. 17.) "Accounting that God was able to raise (Isaac) up, even from the dead" (Heb. xi. 19). So we need to come to a position of positive faith in the God of resurrection, in order that we may know resurrection life as a daily experience. This was Paul's ambition. "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection."

This power is associated with the Blood of Christ. It was put forth in all its mighty potency because of the value and virtue of the Blood. "The God of Peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ through (in virtue of) the Blood of the overlasting

covenant (Heb. xiii. 20). And we can only come into a positive sharing of His life in resurrection, as we know the efficacy of His Blood in dealing with all that we are by nature. To human understanding there is nothing more impossible than that we should, here and now, actually live by the very life of the risen and glorified Christ. That we are IN HIM in some mystical and incomprehensible way can be held as an item in a creed. But to realise that He could be dwelling in us—living His Own mighty life, and manifesting His grace and glory through us, needs a positive energy of faith in the power of His Blood. Only as His Blood continuously avails to cleanse from sin could He indwell by His Spirit the bodies of our humiliation and make them His temples.

But it is not only requisite that we should recognise the possibility of His indwelling because of the virtue of the Blood, it is necessary that we should exercise a living faith in the fact, and, in our walk day by day, count upon His indwelling. Faith and obedience are both required. Faith in, and surrender to, the mighty fact of "Christ IN you, the hope of glory" (Col. i 27). Christ will live His life in us in all its potency, as we exercise appropriating faith, and surrender to the experience of practical death which such a fact makes necessary.

So it was with Paul in the outworking of his ambition to know "The power of His resurrection." In the service of God, ministering in the power of the Holy Ghost, he met such experiences of pressure and death that he lived only because of Christ in him. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 10-11). He deeply realised that the treasure, i.e., "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" was lodged in a "frail vessel of clay-ware" (Way). "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed: perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. iv. 8-9). As Dr. James Denney well says of this passage "In spite of the dying, he was not dead. Perpetually in peril, he had a perpetual series of escapes; perpetually at his wits' end his way perpetually opened before him. What was the explanation of that? It was the life of Jesus manifesting itself in his body. The life

of Jesus can only mean the life which Jesus lives now at God's right hand; and these repeated escapes of the Apostle, these restorations of his courage, are manifestations of that life; they are, so to speak, a series of resurrections..... the very purpose of his sufferings and perils is to provide occasion for the manifestation of this resurrection life."

As the end of the age approaches and the coming of the Lord Jesus for His Church draws nigh, the testimony to resurrection must be established in the Lord's people. Then "death shall be swallowed up in victory," then "mortality shall be swallowed up of life." But, as always in the dealings of God with His people, He desires that that which shall be true in fulness then, should be enjoyed in measure now, and He is, therefore, seeking to get, in those who are willing to go all the way with Him, a true testimony to resurrection. "And He Who formed us with this very end in view is God, Who hath given us His Spirit as a pledge and foretaste of that bliss (2 Cor. v, 5 Weymouth).

So resurrection life in ever increasing measure will be the experience of such as, yielding themselves to God as a living sacrifice, maintained continually upon the altar, seek to enter, in a spirit of appropriating faith, into all the purpose of God for them. They will, of course, be peculiarly the target of the enemy, who is always out in the full strength of his malignant power against Christ, either personal, or as manifested in the believer. But though in the stress of warfare "our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" and if the frail character of the vessel containing the treasure becomes increasingly manifest, it will also be correspondingly manifest that "the surpassing might which accomplishes the work is God's" (2 Cor. iv. 7, Conybeare). For us it is to have "the Spirit of faith" (2 Cor. iv. 13) and though, in the words of Psalmist, "The sorrows of death compassed me and the pains of Hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.....I was brought low": we shall also know His power in a life not our own. "For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken." (Psalm cxvi).

So will there be a true testimony to Christ in the earth, and, at last, in the power of resurrection life, by the mighty energising of the Holy Spirit, such as have the testimony will finally burst the bands of death and the Lord Himself will come.

S. A.

Intercession

(Romans viii. 26, 27).

SHALL we turn to Isaiah liii. 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressor." Here is the secret of a life of intercession—you will never spell out the meaning of the word "intercession" until, like your Master, your soul is poured out. His Soul-life was pure and holy, but ours is corrupt. The soul is the seat of the self-life: the Cross of Christ is the only place for it.

If our identification with Christ in His death, Resurrection and Ascension is perfect, the ministry of intercession should be the result, "because as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17). See Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25; 1 John ii. 1.

The Finished Work of Christ—this is our praying ground. As we bear about in our body the power of Christ's Death, day by day, our selfish soul-life is poured out and Christ's Life is manifested. Death works in us, but Christ's Life is liberated by the Holy Spirit for others (2 Cor. iv. 10-12). His Life on the Throne gives expression to itself in intercession. Can His Life *in us* do otherwise?

This life of intercession is a very dependent one. See Rom. viii. 26, 27. We are shipwrecked here upon the Blessed Holy Ghost. This is the Divine side of this mighty ministry. The Holy Spirit is the great Intercessor and God the Father listens for the prayer of the Holy Spirit. In verse 26 note the intensity of His prayer—"groanings." Such a prayer-life is not child's play. Too often we simply trifle with prayer. Prayer means getting into grips with God about something, in full reliance upon the Holy Ghost in us, and as we do this He energises us and God works and accomplishes His great purposes.

God is in great straits to-day for men and women who will throw themselves into the "gaps" and the broken down Church bulwarks, "for the house of Israel to stand in the battle, in the day of the Lord" (Ezek. xiii. 5). So many of God's professing children are playing fast and loose with the world, just playing into the hands of Satan, therefore the need for

intercessors is very great, and when God does not find them judgment must go forth (Ezek. xxii. 30) and it must begin at the house of God (1 Pet. iv. 17).

God's need of Holy Ghost intercessors was never greater than it is to-day. The members of Christ's Body are separating into little circles, standing aloof from each other, and the unity of the Spirit counts for nothing with them, but God thinks so much of it. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv. 1-6). Lack of unity among believers delays our Lord's return.

God has called all His children unto this Ministry of Intercession—never to hold their peace day nor night, to take no rest, and give Him no rest (Isa. lxii. 6, 7, mar.). God means just what He says and we must require it of Him.

A life of Intercession can only be maintained as we absolutely depend on the Holy Ghost for it, but we must also have a good grip on the Word of God. True prayer and true intercession mean taking God's promises into His presence and requiring the fulfilment of them at His hand. It is for this very purpose that He has given us His precious Word. God means just what He says, but do you believe it? The Word of God is your "tool-basket." Just watch a carpenter at work, he has his favourite hammer or screw-driver. So it is with the child of God who is *constantly* visiting the Throne of Grace. For example, see the glorious promise in Matt. xviii. 19, which is our sheet anchor: in united prayer it stands out boldly and is our security. 1 John v. 14-15 is our confidence, when we know that we are praying according to the Will of God. 1 John v. 16 is our assurance when we are pleading for an unsaved soul; couple that promise with 2 Peter iii. 9, 1 Timothy ii. 4. Come with me to Isaiah xlv. 11, here we have one of the most wonderful words in Scripture, "Command ye Me," as well as "Ask Me."

Let us see what God says about Himself in regard to this ministry of Intercession. Look at Numbers xxiii. 19, this is your God and mine. He promises to do the "impossible" if we will only call upon Him (Jer. xxxiii. 3).

In 2 Tim. ii. 13, He tells us that no matter how unfaithful we may be, "He abideth faithful." He is a God that cannot lie (Titus i. 2). What more can we ask than this ?

True prayer means going into God's Presence, by the Blood-made way which Christ has prepared for us, pleading God's promises in a soul-reliance upon God's faithfulness that He will answer. God's Word is His revealed Will to us, and God has made prayer from our side the condition of His working. He says, "Call and I will answer." "Ask," "I will do."

2 Tim. ii. 13 is a blessed support to us. In the darkness when you are hemmed in on every side, the ground seems iron and the heavens brass, in the great hour of trial, when the Tempter comes to your side and would make you believe that all has failed and that you are all wrong, just fall back on this precious word "He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself," and rest there, even when you cannot pray. This is rest indeed. Your praying and trusting must balance each other.

In this blessed ministry of Intercession, Sponsorial faith plays a very important part. See Mark ii. 1-5, "When Jesus saw their faith." It means taking hold of God's promises and claiming their fulfilment for another. If you have a promise from God that covers the need of a soul, stand there and God will work, especially as we meet Him on Redemption ground. Let us remember that in approaching the unsaved we can only touch them as we stand on Redemption ground. They are redeemed but not saved. Work and pray upon Redemption ground because their salvation is His will for them (1 Tim. ii. 4). Ps. cxxxviii. 2, "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name." "He abideth faithful." "He cannot deny Himself."

God will faithfully fulfil His promises, but we must give Him opportunity to do so. Your own life and service is teeming with needs, and souls all around are waiting for deliverance: rise up out of your spiritual sloth and take hold of God for them.

Moses and Jeremiah were men who reckoned on God to work; when they prayed they expected God to fulfil His word to them, and God did, and God will honour us in the very same way when we pray and intercede, when we trust and expect from God as they did.

They even argued with God in prayer, so intent were they concerning the Glory of God and the fulfilment of His unbreakable Word.

In Numbers xiv. 13-19 we see Moses in grips with God, pleading for rebellious and stiff-necked Israel; God had previously given Moses a revelation of Himself (Exodus xxxiv. 5-7) and in the hour of Israel's peril, when God threatens to wipe them out (Num. xiv. 12) and take Moses and fulfil His promise to Abraham through Moses, "And I will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they" he will not accept it, but throws himself into the "gap" and contends with God for His own Glory, as a long-suffering and a merciful God Who cannot fail Himself, and claims the fulfilment of His Word. In verse 20 we see that Moses prevailed with God, and was mortal man ever so favoured? "And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word. But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

Jeremiah and Daniel were just such intercessors; men who believed God meant what He said and expected God to fulfil His Word (Jer. xiv. 17-22; Daniel ix). God would have us like these three men in intercession—Moses, Jeremiah and Daniel—and our advantages to-day are far greater than theirs. Read Romans viii. 26, 27. We are indwelt by the great Intercessory God, who is seeking fellowship with us in this mighty work of Intercession. Shall it be said of us that "(He) sought for a man among (us) that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before (Him)," for the Church, "but (He) found none, therefore (has He) poured out (His) indignation (Ezek. xxii. 30-31)?" "Judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. iv. 17). The Church of God to-day is in dire need of real intercessors, such as will "weep between the porch and the altar and say, Spare Thy people, Oh Lord, and give not Thy Church to reproach.....Wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?"

The Coming of our Blessed Lord is drawing near. He is calling loudly to His Church to arise and put on her Bridal Garments. Let us hasten His Coming, and the best service we can render Christ and His Church will be done at the Throne of Grace through prevailing intercession.

I. C.

The Overcomer at the End-time

Conference messages as spoken.

Reading :—Revelation xii. 1-17.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

As to these words in the 11th verse, with which we are very familiar, it will be well if again we remind ourselves that they are part of an utterance by a loud voice in heaven at a time when the heavenly hosts were watching a colossal conflict which was taking place in the lower heavens, a conflict between celestial and diabolical forces, Michael and his angels on one side, Satan and his angels on the other. The occasion of the conflict was an object, a corporate object here spoken of as a man-child, or a son ; a son, a man child, which object having been raptured to the throne precipitates this terrific battle and its issue with Satan and his angels cast out of the heavens—“no more place being found” for them there—down to the earth. Then a loud voice is heard in heaven, a great voice the revised version has it, saying “Now is come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down who accused them before our God day and night. And they (our brethren) overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore, rejoice O heavens and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea because the devil is gone down unto you having great wrath knowing that he hath but a short time.” There is very much of detail in that with which we shall not stay for the moment, but note the occasion of that utterance as well as the substance of it, for that is what is before us at this time and all that is connected therewith. Now it will be necessary for us to just look at the Book itself for a moment or two and make a very hurried survey.

We note that chapter 11 brings us to the time of the end. The seventh trumpet closes that period, that is the completeness of things, of that phase or part of the dispensation. Chapter 12 deals with the end time, but it is

very important for us to see that chapters 12-14 are a parenthesis. That is, they are not in the direct line of the narrative, they are—as the word parenthesis means—a section or clause inserted for explanation or confirmation of what has been said. The narrative is complete in itself but something is introduced in a parenthetical way to elucidate and explain certain things in it, and so chapters 12-14 inclusive are a parenthesis, an explanation of what has already been said. Recognising that, if we are able thus to see, chapter 12 corresponds with chapters 2 and 3, and the word which is the key, or the link, between chapter 12 and chapters 2 and 3, is the word “overcome.” We know how all those messages in chapters 2 and 3 come to the Overcomer, that is, they are concluded with “to him that overcometh.” The link between that section and chapter 12 is just that word, “And they overcame,” the overcomer is the key and the link. Now when in chapter 12 the man-child, the son is the group of overcomers at the time of the end. I suppose I ought to stay here to say that that may not be agreed to by some, I know quite well that it is so, and if I say it with emphasis please do not think that I want to impose upon you my own conviction or that I am trying to make you accept that interpretation. My emphasis is the strength of my own conviction, that is all. You are still to go to the Lord about this thing and get from Him this witness. To me this is a matter of unparalleled importance, and I think we may see some of the importance of this thing as we go on. Now that also is by way of parenthesis. Let me repeat as to what I feel myself, that the man-child in chapter 12 is the group of overcomers at the time of the end. I note two things ; that this man-child is referred to as “they.” Verse 5, “she was delivered of a son, a man-child,” verse 11, “and they overcame him.....” That is not a single entity, that is a corporate body. Another thing is that here the word “son” is the Greek word *teknon* which is never used in the New Testament of the Lord Jesus. It is frequently used of believers, but never once of the Lord Jesus, and it is surely a straining of

things to take this one isolated use of the word *teknon* and apply it to the Lord Jesus when nowhere else it is so used. Just make a note of that. Some of you may not, of course, see the value or force of that, others will because of a large school of interpretation that thought this man child was the Lord Jesus and that all this took place when He was born. But the context needs a good deal of wrestling with to conclude finally that that is so*

Now then, if this is so, we are able to open out into a larger realm and see the great thing which is in view here. What is the thing that occupies the central and supreme place in this revelation? It is a company associated with Christ in His throne as having overcome the great dragon, the old serpent, the devil, Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, the accuser of the brethren. That is what is here. A company in that throne position and union with the Lord Jesus the first and inclusive Overcomer. Now, beloved, that ranges the whole history of this earth or this world. It represents God's primary and ultimate thought concerning man in union with His Son, Jesus Christ. It represents God's original thought concerning His Son, and then His thought concerning those whom He chose in Christ before the world was, and His thought concerning His Son and those whom He chose in Him from eternity was that they should reign and govern and administrate this universe for and with God. That they should be linked with the throne of God in universal administration and government. That thought, that truth runs all the way through the Word of God. On that He set His Heart. Against that this other one presented in these various titles, representing the varied forms of his activities and character, set himself in one great age-long challenge and resistance. But God had had His thought, His intention, His purpose for us in Christ in relation to His throne and the overcomers are that. This company embodies the original intention of God, and are God's sphere and instrument of His success. They declare the success of God concerning His original thought, therefore "Rejoice O ye heavens and ye that dwell therein," for God has succeeded in spite of everything. You might think that speaking like that represents some great difficulty for God—not at all. If God had dealt with this whole thing in naked infinity, it would have been like a snap of the fingers to wipe out all that. But it is by Man that He has done it: by

Man, for man, and that represents a terrific conflict. Now you see what is in view. The achievement of God, the success of God in Christ, in those who are in Christ and that represented by a company, a specific company called "Overcomers."

Over against that, then, everything else is set and with that everything else is related. All that is in this book of the revelation is connected with that. Chapter 12 is the key to the whole book. Everything moves up to chapter 12 and everything else moves from chapter 12. Perhaps one ought to keep the connection between 12 13 and 14 because they are so intimately bound up with one another, but this part of chapter 12 is the pivotal point upon which everything revolves. As you go back and traverse this book you begin with Ephesus and see the first love left. "I have this against thee, thou hast left thy first love." You seek for an explanation of leaving the first love and you find the explanation is not to be found in simply the waning of an enthusiasm, but in the attempted quenching by the deluges of spiritual antagonism, the object being to close down the fire of love for God in the heart. You know that true love for the Lord does not just wane of itself, you do not just give it up and let it go; you know it is by reason of great pressure, great adversity, conflict, discouragement, wearing out tactics as well as by subtle insinuations and subterfuges and such like things. The snare of the world, deceitfulness of sin, and the awful opposition of the enemy—why? This is not merely a natural, temperamental thing. It is against that ultimate object of the Lord, the throne. You have Balaam's subterfuge leading to spiritual fornication; and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes; and that woman Jezebel, the false prophetess, and the name to live, but yet dead; mere profession, the false claims of those who say they are Jews and are not but are the synagogue of Satan. Then the lukewarmness of Laodicea.

All these things representing different ways and means by which the enemy has sought to get in to destroy the testimony. You see the lampstand is the testimony. At that time and in that place it was God's testimony in the earth, and all these things are working against the testimony to destroy it, to quench it, to blot it out, and God is appealing for a maintenance of His testimony and all these things are against the issue of that testimony as maintained, which is in the throne. And so you

find they overcame because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony. They have kept the testimony of Jesus, these Overcomers. Do you see the link between these things? And all else you find, whether it be in the nature of the persecutions through which the saints have passed, which are mentioned here, or the subterfuges, the snares, the deceptions of the serpent, or the many trials, adversities, sufferings of the Lord's children, so many that we could never catalogue them, all that we pass through as we seek to go on with the Lord and be faithful, it is all directed against this ultimate issue, the coming of this company of Overcomers to the throne. It is the explanation of what we are passing through now. The explanation of all trial on the one side, from the adversary's side; sufferings, persecutions, pain, anguish, to quench the testimony with a view to thwarting that rapture to the throne.

On the Divine side we are not protected against it because the Lord wants us to overcome, and you will never overcome unless there is something to overcome. The two sides, the Divine, sovereign side and the diabolical side to thwart this. All is related to that beloved, all is leading up to this final fury of the erect dragon waiting to swallow up this corporate company who are to bring about the issue of the ages. Does it not strike you as a thing of immense moment, that a company, we do not know how many, small or great but comparatively small we judge, a company nevertheless of the Lord's children, are going to be the Lord's occasion for the precipitating of the crises of the ages; that is, bringing about that time and that condition when and where there is no more place for Satan and his angels in the heavens. I think it is a tremendous thing to say that, "there was found no more place....." as though the heavens said "There is no more room for you here any more."

Now we do not want to get hilarious about it, it is too solemn—but that is the issue, "no more place in the heavens" and that is arrived at by this company being raptured to the throne in the face of the fury of the dragon. They are God's instruments for winding up the old régime which held for thousands of years contrary to God's original thought. Supposing this is that time, supposing that we have entered into this last phase! Only to suppose it is to explain a great deal. But, beloved, the intention of the Lord in these days

is to show us how to overcome. We have got to know how to overcome. We have got to come to see the means of overcoming, the ground of overcoming, and that is what is in view as we pursue this matter in these pages, that we shall be put in the way of understanding what overcoming is, and how to overcome. So we see that with the rapture to the throne of this man-child company a great change takes place in the heavens as well as on the earth. With this rapture the first thing that is seen is war in heaven. The next, the issue of that war, "no more place" in heaven for these forces of evil. Therefore, they are cast down out of the heavens, and then a great voice in heaven is heard at the moment of that casting down, saying, "Now is come" (it almost seems to say now at last, now at length. now, the great eternal now! This hierarchy which has encircled the earth as "Prince of the power of the air," "The world rulers of this darkness, the principalities and powers, the hosts of wickednesses in the heavenlies," now at length they are cast down, and now is come) the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ.

I pause to note the distinguishing words—"Now is come the salvation of our God." The salvation of our God is come *now*. Sit down with that in this connection for a little while and see where that will lead you. *Now* is come the kingdom of our God; the kingdom of our God is come *now*. *Now* is come the power of our God. The power of our God is come *now*. Here is Divine energy, Divine force, Divine might, here it is *Now*. But then note, "And the authority of His Christ." The *exousia* of His Christ; the jurisdiction of the Lord Jesus has come now. How much hangs upon this "now"! You weigh these sentences one by one and you see that with this rapture of the man-child there synchronises this arriving at the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the jurisdiction of His Christ. A great point to reach, that! To fathom all that, we need much more time than at present; we will leave it there for the moment. There is a new phase of things on the earth as well as a new phase of things in the heavens. Before passing to that, note how this thing is put. There is a great voice in heaven, and that great voice says, "Our God.....our brethren." There is a company in heaven looking on, who call this overcomer group "our brethren" and speak of God here as "our God." Some already there

have been interested in this final overcomer conflict. There have been overcomers in every age and they have overcome and they are interested in this thing to its end, and they say "our God" and "our brethren"—"who accuseth our brethren"; and notice, when you go on, "Satan is *gone down*," is *gone down*—that is someone speaking from above, not underneath, saying "Satan is *come down*." Those there are saying "he has *gone down*," they are above. A new phase then begins on the earth, and then you go on to the other two chapters 13 and 14.

You have on the one side, antichrist, and on the other side linked with that, the tribulation of those who have not been raptured, or the tribulation on the earth into which those enter who have not been raptured, even the Lord's people. The discrimination in the seven letters between those who overcome and those who do not overcome—(I cannot accept that the seven letters addressed to the seven Churches were addressed to those who were not the Lord's people, neither to just a few inside a merely professing Church). I believe the messages were addressed to those who were the Lord's people in a state of spiritual apostacy or weakness, out of the way, in a state of declension, and there is a division between the Lord's people who are in a state of declension and those who overcome. I think it is J. N. Derby speaking of Philadelphia who says concerning the Philadelphian saints, "but then there were very blessed encouragements given to them. There was an hour of great temptation coming upon the whole world to try those who dwell thereon; some might be victorious *in* the trial, but those who kept the word of His patience would be kept *from* the trial. On the whole world it would come, but where were they? They had gone out of it." That is the position here, and the great tribulation overtakes non-overcoming believers. There will be those who were kept *out of* the great tribulation, but there will be those who "*come up out of*," others who were kept there and those who came out of, in the midst of which they have washed their robes which had become spotted by the world.

We see what is in God's eye, in His mind. We see that the end time is going to have this central thing, the securing of this overcomer group, this overcomer company. In the securing of that company through spiritual travail, and the rapture of that company, God is going to secure His original purpose, His pre-eminent

thought. Changes in heaven and in earth will be related to that. That company will be raptured on a three-fold basis. "They overcame because of the blood of the Lamb." That is one of the things we have got to consider carefully, more fully, "because of the blood of the Lamb." That is foundational. "And because of the word of their testimony." The blood of the Lamb was that which was provided for them, apart from them: the word of their testimony is *their* part. We have got to know, first of all, God's basis of victory, and then our side of the victory, what the word of testimony is by which we overcome: and then, as to the cost, the third factor, "and they loved not their lives (their souls) unto the death." That is the position as I believe we have it, perhaps only at its beginnings, just now. Maybe we are coming into it. Some of us feel sometimes we could not stand very much more, the spiritual conflict and pressure is so great. Beloved, do you see the tremendous issues bound us with this conflict? Do you see the need for us to know what the means of victory and the ground of victory are? Therefore it is necessary that we gather together in days like these; these are not just meetings for getting truth, God forbid! These are times when we are in solemn convocation. The ends of the ages are coming upon us and there is a very, very, very big explanation to the pressure and the suffering, the spiritual intensity through which we are passing now. Some of you are feeling that pressing in, that intense spiritual pressure, it is becoming almost unbearable. There is an explanation, a big explanation, the biggest explanation to anything that ever existed. God is about to accomplish His end and change the aspect of the universe. Oh wonderful thing, all that beloved, has its operation in saints. We are in that. That is taking place in us. Perhaps we might sometimes think it might be very much easier if we saw an erect dragon, if these figurative things were literal, we would know where we were and what we had got to do. But it is this spiritual pressure, this thing that comes to us, not in the bare, naked, devilish antagonism of the enemy, but that which is coming in very often along what we call ordinary every day things, the domestic things, the business things; yes, all that, coming in that way, it is all the conflict, it is *there*. But again, we see there is a marvellous explanation to it, and we need grace, much grace, we need a mighty instrengthening of the Lord. Oh, unto this,

doctrine is not enough, teaching will not do, light merely as a matter of light, beloved, is not always power. No, power is the capacity for going through, and light does not take you through; light may help you to see your way, but you want energy as well as light, and we need in these days the mighty instrengthening of God to get through. May He make the hours we spend together, not hours of getting knowledge, but of mighty energising by His Spirit.

T. A-S.

(To be continued.)

* The "Man-child" of Rev. xii.

Inasmuch as many have sought to interpret this Scripture as historical in the past, that is, as having been fulfilled before John wrote at Patmos, and as applying to the birth of Christ, Israel being the woman, it will be well if certain very clear points are afresh taken into consideration and honestly faced.

1. The pangs of travail (verse 2).

Where were the birth-pains in Israel when Christ was born?

Israel has never yet travailed unto the birth of Christ. *Her whole HISTORY WAS MARKED BY TRAVAIL WITH REF TO COMING A CHRIST*

Isaiah lxvi. 8, 24 shows Christ's birth out of the nation without any travail. That Scripture does not refer to Rev. xii.

2. "Clothed with the sun" (verse 1).

The Lord Jesus is *Himself* the sun; "Light of the World," and it is the Church which has been invested with that Light; the revelation of Jesus Christ, the whole Truth of God. The Jewish nation has never stood so robed.

3. "The moon under her feet" (verse 1).

The moon is an object which has no light of its own, but borrows its light from the sun.

This is exactly what the whole Jewish system of Law and Types did. The Law, the Prophets, the Types, all reflected the Christ, and shone with borrowed light. These are all fulfilled in Christ and realised in the Church, and all are under the feet of—in a subject relation to—the Church. This cannot apply to the Jewish Church.

4. "On her head a crown of twelve stars" (verse 1).

Stars are heavenly living bodies in a ruling capacity. Twelve is the number of governmental power or order.

The twelve Apostles may be seen to fulfil this part of the symbolism. They come in several times in the "Revelation" as in a place of special honour. What is here, we believe, is that, in the mind of God, the Church is seen in the position of heavenly authority, according to Luke x. 19, Ephesians, etc., But, while this is God's thought

concerning the whole Church as in Ephesians, only a company out of her actually and experimentally come to know the throne union in the first instance. Undoubtedly, this is the position to-day, as it has always been, and this is the occasion for the great amount of exhortation and admonition in the New Testament. And this also is the place and condition which gives rise to the many provisional "Ifs" of the New Testament.

5. "As soon as it was born," or "When she was delivered" (R.V., verse 4).

There is no gap here. Christ was not caught up to the throne when He was born, there was a considerable interval.

6. "A great red dragon."

"Ten horns" (not crowned).

"Seven heads" (crowned) (verse 3).

No such power existed when Christ was born. John was writing nearly a hundred years later than the birth of Christ, and in the seventeenth chapter of this book he shows that only five of these powers had been overthrown, and one was in existence; the seventh was yet to be (xvii. 10). The ten horns as ten kings obtain power at the same time as the Beast (xvii. 12). Daniel vii. 20.

All these come into view when the Gentile Dominion is at its close.

The Beast and the False Prophet (Political and Religious) are the two aspects of the Dragon which persecute the true Church at the end, and the very removal of the "Man-child" is a main cause for this assault and of the commencement of the tribulation.

6. "War in heaven." "The dragon cast down" ("The old serpent, the devil, Satan, the deceiver"), "No more place in heaven."

This did not take place either at the birth or the ascension of Christ.

"Ephesians" still sees conflict in the heavenlies (vi. 12).

Satan is still "The prince of the power of the air."

True Christ is far above all principality and power, etc., and we are seated in Him there, but the clearing of the lower heavens with the result that the Church administers and governs the world *therefrom* is something yet to be, and the "Man-child" is the fulfilment of Rev. iii. 21, 22, unto this end.

We have not incorporated these notes into the body of the message because it is our aim not to allow the messages to be of a controversial character, but always straightforward spiritual teaching. The notes are added that it might be seen that we are not saying things without very good ground in the Word, and careful meditation and study therein.

→ See Revelation By William K Russell on Rev Chap 12
and John Walwood.
and Jack MacArthur
48

Position and Power

THAT which we have before us at this time is the matter of spiritual power in the Lord's people. One of the great things in this connection which needs very much to be known and fully realised is that spiritual power is very largely a matter of spiritual position. It is not that we ask for power from God, but that we come into the position where the power of God operates.

Now I want to lay down two passages of Scripture to begin with as that toward which we are working. We turn to the Ephesian letter in chapter i. 19-20: "And what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." I would like to read that from Conybeare:—

"And how surpassing is the power which He has shown toward us who believe; (for He has dealt with us) in the strength of that might wherewith He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead; and set Him on His own right hand in the heavens, far above every Principality and Power, and Might, and Domination, and every name which is named, not only in this world; but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Sovereign Head of the Church, which is His body; the Fulness of Him who fills all things everywhere with Himself."

And then chapter ii. 6: "And raised us up with Him and made us to sit with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." From Conybeare: "And in Christ Jesus He raised us up with Him from the dead, and seated us with Him in the heavens."

You see the two things are related in both these passages, the matter of position and power, or power and position. They are in-

separable, but they are recognised as being two distinct factors, that power is a matter of position, and position is a matter of power. That is the end, as we have said, to which we work. What we have in view is the throne, coming to the throne, and, while the ultimate issue is a rapture, a distinct act, a definite movement to the throne, it is but the conclusion of something that has been going on spiritually for some time before. It is the culmination of a process. We come to the throne by the final act because we have been coming to the throne all the time; that is, we have been gaining spiritual ascendancy over the enemy progressively, we have been learning what it is to reign. We have been in the school of the reigning ones to be learning how to reign. The question is sometimes asked by the critic, "If God is omnipotent why doesn't He wipe out the devil, why doesn't He have done with him once and for all?" in which, of course, the critic displays his lack of wisdom and understanding. The answer is very clear. The Lord has not done with the devil yet, He has got a good use to make of him before He has done with him, and that very good use is to teach the Church how to reign, how to overcome how to come to the throne: so that the enemy is the unwonted and probably unconscious instrument of Divine sovereignty to bring the Lord's overcomers to the throne. So that spiritual ascendancy is the thing which is before us, coming to the throne; the ultimate goal is the throne.

Now having that in view we have to go over the steps which lead us to our heavenly position now, our place in the heavenlies now. And I want to take that course very simply this morning by way of leading on to the fuller and deeper things of spiritual ascendancy. You notice that here in this letter, in most of Paul's letters, of course, but in this letter with special apparentness, everything is in Christ. You may not have those exact words, it may be "in Him" but such phrases "In Christ," "In Christ Jesus," "in Him," and so on, and to get the rich meaning and benefit of that is our first objective here. Now everything in relation to salvation in its completeness, in all its

aspects and phases, unto this fulness is hound up in the Person of the Lord Jesus. It is in Christ : all of the salvation which God has provided for mankind is in Christ. That is the first fact which we have to recognise. Of course, we know that quite well, but then all of the salvation which we realise in experience centres in our faith apprehension of Christ, and that is an extra thing. I do not want to take it for granted that you have grasped what I have said; so you will suffer repetition.

Provision and Appropriation.

All of God's provided salvation for mankind centres in Christ, but all of the salvation which God has provided which we realise in experience is in our faith apprehension of Christ, and we have no more of it than we appropriate by faith. It is all there in Him, but in experience we have no more of it than we appropriate by faith. Now that is the second thing. The third thing is this, that salvation, that full salvation which centres in Christ, is historically revealed in epochs in the life and work of the Lord Jesus personally. Those epochs represent progressive aspects of the full salvation in Christ, and we have to appropriate by faith each one of those epochs in its spiritual meaning in order to come into the good of it. That is a broad statement and you may not have quite grasped all of it. There are seven epochs or stages which complete the circle of salvation. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection or completeness, and this salvation which God has provided for mankind is represented in the seven epochs or stages or movements in the life of Christ, in the history of Christ. They represent seven spiritual stages for the believer and each one has to be appropriated by faith in its spiritual meaning for the believer, and these seven are :—

1. The Incarnation.
2. The earthly life.
3. The death.
4. The burial.
5. The resurrection.
6. The ascension exaltation.
7. The coming again.

Now these seven stages are seven spiritual epochs. They contain and represent spiritual values for the Lord's people. That spiritual value has to be appropriated by faith step by step and stage by stage to bring us to God's fulness, to His ultimate position. Briefly, then, without going into all the truth contained in each one of these seven stages we might note

just perhaps one thing about each, which seems perhaps to be the supreme feature in them.

The Spiritual Value of the Incarnation.

Perhaps we have not recognised sufficiently, the spiritual value and good for us of the Incarnation. "Inasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also partook of the same in order that, through death He might destroy him that had the power of death" and so on (Heb. ii. 14). Why did the Lord Jesus take flesh and blood? Now I realise the risks that I am running of being somewhat misunderstood, but try and understand me in the way in which I am saying it—in order that He might be you and me. In order that He might be humanity, be man, and from that point onward this Man, yes, it is God I know that side, with every bit of intense emphasis that it is possible to put upon it He is God, He is the Son of God, but also as truly Man, and it is as Man that He is doing this thing. He is doing it as man, and a Man that *can* do it; because we could not do it He is doing it, but He is as Man, He *can* do it. Why He can do it is another matter of doctrine. The point of the Incarnation is this, that here is a Man (God-man, if you like) who is taking up this work and doing this thing. God has come in man-form to compass this salvation and its fulness. I do wish we could get into the heart of that spiritually. We have a good time singing our Christmas carols about the birth of the Lord Jesus, but oh, the spiritual meaning of that to us to be appropriated by faith!

Here is some immense thing needing to be done, and we are hopeless, unable to give a quota to its accomplishment, but a Man comes who can do it and links Himself with us, and it is done as us. It is He as us, as man, even as though we were doing it in a sense, He is going to take man through this way. It means beloved, that as we appropriate the spiritual meaning of the Incarnation we are taken through with Him in this achievement; we are linked on with Him by faith, in the meaning of the Incarnation, going to go right through to the full accomplishment of God. In the final issue it will be man there at the right hand of God. Of course, we know, not the old man, but this Man to whose image we have been conformed according to the fore-ordained intention of God. Rom. viii. 29. We ought to get away from the doctrine and at once get down on our knees and say, "Have I by faith appropriated that as a working spiritual

reality. How much have I got down before the Lord and linked myself on by faith with the spiritual meaning of the Incarnation and taken up all the good of that in the intention and the thought of God in His being manifest in the flesh?"

It is a practical, working, thing. It is the first step, and until that first step is taken we will never be able to take the other steps which issue in the throne. Man, for man. "The second Man who is the Lord from heaven." I am conscious of difficulty in getting that over as I see it and as I feel it; a position perhaps where we need the Lord to quicken us and open our understanding, but it is an epoch where we become, by faith, joined to this Man to be taken through. That is the Incarnation. "He also partook of the same that....." you see that, this One took our flesh and blood, not in its sinful nature, there was no sin in Him, but He took our humanity in order that "He might destroy, nullify, bring to naught him that had the power of death and deliver all those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." To bring many sons to glory He partook of flesh and blood. "He took not the seed of angels, but took the seed of Abraham" to accomplish this, and so He joins us with Himself and Himself with us to carry humanity through, but He does not do it automatically. We can only go through to that Divine end as we appropriate the meaning of the Incarnation, by faith. See Rom. v. 17, 19; 1 Cor. xv. 21.

The Spiritual Value of the Earthly Life of Christ.

Now the earthly life is the second epoch. Why was He not immediately incarnated in mature manhood at the age of thirty-three years and a few months and go straight to the cross to accomplish the work of redemption by Calvary? Because he had to be subjected to every kind of temptation that man can be subjected to. He has to go through the fire of trial, trial along every line; and it would be a profitable thing for you to sit down and catalogue the temptations of the Lord Jesus as they appear. The list of the unapparent would be far bigger than the apparent ones. The "oven trials" as well as the "pan trials." The oven which tests the fine flour, where you do not look in and see what is going on (the meal offering), but when put into the pan you see the kind of trials; and there are plenty of those open trials in the life of the Lord Jesus. From hell,

from man, along every line of open antagonism to the most subtle subterfuge: by offering of popularity, by treachery, and by the far more insidious danger of affection. And when the enemy cannot defeat by open assault he will come through some one who is linked by affectional ties; and so we have Him subjected to every kind of temptation with one object in view, to see if He will stand true to the will of His Father, or by any means whatever be turned aside from that will. Beloved, the fact that He went through unscathed, undefeated, triumphant through temptations and trials packed into thirty-three and a half years, which probably are not packed into the life time of any long-lived man otherwise, and came out with the triumphant cry, "Not My will nevertheless, not a bit the less, Thy will not one whit the less, even if My humanity flinches, even if I am conscious of how there is a shrinking in My humanity, not one whit less, Thy will just as much as ever, Thy will—whatever I might say as man under these sufferings, not one whit the less, as much now as ever Thy will." He came out triumphant. That is something to be appropriated by faith. He is doing it as man, it is all in Christ. We said to begin with, it is all summed up in Christ. The testing and triumph of the earthly life is a victory in Christ, it is in Christ, it is there for us, beloved. Oh, get it. All that the Incarnation means is there in Christ as an active virtuous thing. It is in Him, and all His triumph through testing means a mighty victory in every kind of temptation. He was tempted in all points like as we are—and that He triumphed is something now in Christ as a part of salvation, something to be appropriated by faith. We can get through every kind of trial and temptation because the victory along that very line is in Christ now. How shall we get through trial and temptation? It will not be because we are able to, but because the virtue is already in His triumph. It is in Christ something to be actively and deliberately appropriated by faith. When we are in severe trials our attitude is not "Oh Lord, give me grace to endure, help me to go through," it is "Lord, I appropriate your victory in this trial." The victory is accomplished, not something in the first instance for me to accomplish, but something that has been accomplished for me to appropriate by faith. This is an epoch in His life which has a spiritual virtue with which we become linked by a definite act

of appropriating faith. A stage further on to carry us to the throne.

The Value of the Death of Christ.

You come to the death, the death of the Lord Jesus representing so many things, but I think primarily the closing of a whole scene and condition of judgment. The last thing in the life of the Lord Jesus, the very last thing before He gave back His spirit to God was judgment completed upon sinful man; the ground of judgment in man. He had at the end of His life, there on the cross, put upon Him sin, in our place, all the judgment of our sin. "He was made a curse for us," when He was put on the tree, because it is written, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." That is where the curse lighted upon Him, and that is where He was made sin, then the judgment of God came upon Him as man, in the place of sinful humanity. Not inherent in Him, but representative, laid on Him. That is all familiar doctrine, but His death closed for ever the question of the ground of judgment, and judgment itself. That whole thing has passed beyond the reach of judgment in the death of the Lord Jesus, because the state which merits and demands judgment has been put out of existence, it has been borne right away into a land unknown where even God takes no account of it: it passes out of consciousness and the remembrance of God, it is dead to God. It is a blessed thing, beloved, if it is dead to God it can be dead to us. The trouble is so many people keep alive for themselves what is dead to God. The Lord is dead to that and we keep the whole thing up before us so often. The death means much more than that, but I am taking the primary thing.

Our faith acceptance of that is declared when we testify in baptism to our union with Him in His death, to put us beyond the reach of judgment, and beyond the remembrance of God as sinners. That is blessed, that God no longer looks at us as sinners. If only we could emerge into that to-day. If faith could really get hold of that to-day: that, now, in Christ Jesus God does not look at us as sinners. It is in Christ. If we begin to circle round ourselves and take ourselves out of Christ in mind, thought, spirit, and attitude, we will very soon bring ourselves under unnecessary condemnation and the enemy will get us back on to his territory in spirit, and accuse us; but while we abide in Him, God does not look at us as sinners. One little word is the key to it all, "Accepted."

God has never accepted anything sinful yet, and you may take it for granted that He never will. God has never accepted any sinful thing, nothing sinful has got through to God's acceptance. The slightest touch and taint of sin puts beyond the acceptance of God, is rejected, but the word clearly is "Accepted." "Hath made us accepted in the beloved." This is in Christ because that which was not acceptable is now dead in Him, "Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God." There is no being "alive unto God" unless there is that death. Something to be appropriated. How elementary this is. I am going over all the well-known ground, but this is to be made practical. Our doctrine has got to become practical, potent, and what I am after is not so much to point out the principle as to come to the active point. I have to have a transaction on that. It is wonderful as an unveiling of truth, but I have to get down on my knees before God and appropriate that by a deliberate act of faith; my death with Christ to put me beyond the place where God takes any account of me as a sinner. Have we died with Him? "As many of you as were baptised into Christ were baptised into His death," and we know the untranslated word, *baptizo*, means "buried"; if you immerse a thing it goes down out of this world, it may be only an instant that you are immersed, but during that instant you are in the place of death. If you were not brought back within 40 seconds you would be finished, but for those few seconds you are in the place of death, it is only a matter of time. One wants to emphasise this, this thing is a position, a very real position.

The Value of the Burial of Christ.

The burial. The death is an active thing. The death of the Lord Jesus is not just a physical thing, it is an active thing. It is something that He does in the energy of the eternal Spirit. Man did not kill the Lord Jesus, they crucified Him but they could never have killed Him. "No man taketh it from Me, I lay it down of Myself. This authority have I received of My Father." It is an authoritative action, something that He is doing by His jurisdiction.

His burial is simply the concluding phase of that old work on the sin, death side, the old humanity side as in the realm of the powers of darkness and the authority of Satan. It is the concluding part of one era, one régime. With His burial that passes out from sight. The

burial the concluding phase of an old state of things relative to humanity and the world as under the power of Satan and the authority of darkness; it passes out with the burial of the Lord Jesus, it is covered from God. So far as salvation is concerned that side of things is finished with the burial of the Lord Jesus, and when we were buried in baptism, that is the covering of an old sin-mastered humanity, and from that point you start on another level; and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus puts Him beyond the power of death, where death has no more jurisdiction; beyond the power of Satan, the jurisdiction of Satan ends at the burial. The burial is the conclusion.

The Value of the Resurrection.

That whole state of things is passed out of in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, He is no longer on that plain of life, nothing of Satan has any power over him at all; He lives by a deathless life in resurrection, He lives now by an authority which is given Him over all the authority of the evil one. "All the authority has just been given to Me in heaven and in earth." He is out in a new realm now. Resurrection means a new life in a new realm where all the old conditions have ceased. Now beloved, that is something to be entered into by faith. Come to Ephesians, "raised together with Him." Resurrection union with the Lord Jesus is to walk in a new-ness of life. To be possessed of a life over which death has no power, over which Satan has no authority. It is the life of One who has taken the authority and who is triumphant over death. This life is a mighty life which will prove in the end that Satan had no power over it at all. "I am He that liveth.....unto the ages of the ages." "I have the keys (the authority) of death." "Because I live ye shall live also." That is very familiar again and simple, but it is an epoch in His history and it represents an epoch in our spiritual life when we appropriate it by faith. We must definitely get before God and appropriate by faith our resurrection union with the Lord Jesus because it brings us into a new place, on to a new level.

The Value of the Ascension—Exaltation.

The next is ascension exaltation by which He is not only living in the power of a new triumphant life, but He is now set in the place of all authority in heaven and in earth over every Principality and Power and Rule and Dominion and every name that is named in this age and that which is to come. He is in a new

place; it is the Man in a new place that helps you to get to the heart of things. Man is in a new place now, in Christ. It is man now representatively in Christ in a new place. He has broken free from the whole world system as lying in the wicked one, as encircled by the prince of the power of the air; He has broken free through His cross from that whole system. Man, in the place of authority, in the place of dominion, at the right hand of God. The right hand is always the place of honour and of power. We have only got to come to our Ephesian passage to see that this runs in spiritual sequence to be again appropriated by faith, "And hath made us to sit in the heavnlies with Christ." The position is one thing, but we have got to get there by a faith act, by a deliberate act of faith, to appropriate that position, it is ours in Christ. Let us go back to our original premise; all the salvation that God has provided for mankind centres in Christ, but all the salvation which we realise in experience depends upon our faith appropriation of what is in Christ, or of Christ as the sum of it all.

The Meaning of the Rapture.

The rapture is not going to be any more automatic than these others. We do not automatically come into the place of "no condemnation" apart from an exercise of faith; if so, all the world would be in that position now without any believing at all. We do not come into our heavenly position in Christ mechanically, there has to be a definite exercise and taking of our position in faith. We have got to have faith for translation. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death," and there has to be an exercise of faith in relation to the rapture, the same law operates, and the final test of the saints who are to be raptured lies in the realm of faith. We are not going to be raptured because we are full of good works—it is just possible we shall have our good works cut off and find it very difficult to do much work at the end. In "Philadelphia" at the end it is a very difficult thing to find open doors for true spiritual ministry; there is almost universal antagonism to what is truly spiritual. I do not think God will enter into competition with antichrist and try to outdo him with signs and wonders. We have to believe God, with not a sign or wonder to be seen, even if antichrist is calling down fire from heaven and giving life to the image. That is the test, that is the faith for translation.

Our particular point at this time is our union in the heavenlies with Christ, a thing to be appropriated by faith. You see what I mean by progressing upward to the throne by stages, each of which is marked by an appropriation, a definite act of faith to bring us into the heavenlies in Christ.

Everything changes in the Heavenlies.

Recognise just this, that when we get by faith to that position of Ephesians, when we really do get to the Ephesian position, seated in the heavenlies in Christ, everything changes, and that is the explanation of the tremendous difference between believers who are still on the earth plane of Christianity in life and service, and believers who have come into the Ephesian position. We have another spiritual consciousness; our spiritual consciousness changes. We begin to realise that now our wrestling is not with mere flesh and blood, and we are not dealing with just men and movements and earthly conditions and circumstances, the disadvantages and difficulties of doing Christian work such as are known to Christian workers here. We become conscious that we are up against ultimate forces, things back of difficulties, that our wrestling is not with flesh and blood but Principalities, Powers. It is no use trying to drop down to other believers who do not know experimentally anything about it and who have a much easier time and who do not understand, who think you have got into what they call a dangerous realm. It is no use trying to explain to them. It is not something you have worked up; a doctrine, teaching you have accepted and taken on, it is a real consciousness, it is as though you had passed out into another realm and it does not matter how much you wrestle with the thing as a doctrine, you are up against it. We have been through this thing and there have been times when we have perhaps stood back and asked questions about the whole matter just to test it. Now are these things what they are simply because we have accepted these ideas, these teachings? Is it the teaching that creates the thing or is the thing there and the teaching is the explanation of it? You have to come back to the second of these propositions.

When you have gone on with the Lord by faith, step by step, stage by stage, having reached your resurrection union with the Lord Jesus by faith and taken that and asked the Lord to bring you into the good of that

and make it real, and you have gone the next step and seen your heavenly position in Christ according to Ephesians, and said, "Lord, make that real," beloved, you have not taken on a system of doctrine, you find at once you have come into a realm, a sphere, which is marked by these things, and the doctrine helps you by way of explanation, for you are up against *facts* for which you need no proof by doctrine, only explanation. You have a new consciousness of being now over against those other forces that are operative in this universe and you come into a realm of real spiritual conflict. That is true, but mark you, you have come into the position of power because you have come into Christ who is above every Principality and Power. We must realise that and take that by faith. So often we allow our consciousness to be almost overwhelmed with the fact of the forces of darkness and forget we are in Christ in the heavenlies far above all, and because our faith does not carry us high enough, it does not carry us higher than the lower heavens, very often the conflict goes against us—but we want to go all the way in this faith appropriation to bring us into this position of authority in Christ, ruling in Christ, dominion in Christ, ascendancy in Christ. Not just a position, but as an active ministry.

I am just feeling that we want to get there. You and I want to get now by faith right into Christ as above, to rule down these things, to fulfil a ministry of executive administration in Christ from the heavens, for unto Him all authority is given in heaven and in earth. What is called the "missionary commission" has suffered a tremendous loss because one half of it has been taken and the other half left. The "great commission" as it is called, is simply "Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature." That is only half, and because that is all we have what we have to-day of only going half-way in the work in very many cases, and a very great deal of defeat and arrest. The other half is this, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and in earth, Go ye *therefore*....." Because of that—and you cannot, you dare not go into all the world where Satan has such power unless you go in your heavenly position in Him who has the authority as a spiritual thing. If you do, one of two things I should think would happen. Either that you will be smashed by the forces of darkness sooner or later, or you will only half do the work that you were

intended to do, an earthly work not the establishing of the Lordship of Jesus Christ there. You cannot do that, set up a testimony to His absolute Lordship unless you go in your heavenly position far above all.

T. A.S.

(To be continued).

NEW BOOK

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T. A.-S.

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Acknowledgments

WE gratefully record the receipt between February 1 and March 31 of the following gifts towards the maintenance of this paper:—

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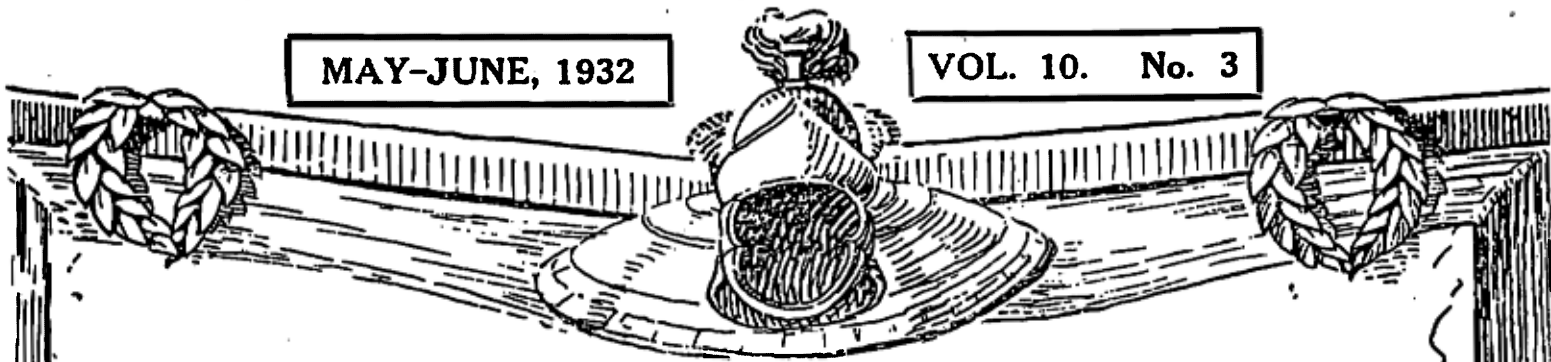
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Witness and a Testimony

MAY-JUNE, 1932

VOL. 10. No. 3



THEY LOOKED
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PSALM 34 .5.



"A Witness and A Testimony"

EDITORIAL

WE are very grateful to God for the tokens of His good hand upon those of His servants whom He has led forth from our midst, and for the gracious spirit of fellowship with them in their ministry which has been evidenced on the part of many of His people. In order that there may continue to be the prayerful upholding of them on the basis of intelligent-co-operation in the actual needs of the various spheres of service represented, we give below the latest news of some of our friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Speedy.

There has been no particular development since our last issue. The work amongst the children and young people in Addis-Ababa continues to afford a very real opportunity of ministry, and especial encouragement is found in a Bible study class (in English) for young men which our brother has recently started, and which he hopes to hold on three evenings weekly. He earnestly asks for prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon these young lives.

A very large area of Ethiopia to the North of Addis-Ababa is much upon the hearts of our friends. There is at present no missionary activity there, and a cry is coming from the people for someone to go and teach them. Mr. Speedy asks for special intercession regarding this need. It may be that some of the native young men who are at present studying the Word with him may be the Lord's instruments for meeting it. Please pray that our friends may know if and when the cloud moves, bidding them go on elsewhere from Addis-Ababa. Remember too their need of acquiring the language, that the Spirit of the Lord may be their capacity for this. They long to be able to preach and present the LIVING CHRIST to a people who have much of the outward form of Christianity without the power thereof.

Mr. and Mrs. Speedy have prepared a prayer leaflet by way of reminder to those who are standing with them in prayer and if any friends

desire to receive a copy we shall be glad to send them one on application to us.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster.

The latest report dated May 5 indicates that our friends safely reached their destination at Quibdo, and by the Lord's goodness were able to rent a suitable, though far from palatial, bungalow on the outskirts of the town. On the first Sunday after their arrival about a dozen people gathered in their house to hear the Lord's Word, and a few of them seemed seriously interested. There is nothing in the district by way of former Gospel effort upon which our friends can build and they need to be constantly upheld in prayer as they seek to open a way for the Lord.

They have with them a young native Christian who journeyed with them from Palmira who was a valuable and loyal helper on their journey. They ask especial prayer for him.

Miss Sinclair.

Our sister has returned from Spain for a time. Her reports confirm the deep need of that land for the light of the Gospel, and the opportunity that lies there at present for the preaching of the Word if messengers were available. We ask prayer for our sister that she may know the Lord's mind concerning her return and that if it be His will others may go forth with her.

Lady Ogle and Miss Gerster.

From Egypt our sisters visited Palestine and Syria for a few days prior to returning to this country. By the time these notes appear we hope that they will have been brought again in safety into our midst. The reports received from them have continued to reveal the intense character of the spiritual conflict in Egypt, but the Lord has graciously lifted the veil here and there and allowed His own workings to be seen. The predominant note in all our hearts is one of thankfulness and worship at the evidences of a mighty Divine answer to the challenge of the devil through Islam. Let us continue to stand in the victory of the Blood and of the Name of the Lord Jesus and claim an expression of that victory to be given in the spiritual realm adequately to attest the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord. Especially let us pray for the many secret believers in Islam, that they may be emboldened by a Holy Ghost unveiling to their hearts of the triumphant Lord Jesus—the Lord of Glory—to give an open confession

of their faith in Him, and thus escape from their bondage to the spirits of fear that as yet paralyse so many.

Mr. Yankowski.

Our brother has been for some time in this country, studying the Word of God, and about a year ago was brought by the Lord into our midst and has been truly knit to us in spirit. Of recent months he had been hearing the Lord's call to return to his native land, Poland, and left us for that country after Whitsun. His first reports indicate a distressing condition of affairs amongst the Lord's people there, and his heart is burdened that he may be used to heal breaches among them and to build up a people truly representative of the Name of the Lord: He—like the others who have gone out from us—has gone back depending utterly on the Lord for everything, and without any association other than a spiritual one with the Lord's people here, and has much need of our upholding and ministry along every line that the Lord makes possible.

Literature.

Two new "Witness and Testimony" reprints, by T.A.S."

"The Offence of the Cross."

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Price one penny each.

The Scottish Centre—Kilereggan.

THE opening Conference at Kilereggan, May 21 to 24, bore very evident tokens of the Lord's seal upon this channel of service. The house was full, and several had to have accommodation found outside. Several different lands were represented by servants of the Lord present. A number of students from the Bible Training Institute, Glasgow, were in the company, and others of the Lord's children hungry for spiritual food and eager to go on with Him came from various parts. The ministry was fulfilled through Mr. Sparks, Mr. Alexander and Mr. Fauuch. The gatherings were good and we believe in the power of the Spirit, but a special cause of joy to us was the atmosphere in the house. The "Testimony" was beautifully and wonderfully upheld in all departments, and in ways unknown to most, behind the scenes. There was a precious display of the victory of our Lord.

Edinburgh.

The gatherings in Edinburgh continue to be marked with those indications which point to the Lord's end-time activity. From many directions and connections considerable companies with real spiritual eagerness for "food" are found at every gathering. It is blessed to see how—because the Lord is at the centre and is the only Object in view—those who are linked with various sections of Christian communities as here on the earth come together in fellowship and rejoice in Him.

By the desire of these themselves the gatherings have now been increased to twice a month, so that now we meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays in each month.

We are persuaded that the Lord has some very real purpose in this direction for all the places entered—there has nowhere been a greater and more terrific battle and resistance on the part of the enemy than here. We have never yet faced the gatherings without a real spiritual ordeal. This to us speaks of "a great and effectual door, and many adversaries."

Yorkshire.

Our Brother Fauch has been visiting centres of the Lord's work in Bradford, Leeds, Otley, Menston, and Rufforth, and the Lord has been greatly blessing this ministry.

It is felt that something in the way of regular periodical conferences in that area is in the Lord's leading, and friends interested may expect to hear of such soon.

Forthcoming Conferences and Ministries.

NEWCASTLE—Church Institute, Hood Street.

The fourth Friday in each month.

"SLAVANKA," SOUTHBOURNE.—Holiday Conference, July 2 to 9.

KILERECCAN, SCOTLAND.—July 16 to 23.

August 5 to 12.

September 3 to 10.

HONOR OAK.—July 30 to August 1.

LANARK (Baptist Church).—The third Thursday in each month.

THE CARAVAN, with a party of our younger brethren under the leadership in the Lord of Brother Frank Davis is setting out again for gospel testimony through the country. They will probably work up through the Midlands and eventually reach Kilereggan. Here a Gospel Mission may be held before they turn south again.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully record the receipt between April 1 and May 31 of the following gifts towards the maintenance of this paper:—

Cape Town, £1; Nairobi, Kenya, 5s.; China, 10s.; Calcutta, 7s.; Darjeeling, 5s.; Bilbois, Egypt, 10s.; Shobin-El-Kanater, 5s.; Toronto, 3s.; H.M.S. "Cicales," 10s.; Phila., Pa., 4s. 11d.; Ambler, Pa., 5s.; Grand Rapids, 5s.; Albany, N.Y., 5s.; Edinburgh, 2s. 6d., 5s., and 5s.; Pitlochry, 5s.; Glasgow, 3s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.; Dublin, 2s. 6d.; Greystones, 10s.; Kircubbin, 10s.; Belfast, 2s. 6d.; Aberkaro, 9d.; Birmingham, 10s.; Houton, 2s.; Newcastle, 2s. 6d. and 5s. 6d.; Leeds, 2s. 6d. and 3s.; Lingfield, 2s. 9d. and 5s.; Upper Clapton, 1s.; Kennington Road, S.E., 2s. 6d.; Sydenham, 3s. 6d.; Sunderland, 9d.; Hayling Island, 4s. 6d.; Wallington, 6d.; Chichester, 10s.; Harloston, 10s.; Willoston, 2s.; Stoke Nowington, 2d.; Stratford, 2s. 6d.; Crouch End, 1s. 9d.; Harringay, 5s.; Bognor, 9s.; Eastbourne, £1 and £1 1s.; Kingston, 5s.; Sanderstead, 2s.; Menston, 2s. 9d.; Hadleigh, 5s.; Ash, Kent, 2s. and 2s.; Lowestoft, 1s. 6d.; Tunbridge Wells, 10s.; Swindon, 2s. 6d.; St. Annes-on-Sea, £5; Cromer, 2s. 6d.; Ipswich, 2s. 6d.; Midlothian, 2s. 6d.; Ilfracombe, 2s.; Sandown, 10s.; Exmouth, 8d.; Dagonham, 5s.—Total, £21 9s. 6d.

Christ the Power of God

(Continued.)

Reading:—Ephesians iii. 14-21; iv. 11-13.

THAT with which we are occupied at this time is summed up and included in the words "Christ the power of God" I Cor. i. 24. Of course these are very familiar words, as familiar as any of the passages of the New Testament, but the content, fulness and meaning of them has never yet been unveiled to us, and we are believing that the Lord has something more to say as to His own meaning in these words, "Christ the power of God." We are proceeding immediately, without any further retracing of our steps by way of review to look as the Lord enables us into the content of Christ crucified as an inward reality. The Lord Jesus (and this is where we finished our last message) has by the Holy Spirit been brought into the heart the life of the believer, and He has come in in all the fulness of the work which he accomplished in and through His cross. It is still, in effect, Christ crucified as the power of God. That is, Christ in relation to His cross, and all the work of His cross. That is also Christ risen, ascended, glorified, exalted. These are only aspects of

the one Person, in virtue of the one cross, and all these are gathered up into Christ the power of God, and Christ as the power of God is manifested in the believer in the outworking of those aspects. His death, the power of God in Christ; His resurrection, the power of God in Christ; His ascension, the power of God in Christ; His anointing, the power of God in Christ; His exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on high, the power of God in Christ. These are phases, aspects of the one Person on the ground of the one Calvary work, which are to be made real in the believer by reason of Christ dwelling within. Now I think that is a very simply summing up of what is before us.

The Death of Christ—the Power of God.

And so now immediately we have to think of the death of Christ as the power of God. I just want to add one passage to those which we have quoted, from Luke ix. 30, 31, "And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accom-

plish at Jerusalem." Now that word "decease," as probably your margin tells you, is the word "exodus." ".....which spake of His exodus, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." And that gives an altogether new idea as to the death of the Lord Jesus. It first of all says that it was a way—and a going—out. A way out and a going out; and then it says that it was an accomplishment on His part. An accomplishment, something achieved something which He did and when we recognise that to be the nature of the death of Christ we get a different conception from His just being killed or just being crucified by men. It was His way out, it was His achievement. I want you to get the picture of that. See Him hemmed in by everything that the Scriptures make us to know as the things of human bondage, man's slavery, man's limitations, man's enthrallment; sin, the flesh, the power of the world. Only believers understand what that is: all the forces of darkness, of hell, the limitations of spirit and of soul and of body. Not merely geographical limitations, but the limitation by reason of nature and the conditions which obtained through the fall, everything that holds man within its grip to limit him and prevent him from reaching God's thought for him, which is a great thought, a wonderful thought, a vast thought. The Lord Jesus came into those limitations, came into that world, accepted voluntarily that bondage, allowed Himself, by His own will to enter into every phase and aspect of that thralldom (excepting inherent sin). Not only allowed Himself to come in it and know it, but drew it on Himself in His cross, and then with all those forces of every kind, natural and supernatural, shutting Him in, pressing upon Him, compassing Him about like bees, He broke through and accomplished a way out, by His death. So that the death of Christ was a way out of everything here, and that is the thing that I want to say here this afternoon. The death of Christ is a way out, a way out from everything here. If that breaks upon us as a revelation we shall be different people, there will be big changes. Let us say it again. The death of Christ is the way out from everything here.

Now first of all, do we realise that judgment was upon everything here? Judgment passed upon everything here. There is nothing in this whole creation, this whole realm of nature, which was not under judgment. Death passed upon all. That is the Word of God; and

judgment, therefore, rested upon everything. It rested upon man, it rested upon the world, it rested upon nature, it rested upon man's soul and body, body and soul; judgment universal upon everything because of sin. And the death of the Lord Jesus was the entering by Him into that judgment, and in His death accepting to its full all the judgment that rested upon everything here, so that where He is concerned there can be no more judgment. Judgment has been finished in the Person of Christ by His death. All the waves and the billows of God's wrath have gone over Him and He has, therefore left judgment without any more power, by His death; that death was a gateway through which He passed bearing the judgment of God out to the place where no more judgment exists. And so He made His exodus, He accomplished His exodus out from a representatively sinful state, not an inherently sinful state, but a representatively sinful state when He was made sin. Out from a judged world, a world upon which judgment rested. He accomplished the way out from the scene and sphere of Divine judgment, through death, went out from it, and out from everything else that was under judgment through death. Now of course, comprehensively we see that in Christ Jesus we too have gone out from all that. Our being made to sit with Him in the heavenlies includes all that.

Our being in Christ Jesus includes all that, our faith in Christ makes all that good for us.

Out from Condemnation.

It means, beloved, simply that you and I if we are in Christ have gone by His way out, through His death, from that upon which judgment rests, and there is no more judgment because the ground of judgment has been fully dealt with by Him. Everything into which we were born by nature, upon which the judgment of God rested universally, we have escaped from in Christ through His death. That is the great objective fact of Christ's death for us. For us. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Judgment is passed for ever, exhausted on Him. The way out has become our way. I know that that is almost too elementary to provoke in you any fresh appreciation, but that is one side, a blessed reality in which, I trust, we are all rejoicing. That has been done for us. There is a way out from all condemnation, from all judgment, and from all that state of things which was under

judgment, and still is under judgment if not in Christ. But beloved, there is the other side, and that is the thing we have perhaps more especially and particularly to look at at this time.

There is such a thing as being in Christ, as making good objectively for us all that in Him, but then there is the complement, of that which is Christ in us by the Holy Spirit working that out experimentally, and it is just there that we begin our experimental Christian life, that what is true in Him has to be made true in us, and that we have got to be "planted together in the likeness of His death." The death was for us, now there is our side, "planted together with Him in the likeness of His death," so that the teaching of Christ, or Christ crucified, has got to come into our lives and be wrought in us by the Holy Spirit to bring us out unto God, and that is the experimental application of the cross as a way out for us.

Out from Sin.

How are we to be actually, experimentally delivered from sin, which is a state upon which judgment rests? And judgment rests as much upon sin in the believer as it does in the unbeliever. "If we sin....." and that phrase is not mine but is inspired Scripture through the Apostle John, "If we sin we have an Advocate." But "If we sin" admits of the possibility; the sin of the believer is no less sin than the sin of the unbeliever, and therefore, no less under Divine judgment than that of the unbeliever. How are we to escape, therefore, from the bondage of sin which brings us under judgment? Only by death union with the Lord Jesus, on the one hand appropriated, accepted by faith, as something that He has done for us: on the other hand, entered into by our own reckoning of ourselves as dead in His death. And what has happened in the life of the believer by the operation of the Holy Spirit? Is it not just this, that He, the Spirit, is applying the cross, or Christ crucified, as a power, as an active thing, as a reality, applying Christ crucified to us on the sinful side of our nature, to the sins of the flesh, applying that cross to deliver us, to give us the way out. There is another way of putting this. "If we, through the Spirit, do put to death the doings of the flesh." How do you put to death the doings of the flesh? You do not try and strangle them, and you do not try and struggle them down into non-existence; you do not take hold of them and wrestle with them; if you do, you

have the kind of Christian life of which we have spoken in our first message, which is a Christian life of constant struggle, and more failure than success. What you do is to hand over to the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, those doings of the flesh that He might bring upon them the power of Christ crucified. That is how you put them to death. You co-operate with the Holy Spirit, you bring in the Holy Spirit Who was the mighty energy of Christ's death, you bring in the Holy Spirit and count on Him in this matter to work Calvary upon this thing and the other thing, handing it up to the cross in the power of the Holy Spirit. If that sounds difficult and far away, let us try and get nearer to it. When you are confronted with the fact of something in your heart, in your life, in your nature, which is wrong, which should not be, which in all honesty you have to call sin, and which has been touched by the Lord and you recognise that judgment stands over that until it is dealt with—and we all know that kind of thing:—when we are so confronted with a thing there are two courses to be adopted. One is to say, "Well I am going to wrestle with that thing until I get the better of it." You can adopt that course if you like, but if you take the experience of the majority of people you will not. That is not a very successful line of operation, and when you have it down in one place it will come up in another. You need something more than yourself to keep that under. A lot of people are trying that. They say, "I realise this is one of my failings, weaknesses, shortcomings, I am going to stop that, I am going to get the better of that." The enemy can keep you very busy on that line and you will never have anything else to do but that, for if you have ninety-nine down and there is—you think—only one more left, ten thousand more will come up and you have to start further back. That is true to experience.

Another course is, "Lord, that thing was dealt with by You in the cross. There is nothing that is possible in this fallen humanity but that you dealt with it in the cross, you triumphed over it, you broke its power and broke your way through it having met the judgment of God upon that, and exhausted that judgment, You did it. Now You have given the Holy Spirit to them that believe, as the Spirit of Your victory, of Your triumph, of your conquest, the Spirit Who has come in virtue of Your Calvary work to make that Calvary work actual in the believer: I

definitely now, taking my position upon the ground of all Calvary's victory, claim in Christ the energy and power of the Holy Spirit to bring this where Christ brought it at Calvary, into subjection. I cannot do it, and if I could I cannot keep it under, but You have done it and You can deal with it permanently." That is another course to take. "And Lord, seeing that You died to that and went out from that very thing, I reckon myself as having died in Your death, and gone out from that thing in Your exodus. I claim my exodus." You see, that is another course of action, and the results are very different. What has happened? You have not come merely into the light of some doctrine, you have come into the power of a Person, and it makes all the difference whether you are trying to deal with things doctrinally or in the power of the Person. This matter is related to the Person of Christ. It is Christ crucified, Christ the power of God, the power of God in the matter of sin. A way out and no judgment. Now you see we have started at the first principles of the Gospel. You and I are not too old in the faith to still benefit by such a contemplation. We want to know more and more of what this death of Christ means to us.

Before we take the next step let us say this. That while it does give us the glorious and joyful hope of assurance of a way out, for our comfort our consolation, it also says most emphatically that it was a way Out and you must not stay in. That is, you must not trifle with sin. You are supposed to be out of that realm, in Christ; you are supposed to be right out of that; do not trifle with sin, do not tolerate, do not play with sin. Be careful that you do not get into that realm by the slightest contact voluntarily. Get out of it as far as you can and keep out as far as you can because the believer can come under the present judgment by tampering with sin. It is a way out, that is a blessed assurance for those who want it. But it is a way out, and that is a tremendous warning for those who trifle with sin and think of sin lightly. Christ, with all that He went through of all the judgments of God, went through to give us a way out, and we must not make light of what He suffered by nullifying it by any tampering with sin. Tampering with sin is making as though Christ had never borne that judgment and made that way out. It is undoing all Christ's work and making little of His terrible suffering, and God can never hold us guiltless if we do that. Now suffer the strong

word, the word that has a frown in it as well as the other word. We delight and glory in the good things, but that must never cause us to refrain from pointing out the responsibility that rests upon us in view of the blood of our Lord Jesus.

Out from Law.

"Now," says the Apostle, "the strength of sin is the law," and as we know, Christ's death is seen in Galatians to be the way out from the law. Now just one brief word upon this. The matter of the law is not very often interesting to people. Talk about law, they are not very interested in that, probably because they do not understand it very much and mentally they almost invariably swing back to the Ten Commandments and think of that as the law. Now this matter does concern us in a very practical way, as it should, and do you know beloved that one dislikes more than most things just giving doctrine. If there is one thing against which my whole being revolts it is just giving out teaching as teaching; the practical value of a thing is paramount with me, so that I am not trying to touch on anything without real practical value.

You can have Christian law as much as you can have Mosaic law. You can be in bondage in Christianity just as much as in Judaism. Christianity can be an imposed system with "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," just as much as the Mosaic law, and there are just as many Christians to-day who are afraid of Christianity, so to speak, as there were Jews who were conscious of the dead-weight of the law imposed upon them. How many there are in bondage to Christian law, whose consciences are an awful bug-bear to them in Christianity. It is very blessed to sing "Free from the law O happy condition" when you are thinking back into Judaism, but it is infinitely better to be free to sing it in relation to Christianity. That wants explaining. Is Christianity to us in any degree a matter of what we must do and what we must not do, and if we do not do what we should do, and if we do what we should not do, we lose our peace of conscience, our peace of mind? Is it that? It means this: I can take this Bible and I can say, here is God's standard for your life, it is all here, Old Testament and New Testament, God's standard for your life. It is a very exhaustive one, a very thorough one, and you will not find that any point of your life remains untouched by it. It has something to say about it all—take that, God expects you to

live up to that ! What is your reaction to that ? Try it, and a lot of people are trying it. They are trying to live up to the New Testament and it cannot be done. It cannot be done that way. I tell you, beloved, that if you are going to take this Book and *try* to live up to it you will be far better advised to leave it alone, don't you make the attempt. You will come back very sorry people in a little while if that is your line ; and yet multitudes of Christians *are* trying it. That is one way of preaching God's standard. I have given you the Book and told you God's standard and you have tried it and found that it condemns, condemns, condemns more than anything else ; the one effect it has upon you is to make you feel what a wretched miserable thing you are, and how impossible you are, that is the effect of it from that standpoint.

What is the other ? I bring you, not a Book but a Person, and that Person has lived up to that standard, absolutely fulfilled every minute demand with the most absolute success, satisfied God to the full under our conditions of life. "Tempted in all points like as we are," submitted to all the trials, in spirit, in soul, in body ; tried under all conditions inwardly and outwardly, and passed through what you and I will never have to pass through. We shall never know the depth of His temptations, of His soul-sufferings, of that which tried Him to get Him to swerve from the path of obedience ; we shall never know the same measure, but in a far greater measure than we can ever know. He has been subjected to the ultimate test of all God's perfect will, and has triumphed, succeeded, satisfied God, and has, therefore, gone out from the realm of the law. He has substituted the law, the way out He made through His death, the law had no power over Him, has no more power over Him, He is far above law as law now. That Person, that living Person in all the virtue and content, the power, of that complete triumph, I bring to you and I say, God in His great grace and wisdom and love has offered to allow that Person to live in your heart by the Holy Spirit in all the virtue of His Cross. He is there, in the Holy Spirit, He is there with all that accomplishment in His possession, living within, and I say, if you will utterly yield your will, your heart, your mind to Him, if you will allow that cross on its death side to be planted in the realm of your mind with all its independent thoughts and judgments ; your heart with all its desires and affections ; your entire nature ; your will with

all its choices, its ways ; if you will allow the cross to be planted there to cut you off from yourself unto Him, and you will yield and obey and go on with Him, and co-operate with Him as He witnesses in you to His will, you need not worry about the Book any longer*. You need not worry about the law any longer, you are free from the law, you are above the law, you have got the law of God written in your heart, "not with pen upon tables of stone but by the Holy Spirit upon the fleshly tables of your heart" ; the law of God written there, and you know the mind of the Lord about things, and what is more the power is there to do it. It is inward ; you see the difference between a Book and a Person, between Christianity as something to be lived up to, and Christ living within. Free from the law. Oh, but you have got to go through that open way with Christ from the law. I trust you will be able to understand what I am going to say. For a believer it is never a question of what others think you ought to do, or ought not to do ; of accepted standards of things ; it is never a matter of you ought to do this and you ought not to do that, you ought not to ride in a vehicle on a Sunday, you ought not to do this and that and a lot of other things.

That whole system of things ought to have

* There is one little point that needs safeguarding. I was conscious that after I had said the above, more ought to be said, and I discovered later that others recognised the dangerous possibility of the inadequacy. I want to put that right at once.

I said that if the Lord, as the perfect embodiment of the will of God was resident within, and we were in living fellowship with Him by the Spirit as within, we need not worry about the Book. Now you see the possibility of that, that it might be construed that I was saying you can ignore the Scriptures. I did not say that, and I did not mean that. I meant this, that you need not worry about the Book. That is, if the Lord is speaking His will in you, you will come up to the Book, you will not be contrary to the Book, you will not be working other than according to the Book. It is a way of realising the Book, and one was really trying to contrast all the difference between taking the Book on from the outside and struggling to live up to it rather than having the Lord of the Book inside and helping you to live up to it.

There are things which are not wrong in themselves, but at times they might be wrong because of a brother with a tender conscience. There is no written law about this, but the Holy Spirit should speak in us as to the Lord's will at the moment. This is what Paul wrote about to the Corinthians in connection with meats and drinks,

passed for you and for me. Beloved, the question of riding on the Lord's day and all these other legal questions ought to have been wiped out as legal factors. What is the law for us? "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" That is the Lord speaking in our hearts not law imposed upon us from the outside, but the Lord making known in our hearts what we should do. We have got the law in our hearts. I want you to see this. The Lord Jesus embraced all the will of God on every point, on every matter, and perfected it in His own Person. Now He, as the perfected will of God, comes to reside in us in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to work out that perfected will of God, not to ask us to struggle towards some thing, but to work it out in us as a power, not as a binding imposition of something upon our lives, but as a living force within. The difference between the Old and New Testament truth is just this, that in the Old Testament it was something presented and people groaned under the weight of it to try and fulfil it; in the New Testament it is Someone resident within. Who is perfectly capable of living up to the will of God, and bringing us up to that standard by working within us to will and to do of His good pleasure. All very simple and elementary again, but oh for the Lord's people to get out through the death of Christ because through His death we see Him out from the law, and that may be, as I have said, Christian as much as Jewish. It is life, not legality.

Out from the Flesh.

Now what is true of sin and the law is true also of the flesh. The death of Christ was a way out from the flesh, that is, as I understand the word in the New Testament, the whole body of nature, the whole body of the old Adam nature, that is the flesh. It is one thing, of course, to be free from sin in its guilt and in its judgment, it is something more to be free from the flesh, the body of nature, and the cross of Christ was a way out from that, His death was a way out from that. If you look at Galatians again you will see how this was so. Gal. v. 19, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like." Now just break those up. Here you have firstly, gross physical sins; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness; then you have evil dispositions, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath

and strife; then you have religious forms of intrigues; divisions, sectarian parties; and then you have evil supernatural elements, Satan in idolatry and witchcraft: and then fifthly you have self-indulgence in drunkenness and revellings. Now of course all these are easily recognised, and most believers imagine that they are wholly free from walking after the flesh because they think of the flesh as here in the grosser forms, but I do not know that even here there is not some challenge. We may not fall under the first category of gross, fleshly or physical sin, fornication, uncleanness, but I wonder if "strife" finds us out? I wonder about "jealousies," "wrath," (that is a better word than bad temper, isn't it?) When we, "in our moral integrity," say we were very wroth, we do not mean that we got into a bad temper, but very often it is the same thing. The works of the flesh are strife, not getting on with one another, and if you track it down there are fleshly reasons for not getting on with one another, and that applies to believers. And bad temper, wrath, it is in the plural here, bad tempers, works of the flesh. We will let it sink in. "Jealousy." We might not call it by that name, we should hate to hear that name applied.

These religious things too. Factions, divisions, parties; works of the flesh. Is that true? Does that account for all this? May it be after all that in sectarian parties the flesh is at the root? Of course that is not always true, but we ought to be very honest with ourselves to see that on no ground whatever before God but the ground of the purest, most transparent, crystal clear spiritual principle do we stand where we stand. It must not be because we cannot get on with other people that we separate from them; not because of some wretched element of disaffection: that if we cannot get on with people we will separate from them instead of dealing with the reason why we cannot get on with them, and having the cross brought in there. It is the easiest thing in the world, if you cannot get on with people, to separate from them. Some personal interest perhaps there, some wish or want of our own, because we could not have our own way. This Word says these are the works of the flesh, issuing in factions, sectarian parties and divisions, the flesh! Now the word that is here in Galatians is this, that the death of Christ was a way out from all that, and that means that, blessed be God, we can be delivered from it all, but it means that we are contradicting the death of Christ if there is any of

that. We are denying the cross if there is any of that. We are working against all Christ's Calvary work if there is any of that. If it can be said in any one of these, or in any other respect, the flesh is there, the flesh prompted that, we do not know Christ; beloved, we do not know Christ if that is true. Christ has brought us in Himself out from that; out from it all and we must not go back and live there. Oh that we saw what a mighty thing this death of Christ is to bring us out of the whole body of the flesh, to bring us right out by the cross. Now Christ in us by the Holy Spirit means that all those things of the flesh must be smitten, must be brought consciously as under judgment, they must be revealed as judged of God and being revealed as judged, we must see that our union with Christ in death is our union with Him in getting out from all that. If then, these things are there, any one of them, we have simply to say that we are still inside and we ought to be outside. We still have not apprehended Christ, we have not seen the Lord.

Out from the World.

Now one closing word, for what is true in these three respects is true with regard to the world. Out from the world; and Paul here in this Galatian letter cries, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus by which I have been crucified unto the world and the world unto me." Out from the world! Do you catch the note in Paul's shout? "God forbid that I should glory"—glory in what? That by the cross of Christ I have been brought clean out of the world; it is a dead world to me. What is the attitude that seems to hold with so many, even Christians? That they just hold on to as much of the world as they can without losing their peace of mind, without having their conscience disturbed. If they can have this and not be compelled to give up that, and if the other thing does not involve some disturbance of their inward peace, well, they would like to keep it, they would like to stay there. But Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Glorifying, not so much in the fact that he can have so much of the world with peace of conscience, but that he has gone out of the world. Christ, by His death, delivers us from it, and it all comes back to this main inclusive question, what is Christ to us? I rejoice that I have got a very good answer here this afternoon in this company! A lovely bank holiday, the world out on the spree seeking

its pleasures, you are here shut up in a crowded hall. Why are you here, beloved? Why are you not out there, why in all the world have not you gone out to enjoy (?) yourself? Because you are not in the world, the Lord Jesus is your attraction, you are satisfied, ye are here because He is more to you than all the world. He has proved to be our way out. Yet, we would like to have a motor ride, to get out in the sunshine and enjoy that, but when we come to face it deliberately and frankly, and say "shall I go to the conference or shall I go off to the country and open air?" we find our hearts will not let us go; the verdict is here for deeper reasons than nature. By His death we are out, but remember that this is the only way of living in the world.

The only possible way of staying in this world for believers is that they are out of it! You see the meaning of that. We cannot stay here on this earth only that we have got something more than this earth, this world. If we had not, well, with things getting as they are getting just now in the world, beloved, with the suicide mania, the pressure, men's hearts failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth; the only way to live in this world is to be out of it, to be delivered from it: we can live here then. We can come back to it in a sense, when we are not of it and our destiny is not bound up in it, we have been delivered! Are you out? So out that you are perfectly satisfied with the Lord Jesus? We said this morning that everything in the Christian life is bound up with the Person of Christ, and power is related to the Person, not to truth, doctrine, or knowing laws in Christianity, but the Person; and it comes back there, what is Christ to us? Has He proved to be our way out from sin, its bondage, its judgment, out from the law. Is that calculated to destroy all our peace of conscience, to bring us under a burden? Out from the body of the flesh, which spoils everything. Out from the world! Well, now, Christ in us is for this one thing, that what is true positively in Him shall be true continually in us. The application of the cross by the Holy Spirit of Christ crucified is just to get us out beloved, right out from all that upon which death and judgment rests. May we enter into His accomplished exodus by fellowship with Him in His death. We have still to see much more, both of what the death means, and then the resurrection and ascension. The Lord make this, at any rate, very real to us.

(To be continued). T. A-S.

For Boys and Girls

The Gospel on the Railway, (No. 4). Driving Power

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.”—Zech. iv. 6.

“Be filled with the Spirit.”—Eph. v. 18.

In London recently a real treat was provided for many boys—one of the “Lord Nelson” engines of the Southern Railway was on exhibition. Visitors were permitted to go on it and the driver was there too to answer questions about it. Hundreds of school boys had a life ambition realised in those days, and could proudly say that they had been on the footplate of a “Lord Nelson,” and I am sure that by the time some of them had finished questioning the driver there was very little about that engine that they did not know.

A Fine Outside but—

Supposing that amongst the many English boys who visited the engine (and who, of course, would know what was the secret of its power) there had been a boy from a land where railways are little known, and who had never seen or heard of an engine in his life. He would have seen the fine outside of the engine—the huge body, the funnel, the buffers, the enormous wheels taller than a full grown man, the tender with the coal on board, and then inside the fire-box a great fire eating up coal by the ton. If that were *all* that our foreign boy saw and if nobody gave him a hint of what else there was in that engine, do you see what impression he would form? He would think an engine was a great steel body on wheels with a fire inside and that somehow it managed to run along lines and pull coaches behind it. He would have left out one very important factor—the water in the boiler—not visible to those who looked at the engine from the outside, but absolutely necessary if the engine were to do its work. The whole secret of its power lay in the water hidden inside, converted (as of course you know) into steam by the heat of the fire, and thus able to supply the pressure that moved the engine.

It is the Inside that matters!

Now an engine with water in its boiler would

look from the outside just like one with *no* water on board, but the one would be ready for service and the other would be of no use at all. And this unseen factor is so important in other matters besides railway engines. For example, you must discover what is inside the heart of a person before you can know their true value. Let us consider the Lord Jesus Christ. To look at Him from the outside He was a man just like any other man of His day. We read that men said of Him “Is not this the carpenter?” “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?” and yet there was something about Him—not His outward form but something *within* Him—which made Him very different from all other men so that others had to say “What manner of man is this?” “Never man spake like this man,” “Who then is this?” What was the secret, inward, something that made Him so wonderfully different from all others, though He *looked* the same? The Bible tells us in this way—“God was in Christ” (2 Cor. v. 19), “God was with Him” (Acts x. 38). He was “Full of the Holy Spirit” (Luke iv. 1). The secret was—GOD. We know that Jesus was Himself God, but He lived here on this earth just as an ordinary man; and yet every word that He spoke and everything that He did was not the word or act of a man merely, but that which God spoke or did *through* Him by the Holy Spirit. If I may say it reverently, the Lord Jesus was like an engine full of water—the water of the Holy Spirit—and in His heart was a great burning love for His Father whose will He desired to do at any cost. It was this that made His life so wonderful. As we read of Him we are struck by the quiet, calm ease with which He went about, and yet the mighty things that were done by Him. There was never any hurry or fuss or excitement about His words or actions and yet they were always tremendous in their effect. How different from some of us! We look from the outside as if we are doing a great deal. We rush about we get excited, we make a great deal of noise, we often wear out ourselves and other people—

and yet we accomplish so little! Why is it so?

A Filling that means Power.

I will tell you—we are all too often like an engine with an empty boiler, and such an engine cannot do any useful work. All the heat of the fire will not drive it, but will only do it harm; and all our busy-ness and excitement will only wear us out and do nothing useful for God. *We must have His Holy Spirit*, as the Lord Jesus Himself had, if we are going to serve Him; and the more we are filled the more we shall accomplish. And we *may* be filled—yes, God's Word *commands* us to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. v. 18)—and it is surely, therefore, a very serious thing if we are *not* so filled. I have not space to tell you very fully how this may be brought about, but in a word it is this: (1) You can never have the Holy Spirit within you until you have received the Lord Jesus into your heart; and (2) You can never be *filled* with the Holy Spirit until you have made Jesus the Lord of your whole life. Have you done the first of these? If not do it now. And the second? Oh, how many people are losing the joy that might be theirs, and the privilege of serving the King of kings, by refusing to allow Jesus to reign over *every* part of their life. Have nothing that is not surrendered willingly to Him—enthroned Him as King, even in your play; whatsoever you do, even eating or drinking, do it heartily *as unto Him*; in *everything* obey His Word; and then you may well ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and He will, for He has promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him (Luke xi. 13) and to them that obey Him (Acts v. 32).

And thus continuing to own Jesus as King you may be kept filled with the Holy Spirit, and your life, like His, may be one of strong, deep, quiet and mighty service to God, and instead of using up much of your own strength to little purpose you will find that, young and weak as perhaps you are, He will work *through* you and do far greater things than ever you would have thought possible. "Not by might,

nor by power, but by my Spirit," the Lord has said (Zech. iv. 6). What a glorious promise for boys and girls who have not much power of their own and might be tempted to think they could do little in God's service!

You can be filled as you go!

But perhaps you are inclined to say that it is all very well to talk like this when circumstances in life are easy, but that yours is such a full and busy life, that you have not much opportunity for spending time waiting upon God, and how can you be expected to be *filled*? Well, listen—there are two ways by which an engine can take in its water supply; one is by drawing up under the pump in the station, and quietly standing by, doing nothing, while the water flows in. If you are doing all the quiet standing by that is possible, giving God a chance to fill you as you pray and read His Word, I am sure He will fulfil His promise to you. But there is the second way of filling—the engine can take up supplies from the water troughs between the rails as it rushes along on its journey—and the beauty of this is that the faster it is travelling the better it can be filled, and if it is going along in a leisurely way at less than 20 miles an hour, it cannot be filled at all. Do you see that God can fill you as you press on faithfully in your daily duties? No filling for the lazy ones who cannot be bothered to put their heart into things! But as you pursue your tasks day by day, seeking to please your Lord in even the little things, have your heart open to Him, just as the engine has its suction tube in the water trough, and His Spirit will flow in. And then what? Why, He will become the very power to carry you on yet more and more in your Master's service and will flow out through your life for the blessing of many others and for the glory of God.

Now please say—have you got water in *your* boiler? And if you have, are you *filled*? If you are not, there must be a reason—I wonder what it is?

G. P.

Love, Spiritual Intelligence and Worship

"Jesus *therefore*, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where was the dead man Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from among the dead. There, *therefore*, they made Him a supper, and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those at table with Him. Mary *therefore*, having taken a pound of ointment of pure nard of great price, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment."—John xii. 1-3. (New Translation).

WORSHIP is the highest form of expression of which the human spirit is capable as indwelt and illuminated by the Spirit of God. "The true worshippers.....worship the Father in spirit and in truth for the Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John iv. 23). "Such" is emphatic in the original. It is not so much that the Father is seeking worship as worshippers who know what true worship is. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him *must* worship in spirit and in truth."

Much that passes for worship to-day never reaches the heart of God or comes up before Him as grateful incense. Beautiful architecture, stained glass windows giving dim religious light, vestments, gorgeous ceremonial, etc., doubtless act upon the human soul and cause religious emotion, but this ends where it begins and never touches the Eternal. When the spirit rejoices in God its Saviour, the soul is moved to magnify the Lord, and thus spirit and soul are moving in harmony in adoration. This is the true order. In worship according to God's mind, the whole man, spirit, soul and body, is moving in its originally designed, harmonious, co-operative functioning, and is nearer heaven in experience than in any other form of spiritual activity. "We are the circumcision," says Paul, "who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3, R.V.).

No heart will worship that has not been moved to a deep and adoring love, but love alone will sadly blunder, even in the Holy Place. It must be a love informed, and made intelligent, by an inward unveiling of the

Person of Christ Who is the revelation of the Father, and a spiritual knowledge of the ways of God. For such an intelligent love we should earnestly pray, and seek, by sitting at the Master's feet, hearing His word, to come into an understanding of Himself and His own wondrous thoughts.

Is there any picture in all the beautiful range of Old and New Testament stories more perfectly expressive of true spiritual worship than that of the supper at Bethany, immediately preceding the agony of Calvary? A little company of redeemed and loving souls. Simon the leper, Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, together with the disciples who had companied with their Lord for over three years, and who had now travelled up to Judæa with Him, well knowing that in so doing their lives were at serious risk. "Let us also go that we may die with Him," Thomas had said when the Lord made known His intention of going to Bethany.

An intimate group of loving hearts, and the Lord in the midst the object of their concern. "They made HIM a supper." A simple feast, a token of true affection. He was central in their thought; everything was for Him. Simon, glad to place his abode at the disposal of the company; Martha, serving now in a simplicity of love she had not known before; not as previously "careful and troubled about many things, cumbered about much serving"; but simply "Martha served"; Lazarus, newly raised from among the dead, sitting at the table in the enjoyment of fellowship with his Lord; and Mary, pouring out her love in a passion of adoring devotion, as she breaks the alabaster vase and pours the ointment of spikenard, very costly, upon the head of her Lord, the precious nard flowing down to His feet and anointing His body for His burial, filling the whole house with its fragrance. How unspeakably precious to the heart of the Lord Jesus as He wends His way to Calvary's Cross and shame.

Howsoever viewed it is a sweet and affecting scene, but there is a hidden element in it as the story is told in our Authorised Version of the Scriptures, which is brought into clear relief in the rendering of John xii. 1-3, quoted above.

The inclusion of the word "therefore" in each of the three verses, throws us back on the story of the death and raising of Lazarus recorded in the previous chapter, and shows that all the individuals concerned were acting deliberately, in a fully intelligent apprehension of the situation.

The Lord Jesus knew that His hour had come (John xiii. 1) and "therefore" came to Bethany six days before the Passover. The little company of Bethany disciples also knew that Jesus was moving to the crisis of His ministry and "therefore" made Him a supper. Mary knew that Jesus was going both to death and resurrection, and "therefore" anointed His body "aforehand" (Mark xiv, 8) to the burying. She had been keeping the ointment against the day of His burying, but now her heart, overflowing with love, and her mind, illuminated by the knowledge that had come to her as to the glory of His Person, knowing now that death could have no dominion over Him, that His body could never need the embalming spices, she poured the treasures of her loving devotion upon Him while yet He sat at the table.

Mary of Bethany was not found at the tomb on the resurrection morning. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome, in their devoted, but blind, love might bring the spices (Mark xvi. 1) but only to find that the Lord was risen. The disciples might accompany the Lord to Bethany and Jerusalem in a spirit of real yet pathetic, devotion, thinking that the end of everything had come. He had told them repeatedly that He would rise again, but they understood not, they believed not. To Mary of Bethany had come an intelligence the disciples did not possess, and she was therefore able to enter into a close and understanding fellowship with her Lord.

The love of the whole group of loyal souls who were faithful to Him when the Scribes and Pharisees were seeking to put Him to death was very precious to the Lord. He forgave their unbelief; He excused their blindness, and accepted their heart's devotion. His blessing rested upon each individual, and, as they were able to receive it, He revealed the wonder of His Person and the glory of the work He was about to accomplish. To Mary Magdalene, disconsolate and weeping because His body had been removed from the grave, He appeared in resurrection, and, with His tender "Mary," flooded her heart with light making her His messenger to the other disciples. But how

lonely was the heart of our Lord; how few understood and entered into intelligent fellowship with Him. It was the intelligence of love manifested in the action of Mary of Bethany, as well as the deep devotion expressed in the lavishing of her costly gift upon His Person, that was so rarely precious to the heart of the Lord and earned His commendation. "Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. xxvi. 13).

What made the difference between Mary and the eleven disciples? How had she, together with Martha and Lazarus, come to the place of understanding fellowship where she knew Him as Resurrection and Life. Ah! had she not sat at His feet and heard His word? Had she not deliberately chosen that good part which the Lord would not take from her? Mary truly loved her Lord as also did Martha, although her love was expressed in a different way. Lazarus was glad always to welcome Him to their home, whenever, in the course of His ministry, His footsteps led Him to Bethany. Therefore is it recorded that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. And His love for this little group was so deep and pure that He desired for them the very highest blessing they had capacity to receive. In order that they might come to know Him in a deep, intimate, and wonderful way, He led them through the valley of the shadow of death, along the road of suffering and heartbreak.

"When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick He abode two days still in the same place where He was" (John xi. 6). Yes, He left Lazarus to die, instead of flying to his aid. And, as a result, the sisters were desolate. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died!" Such the poignant cry of anguish when at last he appeared. It was true. They knew enough of Him to realise that death was powerless in His presence. But now it was too late. Their brother had been dead four days and his body had gone to corruption. "By this time he stinketh." The thing they most dreaded, had happened. It was irretrievable. They would never see their loved one again, and even the personal presence of Jesus could not console their wounded hearts. Yet, was the situation quite hopeless? Despair and hope alternated. Jesus *had* come, and Martha says "I know that, even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee".....

"Thy brother shall rise again".....Ah! but that will not happen till the last day. The consolation of that thought may come later, but now the grief is too fresh, the heart too sore, to find comfort in the hope of ultimate resurrection.

Then came the word of revelation to which all the bitter experience had led. "I AM the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Martha's reply is so human. She reiterates her belief in His Person and mission, but misses the glory of the new revelation. It was too much for her to receive at once. That the Lord was, in Himself, Resurrection and Life, and that, in His presence with them, everything was secured, was more than the mind could grasp. But when the Lord manifested His power, and Lazarus came forth from the tomb at His word of command, then both Martha and Mary understood, and were deeply grateful that, through processes of pain, they had come into the light and now perceived the glory of His Person. This more than compensated for the suffering. They were lifted to a higher plane of spiritual experience.

It had been a blessed thing to know Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of God which should come into the world," but it was glorious beyond telling to be brought, even though it was through intense suffering, to a realisation of the full implications of their belief in Him, and to know that He was, in Himself, both Resurrection and Life. It was the wonder of that knowledge that made the supper at Bethany a time of such unspeakably precious fellowship. No mere social meal this. Here was the Christ of God, revealed to worshipping hearts as Resurrection and Life, moving deliberately and triumphantly into death, in order that, through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, and so secure as the Living One, the keys of Hades and of death. What a privilege to entertain such a guest. And what a gratification to His heart that here was a little company of those devoted to Him, who, having come into an intelligent fellowship with Him understood the situation. Rare and beautiful communion.

May we also love Him so devotedly, and trust Him so fully, that He may be able to lead us through those experiences, by means of which, the full glories of His Person may be

unveiled to our heart, and we may pour out our souls to Him in an utter devotion, inspired by an intelligent fellowship which co-operates with Him in the outworking of those glorious purposes for the realisation of which He endured the Cross of Calvary, despised its shame, and is now at the right hand of God, waiting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet.

S. A.

NEW BOOK

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The "Overcomer's" Pathway to the Throne

WE are now going to consider the pathway of the Overcomer to the Throne. We have seen that the last thing said in the Church age is "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne even as I overcame and am sat down with My Father in His Throne." Rev. iii. 21. "And the 'man-child' was 'caught up to the Throne.'" Rev. xii.

Now the first step in this pathway has to do with the Blood, the Cross and the Will of God. That is primary. That comes before anything else because it was the first issue; it will be the ultimate issue—the will of God. Before ever we have to do with sin by the Blood and all the aspects and phases of the redemptive work of the Lord through His cross by His Blood; before ever the question of sin arose the question of the will of God arose. That is where we begin. The sin question and all the redemptive work of Christ by His Blood in His Cross is subsequent to and consequent upon the violation of the will of God. Thus before ever we reach the stage of dealing with sin specifically by the Blood we have to get behind it and recognise that the foundation of it all is the Will of God. I want to be just as clear as possible so that we shall not get into a merely theoretical or theological realm, but remain very practical, and we want just to get before the eye of our heart what is in view. What is in view is the position of victory and power over the adversary and his hosts. That is what is before us here. Revelation xii brings that clearly into view. The great issue, the all-inclusive issue of the ages for eternity is bound up with this, the reaching on the part of a company to a position of victory and power over the adversary and his hosts. Now that is not done mechanically, we do not reach that position automatically. It is not reached by our recognition of certain doctrinal truths, and adopting certain attitudes and terms. I say that to try and clear the ground of misconceptions, because there are those I fear who think that if they take a certain attitude towards certain doctrinal propositions about victory and employ certain terms and phraseology, they are in the way of being Over-

comers, and that they are in a place of authority over the enemy.

That is not the case. Many who have adopted such attitudes and employed such terms and phraseology have just been the playthings of the enemy, and he has made fun of their phraseology and their terms and their attitudes. It has not worked out. This thing is not realised in that way, beloved: we do not get power over the enemy and his hosts by terminology, phraseology, or by the acceptance of teaching about this thing, or even taking up attitudes. There may be a place for the truth, there is a place for doctrine, teaching, and there is a necessity for attitudes, but these are not sufficient, and we do not attain to the position in that way, but it is a matter of a certain spiritual inwrought work of the Holy Spirit; it is a matter of certain spiritual elements being in the very nature and constitution of the Overcomer. Something has to be put into their very constitution. It is spiritual, not technical. What is the basic thing wrought into the constitution of the believer which makes him or her an Overcomer and brings him or her to the attainment of this power over the enemy and his hosts? What is it? The root of all is the will of God. The battle of the ages has ever had as its main issue the will of God. That little phrase, one of the commonest phrases amongst Christians, "Thy will be done" is the focal point of the battle of the ages; of all the forces of heaven and hell; they are concentrated upon the issues of that, "Thy will be done." The ages converge upon that, that is the issue between heaven and hell in the battle that has raged all the way through, and when you add the clause, "In earth as in heaven," you have set the stage, the place where that issue is settled. This earth becomes the stage upon which there is wrought out that issue of the will of God, and therein of course, is the explanation of the incarnation of God in Christ. Now we are able to gather that up into several concrete factors which we have to recognise. One is this; the fact of the presence of a will which is not subject to God's will, and that in us.

Now you all agree to that and accept that. It is almost a commonplace, it does not need a great deal of emphasis, it would in certain realms, but not with us. The man who does not believe in "the fall" would not accept that, but here I think we can take it for granted that we universally agree that there is a will in us which is not subject to the will of God, by nature. We are all too frequently made alive to that fact. But why does one say such an obvious thing here? Because you and I often forget it, and we are surprised when we come up against it, and are very disconcerted sometimes because of it. We find even these consecrated lives, these lives which we have declared as wholly the Lord's, ourselves as being all for God, about which we would unhesitatingly say we have no wish whatever but that the Lord should have all His way in us, even we from time to time have the most terrific conflicts, and all because of that other will. The surprise to us of the thing! We who thought we were all for the Lord are surprised from time to time that we have a bad time because things do not go just as we thought they ought to go, as we wanted them to go, as we prayed they should go, for the Lord's interests, ostensibly for the Lord's interests. As far as we knew our own hearts, we believed in our absolute sincerity that it was for the Lord, and yet we have bad times in that realm. Now we have got to settle it beloved, that there remains another will in the flesh which is not God's will, in nature, and which is not subject to the will of God in itself. There is another will, there is the will of the flesh, there is the will of nature, and I do not understand any of the teaching of God's Word about progressive sanctification unless I admit of that.

The next thing we have to recognise is the dealings with us by God to bring us to be governed inwardly by the Divine will; and then the third thing is that the Lord Jesus has perfected the will of God in Himself once for all, and has given the Holy Spirit to them that believe, to incenergise toward that position in us. That is, of course, the positive side, which is the most encouraging. "It is God Who worketh (energiseth) in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13.

The Will of God deeper than Doctrines,
Phraseology, or Attitudes.

Let us go over that ground a little

more carefully. The first, the presence of another will in this universe and in us by nature. Now beloved, this is not merely a mental or conscious attitude. I suppose there is not one of us who would not say, if we were asked, that we were wholly devoted to the will of God, that we wholly wanted the will of God, that we were wholly on the side of God's will. As to attitude and present consciousness we stand—we should say we stand—in the will of God and for the will of God. Our strongest affirmations are of that character. And yet the strange thing is that, while in all sincerity, we may affirm our position in this matter, we may at the same time be full of prejudices, preferences, personal interests, strong-minded holding or seeking to hold things to our own liking or desire. We may be gripped and held imprisoned by traditional systems and common acceptances. This is not a matter of just our conscious attitude or our consciousness at all. The Will of God is a truth deeper than consciousness and deeper than our present attitude. We may take that attitude this moment in relation to what we call the Will of God, and in half an hour's time, or perhaps tomorrow we may be tested very severely on a point in the Divine Will and our attitude may change and we discover that it was not a question of attitude at all but something deeper; it was not a matter of our consciousness, it was deeper than that. We never know how strong our will is until God puts us into situations where we behave as we never thought we should behave, where we betray ourselves because of the Lord's dealings with us. We have a controversy with the Lord, where the prevailing test of all is the will of God, where up to that time we have been saying, "Of course, all the will of God." Ah, but that was on the surface and we did not know what was involved, something deeper down; this other will would rise in our very nature, and in so far as that is true, we are in weakness and the enemy has got his ground, the ground to defeat us, the ground to hold power over us. And that is what I mean by this being a matter of something wrought into our constitution, not something we adopt as a mental attitude. And so we want the will of God, not something we believe about ourselves, not something which today—when things are not quite so difficult—we have as our consciousness towards God and His will, but something which is right beyond the reach of

changing attitudes, something deep down. We have come to a place where it is so and changing conditions cannot shake that thing because it has been wrought into our constitution: the will of God wrought in us and becoming our nature. We have become partakers of the Divine nature. It is a matter of nature, beloved, not of attitude, not of temporary consciousness in acceptance of truth; it is a matter of nature, new nature. We must recognise that. Until that is done we have no power over the enemy.

You see what I mean by taking up attitudes towards the enemy on the basis of doctrine and thinking we have ascendancy. It does not work. It is this Overcomer company being put to the test through the fire and having the will of God wrought into their very constitution. On that basis we are overcomers. You see where it comes in in Revelation xii. It comes in in the blood. "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb." What does that mean? Why "He poured out His soul unto death." When? How? "Father if it be possible let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thine." "The hour is come that the Son of Man shall be glorified..... except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone.....but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it....." Do you see in the pouring out of His blood, His soul life in the blood unto death, it was His utter acceptance of the Divine will and that blood poured out registers the triumph of God's will, and that blood has been taken by Him into the presence of God as a testimony to a will perfected. Now "they loved not their souls unto death." The "word of their testimony" led them far on the ground of His blood. The principles are all patent; that the overcomers—though not with the same universal redemptive effect but with the same issue over the enemy—the overcomers come along the line of the will of God as perfected in Jesus Christ. The blood represents God's will perfected in the first and supreme Overcomer, the Lord Jesus, and by the word of our testimony we stand on the ground of that blood testifying to the blood which has overcome the other will in the will of God. That is the word of our testimony; not doctrine, but the thing wrought in experience.

"They loved not their souls....." The doctrine is made good, the testimony is estab-

lished through the trial, and an erect dragon, standing to swallow us up is a good enough test as to whether we will stand for the will of God or not. This is a very practical thing. It goes deeper than attitudes, doctrine, consciousness; it is something wrought into us that makes us Overcomers, and that something is the will of God becoming constituted in our very make-up so that gradually we emerge from battles over the will of God and come to the place—not of passive resignedness—but of positive standing for God's will. There the power of the strong fleshly will is broken, which is the Satanic will which has been put into our very nature by the sin of Adam.

The Will of God wrought in us through Suffering.

The second thing; God's practical dealings with us to bring us to be governed inwardly by that will. This is the explanation of all our temptations, all our trials, the seeming contradictions that come even from the Lord Himself. I say "seeming contradictions." Very often we find ourselves in a position where it looks as though even the Lord contradicts Himself. The Abraham trials. God promised a son, and then said that in that son—which it has taken a miracle to bring into being—everything in the Divine promise and covenant was bound up. Then the Lord said go and slay him and offer him a burnt offering—a burnt offering, there is nothing left. The Lord seems to be turning round on Himself sometimes and contradicting Himself. The seeming contradictions, the Divine delays, the disappointments, the set-backs; all these things find out our will. These are not the ordinary common-place experiences. I am talking about the spiritual experiences of the Lord's children who are, so far as they understand their own hearts, sincerely devoted to the will of God, and yet we all are passed through this course of testing where we come up against severe temptations and trials, contradictions, delays, disappointments, set-backs, and all this sort of thing, and they find us out.

The Lord knows us better than we know ourselves, and "the heart is deceitful above all things." The Lord knows we may be sincere in our own eyes, but He knows just how much *we* would like that, how much *that* is a secret appeal to what we would like, we would take; how there is that to which we would not open our eyes wide, we keep them half closed

and say if only that comes about how delightful! There is something after all that *we* would wish, that *we* would desire: just that half or three parts element of self gratification. We would not admit it, we hardly recognise it, and yet we find our own soul responds to it. Beloved, you may say this is analysing very closely and making things difficult, but we have to get right down to the truth of things. There is something there which weakens the ground for God, and it is a tremendous triumph over the enemy when a child of God can come to the place where the greatest hopes and most cherished desires and ambitions are handed up to the Lord and are as dead in the acceptance of what the Lord may desire. If there is any personal, fleshly—I do not mean gross, I mean natural fleshly—ambition preference, like, will, in any direction, if there is that, you may settle it once and for all that that is the ground of confusion. You will not get clear guidance from the Lord if there is mixture of the will of God with the will of the flesh. The Lord cannot guide us clearly if we have personal desire in the matter; if we have a little bit of personal strength moving; if our soul comes in, whether it be the reasoning or affectional soul or the volitional soul, the choosing soul; it is *our* soul-life. If that comes in one little bit we have no ground of clear guidance from the Lord. We have to stand back and say, not as I desire, will, or think, but absolutely as God wills. We have to get to the place where, by the grace of God, we can truly occupy the position that it does not matter to us personally so long as the Lord gets what He is after. Believe, me, beloved, then you have provided a ground for clear guidance; but if there is strength of soul life as such getting into any question or issue, it brings about confusion and we shall simply get contrary guidances and not a clear way with the Lord. It is a ground of weakness, we cannot stand up, we cannot meet the situation, we are weak, and, therefore it is the ground of defeat, a ground of the power of Satan.

The Ground of Satan's Strength.

Satan's power is maintained not merely by what he is in himself but by the ground that he has in man, he must have a ground, a judicial ground of his own somewhere, upon which to operate. The Lord Jesus was able to overcome because He could say "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me." We are

defeated on that ground, our defeat takes place on the ground of our own strong will. Yes, often that which we colour and dress up as being desired for the Lord. We never know whether our protestations that it is for the Lord are really genuine until submitted to a severe test. We have said, "All the Lord's will in that," and the Lord has put us in something pretty hot, and we come back and say "this is exacting more than I thought it would, this is finding me out: I was a bit rash....." You invoke the challenge of God when you take that position. You see the Overcomer must come to the position where there is wrought into him or her this will of God as a part of their constitution through testing, trials, adversities; where they come to the place where nothing is worth while but the will of God. It is a great thing to find yourself eventually experimentally and positionally where you once were doctrinally, and sometimes it is a long and trying and terrible journey from where we say, "Yes, all the will of God," until you get there. We are not there by saying it, we are there by a thing wrought in us. There must then finally be a letting-go to the Lord. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, because there is that of this creation which must be cast off. The motive may be good, the sincerity may be all right, but there are personal things bound up with it, desires, ambitions, things which would give us much pleasure. There is this secret mixture of ourselves, and although the Lord is going to save something—there is something very precious for Himself—He has to put the whole thing down into death that in death it shall be stripped of every bit of personal, natural soul interest and raise in resurrection a thing which is wholly of Himself—and then you get the enlargement—the Son of Man glorified.

I will close, reminding you of the third thing. While we stand face to face with the severity of this thing (it is a tremendous thing when you are coming through it and having the will of God wrought into you and all things are being brought to death) it is blessed to remember that the will of God has already been perfected in Christ and He has in Himself secured our perfection in the will of God. Read again Hebrews x. 10 "By which will we have been sanctified....." Perfected for ever by the will of God done in Christ. "I come to do Thy will, O God." "By which will we have been sanctified." He has done it, He has secured it, and He has secured our perfection in God

in Himself and now, on the ground that something has been done, a living, standing reality, a fact to which nothing can be added, He has sent the Holy Spirit to enter into us who receive Him, to be in us the inenergising power of the will of God. God the Holy Spirit working, energising in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is a blessed thing to get linked up with something that is done. Not a doctrine but a living Person, by a mighty power, the Holy Spirit, God Himself working in towards something He has achieved. It is not enough to take hold of that as doctrine. We have to take hold in a practical way. On the one hand, let go to the Lord, and on the other hand reach out strongly and take hold of the energies of the Lord that there shall be a fulfilment in us of the words "It is God Who worketh in you to will and to do....." In the hour when we are challenged, when after all the will of God is not so easy to accept, when we are passing through the

test and when we are in our Gethsemane, when the cup is offered to us—then, what is it to be? "O fulfil that word in Philip. ii. 13," "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Unless He does it we will not go through, but by that inenergising of God, "strengthened with might by His Spirit into the inner man" we shall become Overcomers, we shall come to the place where Satan is robbed of his ground of power in us because the will of God perfectly done is now a part of our being, we have approximated to that experimentally. I leave these closing words of the Hebrew letter with you, "The God of peace Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in everything to do His will, energising in you that which is well pleasing in His sight."

T. A.-S.

The Meaning of Union with Christ

"If, then, ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, WHERE CHRIST IS, seated on the right hand of God."—Col. iii. 1.

"WE BEHOLD HIM (Jesus).....crowned with glory and honour."—Heb. ii. 9.

"LOOKING OFF UNTO JESUS, the author and perfecter of our faith, who.....hath sat down AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD."—Heb. xii. 2.

The Meaning of Christ's Presence on Earth

THE presence of Christ here on earth had two purposes. One was that there might be a perfect presentation of God to man. The other was that He might take up man according to God's thoughts. There were very few, if any, who saw him in the first aspect. "The world knew Him not." Even those who were most closely and continuously in touch with Him, looking on Him, hearing Him, watching Him, did not really see Him. Toward the end He had to say to one of them, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me. He that hath *seen* me hath seen the Father." But in that true sense they had not *seen* Him. He was here to personally represent

the mind, heart, and will of God, but it needs the Holy Spirit to open the eyes to Christ in these respects. Nevertheless, God has had a perfect representation of Himself here on the earth, and thenceforth all knowledge of Him is inseparably bound up with the person of Jesus Christ. In a sense, of old time, the Jews went directly to Jehovah, the first Person in the Godhead. They did not look upon the sacrifices, priesthood, etc., as more than things. That is, they did not personify these, and regard them in the light of a mediating Person. But from the time that Christ came into this world, entered upon His ministry, and accomplished His work in the Cross, God could never be known apart from Him, and in the most direct sense His words are true, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." No Jew from that time would or will ever know God apart from Christ. When the name "Jehovah" went out of the Jewish Temple—as it did—it entered in the form of "Jesus" (Jehovah-Saviour) into the Christian Church. This first aspect of Christ's presence here is, however, not the object of our present consideration. We are here concerned with the other side in particular, although they cannot

be separated. Christ was here to take up man as to God's thoughts about man. In Christ God had a man wholly according to His thought. (In what we are saying about Christ as man, we are not touching His deity, or overlooking the fact that Christ *was* God. That we believe absolutely, and about it we have no reservations. We are here dealing with His humanity.)

One of the main purposes why Christ spent some years here was that as man He should be tried, tested, proved by every kind of fiery ordeal as to His faithfulness, obedience, and devotion to God. The meal offering of Leviticus ii. is Christ's humanity, as is well known. That meal offering was prepared for presentation by fire in three ways. The oven, the pan open at the top, or the flat pan. The oven speaks of the fiery ordeal in secret where no life could see. The second method suggests those trials which only those who are sympathetic enough to look into can see. The flat pan is the form and nature of suffering and trial which is patent and open to all. In all of these ways the Lord Jesus was "made perfect through sufferings" and "tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin." He was tried by every realm. He met hell directly through its head—Satan himself tempted him—and exhausted its resource to break His faithfulness and loyalty to His Father. During forty days in the wilderness He was thus directly assailed. It was but "for a season" that the Devil left Him then, and doubtless He had many another secret—oven-like—conflict with the "Prince of this World" over the matter of faith and obedience.

The world assailed Him. The world system, religious and pagan, circumstances, relatives, friends (?) and the commercial, social and professional realms all tried Him out. Even within the narrow circle of His own earthly home, not excluding the beloved and devoted mother, was His relationship to His heavenly Father put to the test.

Then, at length, in one terrible moment, heaven was the source of the supreme test. The Father had to forsake Him, and this broke His heart. Nevertheless, He triumphed, and almost immediately after the terrible cry of forsakenness He cried "FATHER, into Thy hands I commit my spirit." Thus He was tested and triumphant in every realm—heaven, earth, and hell; and in every form of trial. Thus He, as the "Captain"—file-leader—of our salvation was made perfect, through sufferings."

This brings us to the point where we are able to answer the question as to why the Lord Jesus is as "Son of Man" in heaven: For it was "the Son of Man" whom Stephen saw standing on the right hand of God. It was "Jesus of Nazareth" who spoke and appeared to Saul of Tarsus. It is "Jesus" whom the Apostle says "we see, crowned with glory and honour," and to Whom we are to "look off." It is "One like unto the Son of Man" who is repeatedly seen in the Book of Revelation. The truth, then, is that at God's right hand in the Person of His Son there is a MAN wholly according to His thoughts concerning man. God has got in His presence in the place of honour and power (right hand) a MAN who wholly satisfies Him and answers to all His eternal mind as to man. There is a humanity in God's presence with which He can be in the most perfect fellowship. Now, this is the whole foundation of Christianity, provided it is born in mind what this includes and involves as to the meaning of His Cross.

Everything in God's interest is bound up with Christ at God's right hand. This we shall see from several points of view or by taking its various inclusions. The first main truth in this apprehension of Christ is that Christ in heaven is

The Pattern to which God is Working.
in all them that believe.

We are not here saying much about the *positional* meaning of Christ in glory, but are chiefly concerned with the *conditional* aspect. It is blessedly and wonderfully true that He is there *as us*, and that when we are "in Christ Jesus" all that is true of Him there is placed to the good of those who believe, and they are "accepted in the Beloved One." All that that means is a comprehensive revelation of the grace of God and should never cease to be the believer's theme of praise and ground of confidence.

But it is true that what obtains in Christ there *for us* is the Father's concern to make good *in us*. The all-inclusive statement concerning this matter, and which leads right on to the end is Romans viii. 29: "Whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

God's object, then, is to have a family fully brought to the image of the Son who is at His right hand. That object sets the bounds to the interest of God. All His interest is bound

up with that, and He has no interest outside of that. Christ is "the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last," the beginning and the ending.

How will God operate unto that end? Here, again, we are on what is—although elementary, yet—most vital. He will do it inwardly and from within. The only but sure hope of glory is "Christ in you."

What is the New Birth?

This postulates the absolute necessity of the new birth. What is the new birth, simply? It is receiving Christ as the Life into the heart by faith. Not life as a thing, in the abstract, but life in inseparable relation to the Person. This is emphatically so on the ground that the Holy Spirit is a Person: He is the "Spirit of Christ," and He is the "Spirit of Life," and there is no relationship to Christ apart from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Rom. viii. 9).

So, then, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and "Eternal Life" are one as to the basis and resultant relationship to Him. Christ is the Object and Central Reality. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Agent. Eternal Life is the basis of relationship to God.

Whatever terms we may use, whether "New Birth," being "Born anew," "Born from above," "Regeneration," or "Born of God," the meaning is one, and it is that we receive in Christ by the Holy Spirit the life of that One Who is at God's right hand. Nothing is possible of conformity to His image until that life has been put within us. As in a newly born infant the life contains all the elements, possibilities and potentialities of the fully grown man to be, so in new birth all that Christ is as "made perfect" is in the life of His Spirit then imparted.

By nature *that* life is not in any one, it is the "gift of God" in new birth, regeneration by the Holy Spirit. It is upon that new life within that all God's interests are centred. The growth, increase, and development of that life with all its features is the one purpose of the Holy Spirit in the believer. Paul wrote to certain believers—"my little children for whom I travail in birth until Christ be fully formed in you." Christ fully formed within; that is the nature of spiritual growth.

The new birth is the beginning and provides the Holy Spirit with His basis. That is the first step in answering the question as to the

nature of union with Christ. It is oneness with Him in His risen and enthroned life. That is life which is already *in Him* consummated in full triumph.

The second thing in this union on the side of state is sanctification.

What is Sanctification?

This great doctrine can be quite adequately brought within the compass of two simple statements for our purpose here.

Sanctification is firstly an act, and that an act of making the object wholly the Lord's. In Old Testament times when a thing or a person was sanctified (consecrated, devoted, sanctified; all same word) it or he was first taken apart and separated from all other interests and made wholly the Lord's. From that time all the proprietary rights were His, and it was recognised that He had the entire claim upon it and government of it. It was consecrated or sanctified by blood or that which had the same symbolic significance. This is the simple fundamental meaning of sanctification.

"*Ye are not your own, ye were bought with a price*" (1 Cor. vi. 20).

"*Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold.....but with precious blood*" (1 Peter i. 18).

It is—in an act—presenting spirit, soul, and body to the Lord that in every part and in all the details of life He shall have first and final consideration: be consulted on all matters of mind, heart, and will; the personal life with the entire self principle and natural constitution handed up by the Cross to be absolutely subject to the will of God. Christ at the right hand of God represents man as in an act abandoned to the will of God; tried as to that abandonment in every way; and victorious as to that initial act. That act has to be entered into by the believer, and maintained in the energy of the Holy Spirit to the end.

There is abiding virtue and power in His act "once for all" for us in our receiving of His Spirit.

Then, secondly, sanctification is a progressive thing. It is the process by which all that is true of the moral excellencies of His glorified humanity is wrought in the believer. The things of Christ taken by the Holy Spirit and revealed to His own are not just the splendours and riches and possessions which He has entered into for Himself. Neither are they just *things* gained as a reward. They are those perfec-

tions through sufferings which are to be made over to believers, and into which believers are to be brought that they may also share the glory which rests upon perfected humanity as its native state as invested by an all satisfied and delighted God.

As "we behold Him we are changed from one degree of glory to another, as by the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

This beholding is by the Spirit's revealing *inwardly*, and what is revealed is the truth of Christ as "made unto us sanctification," that is, sanctification *for us and in us*.

I see, by the Spirit that sanctification is not my struggling and striving to be better. It is the fruit of Christ's conflict and victory appropriated by faith. It is not my moral improvement by effort or care, but the appreciation and apprehension of Christ's moral perfections as secured for me. Christ in glory is the pattern in the eye of the Holy Spirit, and He would work in me conformity to that pattern, asking of me yieldedness, surrender, faith, obedience; unto all of which He is willing to be my strength as I take an attitude of a positive character in line with His purpose, as over against a mere passivity of mind.

Why we are Chastened.

Thus sanctification is the meaning of "Christ at the right hand of God," and of our union with Him in the Spirit. What is true of the New Birth as the basis, and of Sanctification as the all-inclusive process, explains the dealings of God with us in training. We must be careful that we do not fall into the snare of thinking of God as ever standing over us with a stick, ready to pounce upon our faults and immediately punish us. "Chastening," as in Hebrew xii. is not just punishment, it is "child-training." True it represents suffering in the main. But then there are those of us who, now we are of matured judgment, justify parents up to the hilt for the chastening which, when it was given, was regarded as cruel and unloving. We wonder what we should be but for it, and those of us who are parents have long since changed our thoughts about many of the unpleasant experiences of childhood. We may smart under any little bit of injustice which clings so tenaciously to memory, but we are not now in the hands of an unjust or unrighteous Father.

God is after an "afterward." What is it? "The peaceable fruits of righteousness." That is, a *state* where there is no discord or strain in

relationships. This is nothing other than Christ's present state with the Father being made good in us also. So all the difficult aspects of our training are to the same end—conformity to His image.

The Motive of Ministry.

There is one other aspect of this matter to which we will point before we close. It is in relation to ministry and fellowship. What should be the predominant motive and aim of ministry, whether to us or through us? It most certainly should be with God's one end in view, and everything should be sacrificed for, or brought into line with that. God's one end is likeness to His Son. In ministry everything must be subjected to the test as to how far it is calculated to reach that end. With God Himself the value of anything and everything is determined by this. Methods, materials, manner, personal presence, and everything are to come under this test. Only the Holy Spirit can bring to Christ and conform to Christ. Hence ministry is of value according as it is in the Holy Spirit. Not only does this apply to our ministry, but it must influence us in the matter of what we accept and where we go.

Are we being built up in Christ? Does what we receive really tend to inwardly increase Him? Is it Christ being ministered to us in the Holy Spirit? If not, then no matter how interesting, brilliant, informing, or attractive, we are wasting our time, the eternal thing is not being done, and God's end is being missed. This principle must also apply to the fellowship of believers. It is so easy to fall into the trap of talking on all sorts of commonplaces, matters of interest, and often into a spiritually dissipating jocularity and frivolity, and then when the time is gone to realise that the heart cries out in hunger for that which alone is its Bread—even Christ. Fellowship should be unto mutual upbuilding and definitely to impart Christ to one another.

Hebron was where they made David King and feasted for days in happy fellowship. Fellowship should always be the festivity of the crowned—exalted—glorified Lord, and more of Himself in our heart should be the outcome.

Thus we see that everything in the life of the believer from the beginning is related directly and in a practical way with Christ in glory, and the nature of union with Christ is that of the Holy Spirit's activities unto our conformity to His image, individually and corporately.

T. A.-S.

The Holy Spirit in Relation to The Glorified Christ and The Believer

Readings : John xvi. 5-15 ; vii. 38-39.

" He that believeth on Me as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him were to receive : for the Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Beloved of God, for some considerable time my heart has been growingly exercised concerning the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Lord has something that He wants to say to His people in this connection, and something that He wants to do in and through His people in this connection in some new way in this end-time. If one has not misread the leading of the Spirit, we are right in gathering at this time for the Lord to speak to us on this matter. I am quite sure that we, with a great many more of the Lord's people, are deeply conscious, and increasingly conscious, of the need for some fuller expression of the life, power, and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church ; which of course means in ourselves as members of Christ. And while it is not my thought at this time, or the leading which I have, to seek to present a system of doctrine concerning the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, I do feel that the Lord has some things within that compass that He really does want us to take heed unto. We are not going, for instance, to discuss whether the Holy Spirit is a Person or not. I think we can all take that as settled. If it is not, well, let us get it settled outside, for that is not the matter which concerns the majority of us here, who have, I am sure, settled that matter long ago. There are other similar matters in relation to the Holy Spirit which we will take as settled and for granted, but there are some things which, while we may be well acquainted with them, we need to have renewed as a serious matter of quest and enquiry before the Lord.

There are, I think, in the main two or three directions in which this matter of the Holy Spirit concerns us spiritually in these days.

There is, for instance, the matter of power. Power by the Holy Spirit ; the Holy Spirit as a Spirit of power. That is a matter that concerns us, for the Lord's people are almost universally, at least very generally, conscious that the forces which are against His Testimony, His work, are well nigh too much for them, if not altogether beyond their ability to cope with. There is a sense of severe limitation, real weakness, inability to make much headway, a mighty withstanding and obstructing, a terrific pressure and adversity which raises the whole question of power. We are all in our hearts just crying to the Lord that we might know more of the power of God in our lives, and then in what ministry the Lord may give us beyond the ministry of the individual's life testimony, that is, in specific ministry that may be entrusted to us. That is one realm in which the whole matter of the Holy Spirit is a living one for us to-day. And then again, the question of truth ; this is, I think, equally a living one at this time. While we are up against that force of opposition, that power of evil, that mighty antagonism of the adversary, we are also up against widespread and growing error which is taking the subtle form of a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. There is no doubt but that there are movements in the earth at this time which are a counterfeiting of the Holy Spirit even in the matter of regeneration or new birth or conversion ; and in many other connections the Holy Spirit is being counterfeited ; and the sad, grievous tragedy of it all is that multitudes of the Lord's own dear children are being carried away by these things. It is quite easy for us to say that we do not want *teaching*, we want life, we want power, we want work, we want activity, but, beloved, we need teaching. The matter of truth by the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth is a very, very vital, important matter for us to-day. We cannot speak about wanting power as something in itself ; these two things must go together, truth and power, power and truth.

The Peril of making Experience an End in Itself.

Now the third thing, which of course embraces these two, is the question of experience, and here we are on perhaps the most dangerous ground of all, for so many of the Lord's dear children, in conscious disappointment and weakness and insufficiency, are just crying, praying, longing, for an experience, a new experience, a fresh experience, and are stretching themselves out for such. They relate their experience mentally to the Holy Spirit, they speak about the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and such like terms are used, but it is an experience that they are after. Now that is right and it is wrong, and we want to be very clear as to the right and the wrong of an experience in relation to the Holy Spirit. It is a most dangerous thing to go out for an experience *as such*, to have an experience as an object in view in itself. It opens the way for deception, for delusion and for the inrush of counterfeit. It draws out our soul-life, and brings us into a strained and almost occult state, making many of the Lord's dear children mediumistic, and they are carried away, therefore, by anything that the counterfeiter of the Holy Ghost likes to offer them, providing it is couched in biblical terms and presented in a semblance of evangelical doctrine. The danger there, beloved, is the supreme peril of the hour, a stretching out of the soul for an experience, as such. But oh, my heart in these days is terribly burdened concerning the Lord's people, that He would say something, if possible here, but that He would in any case raise up a ministry for the safeguarding of His people in these very perilous days, these days which are perilous in these particular respects. There is going to be a terrible state of things before very long in the discovery of multitudes of dear children of God that they have been misled, they have been led off and that the thing that has carried them away is not the true, although it had all the marks of the true as far as they were able to see; but it was another, another and not the truth as the truth is in Jesus. As far as the Lord would enable us, we should seek to come into true light to-day by the Word of the Lord, and full understanding, that on our part we might be preserved, and that also we may be able to help in the preservation and safeguarding of other children of God. Pray that the Lord may raise up that ministry and pray that even now, in this message if it be

His will, there may be that which shall be for the saving of His own people in a day like this.

Now with regard to experience. Things, of course, must be experimental as differing from merely doctrinal, theoretical. There must be experience and there must be experience in relation to the Holy Spirit; but in what way is experience safe? Well, let us remind ourselves of the New Testament position about this matter, that while the Holy Spirit's manifestation, coming, presence, activity in the New Testament was ever an experience on the part of those concerned, it was not *just* an experience, it was not an experience just in itself, something that they felt, something that they heard, something that broke in upon their senses; the experience was always related to a Person and that Person was the glorified Lord Jesus, and the experience always brought Christ glorified personally into evidence, so that their immediate, spontaneous expression was the glorifying of Jesus in word, in testimony, in life, in manner, in every way. Christ glorified came into evidence at that moment, and they did not go about saying that they had had some kind of beautiful sensation, emotion, high-tensioned experience; they went immediately to speak about the Lord Jesus. That is the only realm in which the experience is a right quest. We must always relate the Holy Spirit in every form and fragment of His activity, to the Person of the Lord Jesus, for that is where the New Testament makes the link. And so we must cease to seek for an experience in itself. We must seek for an expression, a manifestation, a glorifying of the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit as our experience. Beloved, if the Lord Jesus is glorified in our lives we have the Holy Spirit, for that is not possible otherwise. If He is the One who is before the consciousness of others as glorified, that is the testimony, coming right from our innermost being and registering itself upon others, you may take it for granted the question of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is alright, it is settled. But though we may have had all kinds of wonderful experiences, and people are impressed with us and something that has happened to us, and we are brought into evidence, and we are circling around ourselves and our own experience, and the Lord Jesus is not the registered fact upon other consciousnesses, but we occupy the field, there is some real question of our

having become controlled, dominated, filled, baptized (whatever you like to call it) by the Holy Spirit. It must be related to Him. That is why we have read this passage as a key to whatever the Lord Jesus may have to say to us. "This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive: the Spirit was not yet because Jesus was not yet glorified." The Spirit could not begin His work until He had got that which was essential to His work. The Holy Spirit's ministry could never be commenced within a believer until He had got that which was essential to His ministry in full, which was Christ glorified. Which means that the ministry, the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the believer is based wholly and solely upon the glorification of the Lord Jesus.

Why did the Holy Spirit Come?

Now then, let us begin to sift this out and bring it down to a few quite clear, concise facts, realities. We begin by asking one very general question. Why did the Holy Spirit come? I think, as far as I know, the best answer to that question is: to take the place of the Lord Jesus here. That will embrace a great deal. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Holy Spirit will not come." So that the Lord Jesus considered that the presence of the Holy Spirit here was more important than His personal human presence on the earth, that it at least meant what his presence meant in the flesh, but more. So that we might quite safely and truly say that the Holy Spirit came to take the place of the Lord Jesus here. Let us ask another question which will bring us a step further toward our ultimate conclusion. Why did the Lord Jesus spend thirty years first, three and a half years second, and forty days third, here on earth? The answer of course is a simple one. In order that, firstly, He might be associated with humanity vitally and practically; that is the meaning of the thirty years beginning with the Incarnation. You have no need that we take up all that the scripture has to say about the Incarnation; one scripture is enough, I think for the moment. "Inasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also partook of the same that through death He might destroy him that had the power of (the hold) of death and deliver all those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death." "He also

partook of the same. "Being made in the likeness of man and being found in fashion as a man," a second very strong scripture. And thirdly, "Though He was a son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." Many more scriptures bringing Him into a vital relationship with humanity could be cited, but I think we recognise that He should have been here, though silently and mainly in seclusion for thirty years before His manifestation to the world, is not without point, not without reason and not without the best of reasons. When you remember that in the Old Testament He appeared in the form of a man again and again and was seen and spoken with in a full-grown man's form—where He got that body you do not know, I do not know; where it went to you do not know, I do not know, but on many occasions He was seen as a man. The scriptures make it absolutely clear and certain that that One who appeared was God, but He then for specific purposes, at given times, just for a moment, took a man's fully-developed form and appeared to accomplish something, and then disappeared. We do not know any more about the means of His manifestation then, but here He chooses to come by the way of an infant's birth and abide for thirty years, and there is something different here from that, and it is because, now, as differing from then, He has become vitally linked with the race as He was not then, partaking of the same flesh and blood, yet without the stain of sin. Well, the thirty years primarily, I think, represents His relationship to humanity, vitally, that is, livingly and practically, I mean in a practical way. He was a baby, and He was a boy, and He was a youth, and He was a young man and went through all that such go through, and you do not want to put a halo round His head and make of Him an extraordinary exception from all boys and youths and men, except that you will not find sin in Him: yet He had a boy's life, a youth's life, and young man's life. He is in a practical way related to humanity. The three-and-a-half years are the second phase and they bring in new factors, as to why He was here. Well, they bring into view the fact that He was here to reveal, to manifest the Father's mind, the Father's love, and the Father's power. They were the years of the unveiling of God's mind, God's thought in and through Christ.

Beloved, everything that you will find subse-

quently in the New Testament in the book of Acts, in the Epistles or in the Revelation as truth, you will find its seed, its germ, in the gospels. That is an important thing to remember. Put that down, that you will not find in the subsequent writings of the New Testament what you cannot trace in germ in the teaching of the Lord Jesus. His three and a half years' teaching was the seed plot of all Divine revelation. That will give you enough study to the end of your days! It was the revelation, not that man apprehended it, grasped it, understood it, not even those nearest to Him understood; nevertheless it was the revelation of the Father's mind for man. How wonderful it is. We might spend many hours, many weeks with that alone, to see the aspects of that truth, the revelation of the Father's mind and the riches of that teaching. And ought we to make comparisons? Perhaps not, but one was going to say, the richest is John's record: And what has John, as differing from the others, to reveal about the Father's mind?

It is this, the Father's coming down all the time to man. It is a wonderful revelation of how God takes the initiative toward man. The whole aspect of John's Gospel of the teaching and work of the Lord Jesus is God taking the initiative, God coming down. That is blessed, that is precious, follow that out in the rest of the New Testament. You know what we are trying to do, trying to pump up this vile stream of our humanity to reach God, when God is pouring down the stream of Divine life to reach us. We are struggling somehow to get up in all the vileness of our flesh, into touch with God, and it never succeeds. But the revelation of God's mind is that God has come down to us in all His holiness. That is "John." That is comforting surely to our hearts. I merely touch it as signifying what I meant by revealing the mind of God in the three and a half years. And then, revealing the Father's love.

T. A-S.

(To be continued).

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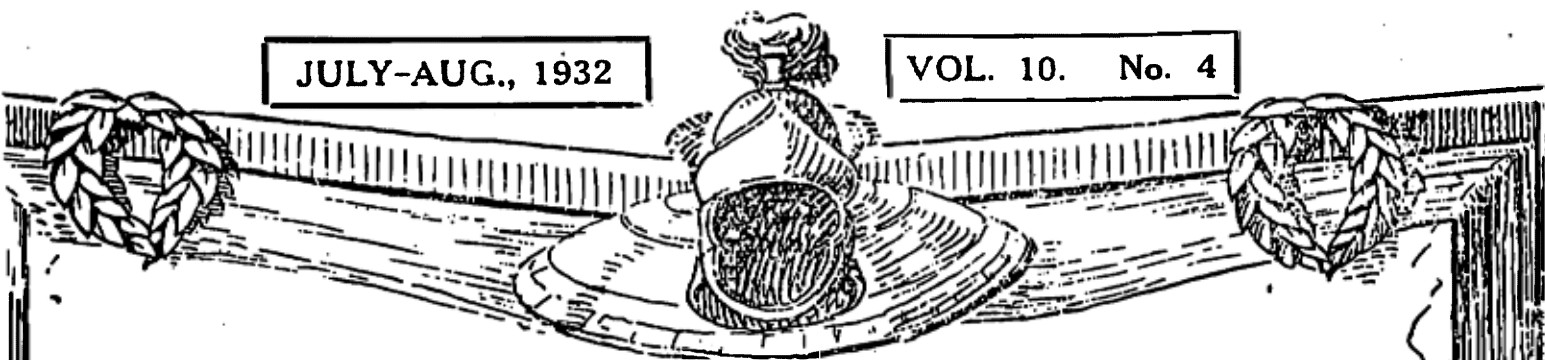
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Witness and a Testimony

JULY-AUG., 1932

VOL. 10. No. 4



“ I WILL MAKE
ALL MY
MOUNTAINS
A WAY ”

ISAIAH xlix. 11.



"A Witness and A Testimony"

EDITORIAL

THERE is but little to report on this occasion concerning those who have gone forth from this Centre to serve the Lord elsewhere.

Mr. and Mrs. Speedy

continue in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) applying themselves diligently to the study of the language, and using the frequent opportunities which the Lord is opening to them for the ministry of the Word. They are still looking to Him for clear guidance concerning any step that they are to take out from Addis Ababa and solicit continual prayer concerning this.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster

write encouragingly from Quihdo, Colombia. They sense a growing antagonism from the Roman Catholic Authorities, but report that a still greater obstacle to the work is the love of the world that holds the hearts of the people. Our friends are, however, much cheered by finding everywhere a ready hearing for the Gospel, and are continually occupied in sowing the seed of the Word. They feel that the Lord has indeed led them to the right centre from which to reach out to the rest of the Choco region of Colombia, and they are looking earnestly to Him to add other workers to them so that the neighbouring country can be opened up.

There are others of the Lord's servants in this country with whom we are in fellowship and upon whose hearts the burden rests both for Colombia and for Ethiopia, and we shall value prayer that these may be prepared by the Holy Spirit to go forth in His time to join our friends who are already in those lands.

Mr. Yankowski

in Poland has been continually engaged in the ministry of the Word in and around the town of Luck. He has found conditions by no means easy, but he is encouraging himself in the Lord, and there are not lacking tokens that his ministry is being used for the blessing of other hearts. Our brother needs continually to be encompassed by prayer, particularly in view of his being alone.

Forthcoming Ministries and Gatherings.

MR. SPARKS is expecting to be on the Continent for three weeks in September. One week at a series of gatherings at Gumligen, Switzerland with Pastor Imberg; the following week at the Dieulefit convention; and the third week with the Russian friends in Paris.

HONOR OAK CONFERENCE,

October 1 and 2.

Mr. Alexander will be at The Lowestoft Convention September 12-16.

Mr. Sparks and Mr. Alexander are expecting to be at the Dublin Convention, October 3 to 7.

BRADFORD.—The first of the Quarterly Conferences in Bradford will (D.V.) be held on October 15, 16, 17.

EDINBURGH.—Every second and forth Tuesday.

LANARK.—Every third Thursday.

NEWCASTLE.—September 23.

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The Food Question

READING : John iv. 31-34 ; vi. 1-14, 60-71.

THESE three portions of scripture all have to do with the food question. The food question is very much in view in these portions of the Word of the Lord, and it is about spiritual food that I feel the Lord wants something said at this time.

The Lord's desire is Fulness.

There are some simple deductions that we may draw, and conclusions to which we may come from this opening part of chapter vi., such as the clear fact that the Lord Jesus has it in His heart that all who come to Him should be fully satisfied. He was moved with compassion. It is a heart matter with the Lord Jesus that all who come to Him should be fully satisfied, that they should be filled full. Our translation often puts the word the other way round, "fulfilled," but it is the same thing, filled full. When you come to think about it, this is a Divine thought expressed throughout the whole of the Scriptures. God desires fulness to be a mark of the life which is related to Himself, and God's ultimate intention is that all His fulness shall be poured into the vessel of the Church, the Body of Christ : filled full in Him. That is one simple deduction to be made from this portion of Scripture, and must be before us both as a fact stated and a test of our relationship to the Lord. It immediately interrogates us : have we found in the Lord Jesus absolute fulness, complete satisfaction, or are we still without that finality which is in Him ? Are we enjoying and rejoicing in fulness in Christ ? With that testimony to His desire, that test before us, we are led on in these passages to see the way of fulness, and then the object of fulness, so that these three things, very simple, are here. Firstly, the Lord's desire that these in relation to Himself should be filled full, and have something to spare ; then as to the way of fulness, and then as to the object of fulness.

I think we can dismiss number one at once. I hope we can. Our hearts do respond to that. Many of us are quite ready immediately to say that we know the Lord's desire is for our fulness because He has become to us all and in all. That does not mean that we have no more desire, no more longing, but it does mean

that we have found the realm in which all our satisfaction is gathered up, and that realm is the Lord Jesus Himself, and we have no desire nor inclination to go outside of Him for anything ; He is everything. We are daily discovering how very full He is. More and more we are discovering that "In Him all the fulness dwells," and that is far more than we have ever yet experienced, or expect to experience on this earth, but we are altogether spoiled for any other sphere or source of life. Some of us can say that truly. I hope that you can say that, but if there is anyone who is not able to say that, let me declare it again as a strong affirmation, as to the revealed mind of God, He desires that all those that are in relation to Himself shall be fully satisfied.

The Way of Fulness.

Now then we can go on, as to the way of fulness. The Lord's way of fulness, beloved,—it may sound to you almost ridiculous—is feeding ; but I put it like that because some people seem to think it is a kind of effervescence, it is becoming wonderfully, mysteriously conscious of a bubbling up and overflowing for no reason whatever, and they are trying to get full that way and want to have a wonderful series or continuation of sensations of fulness and satisfaction, and so on. That is not the Lord's way. The fulness of the Lord is not air, not effervescence, it is feeding. The Lord does not do this in a miraculous way which suspends all spiritual exercise and activity on our part. The Lord makes provision and calls us to appropriation, and the appropriation is of a very practical character. You will never be full of the Lord's fulness only as you apply yourself to feed upon the Lord, to feed upon and assimilate the Lord's provision.

Nothing can be a more elementary statement than that, yet it has to be made lest we should be living in a false realm. So we have the miracle of the loaves and fishes, a provision made to realise the Lord's end of fulness, and the Word stated that they were caused to eat "and they did eat." Now coming back to John iv. you have the Lord's own explanation of what He Himself means by eating. When the disciples came with the bread which they had gone into the city to buy because they and He were hungry, and begged Him saying, "Master, eat," He waived their bread

aside and said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." They said, "Hath any man given Him to eat?" and then He explained. "My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work."

So, feeding unto fulness and satisfaction according to the Lord's own definition and explanation is obedience to the will of God. Do you want to grow and flourish and be satisfied, and happy because satisfied? The way, beloved, is instant and prompt obedience to every intimation of the Divine will. Do you want to be thin and half-starved and miserable, and murmuring, and never content spiritually? Just suspend your obedience to one little bit of the known will of God and it will produce that result very quickly. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." The Lord Jesus found wonderful satisfaction along that line, and wonderful peace, and wonderful joy, and you know, beloved, there is nothing so stimulating and strengthening as to know you are in the will of God. You ask anybody who knows anything about it: and if you know that you are in the will of God and that you are with the Lord, and that you are for the Lord according to His will, you are in a wonderfully strong, healthy, happy, restful, victorious position; a man or woman on top. It does not matter what it may be costing, there is a marvellous strength from being in that position. Ask David about this thing. This youth, this stripling, has been sent by his father up from the field or the sheepfold with bread for his brethren in the army, and to enquire after their well-being. As he comes to the army there comes out from the hosts of the Philistines that monster who has day by day been challenging the hosts of Israel "Find me a man to come and fight with me," and Israel could not find him a man, they could not find a man! Things are in a bad way, a very bad way. David hears the challenge; a youth, a stripling, his brothers altogether misunderstanding his motive, no one giving him much countenance, recognition or counting him as much: despised, but knowing the Lord.

As he is brought to King Saul and offers to go and meet that Philistine, Saul looks at him and says, "Whose son are you?" "Where do you come from?" David gives his testimony. One day while he was looking after those few sheep a lion attacked and he took the lion and rent it as he would have rent a kid. Another day a bear attacked

his flock and he took the bear and tore it asunder. Listen, "The Lord who delivered me out of the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine, this uncircumcised Philistine." His testimony to his knowledge of the Lord. And what a position of ascendancy that secret fellowship with God put him into, moral ascendancy in a day when all that represented God was in such a poor condition, could not find a man. But God had in secret one despised among men who knew Him in experience, one who had proved God.

David is a marvellous expression, representation of one who knows the Lord and trusts in the Lord, and puts no trust in anything else. What one likes about David is that he refers everything to the Lord. When Saul with his pious religious platitudes said to David, "Go and the Lord be with thee," he also said, "Now take this suit of armour." Piously he meant well when he said "The Lord be with thee"—but that is not enough, "you had better have some armour as well!" Trust in the Lord—but! David donned the armour, but was uncomfortable. "I cannot go with this, I have not proved this, I have proved the Lord, I do know the Lord, and you can have your armour, I am prepared to trust Him. Now to the giant, "I come to you with a sling and five smooth"—no, I do not; "I come to you in the Name of the Lord of hosts whose armies you have defied." Who is the giant on that field? David is the giant and that day something entered into the head of Goliath that had never been there before. The point is this, beloved, that strength, robustness, fulness, confidence, assurance come by standing in wholly with God on the basis of all His will. You will be reproached, for like David in a day when things are religiously in a state of declension, the man of faith who dares to step out and trust God is always misrepresented, slandered, and his motives are always twisted. "I know," said the elder brother of David, "the wickedness of thine heart, you have come to see the battle." Yes, the man who trusts in the Lord in a day when things are in a poor spiritual condition will have his motives twisted, distorted, misrepresented; but if he stands in with God he has assurance and confidence, he is in ascendancy even though he may be misunderstood, set at nought and discounted, he is standing with God, for God's will, and that is the secret of satisfaction, strength, fulness,

robustness. The Lord Jesus was ever in ascendancy spiritually and morally in that day of spiritual declension.

Well, the secret was that He was with God and God was with Him, they were together, and there was never one moment's hesitation in His life about doing the will of God. Now that will of God will cover every stage, every step of life. It will begin on the very first point of taking our place as a sinner before God, acknowledging ourselves to be helpless in the matter of our salvation, and desperately in need of salvation and a Saviour, and by faith taking the Lord Jesus as that Saviour for our salvation. That is the first thing in the will of God, and it is the first step to satisfaction and fulness, and when you take it—everybody here who has gone that way can testify to the fact—there is a wonderful sense of satisfaction, fulness; following that step, joy begins.

From that point onward, therefore, the whole course of our life and experience, our growth, increase, fulness, is bound up with steps of obedience to the will of God. We have known many to make shipwreck of their faith, to wreck their own spiritual life by coming to a standstill upon some point of the known will of God; something the Lord has told them to do; something upon which the Lord has put His finger as not according to His mind; something which the Lord has shown them to be a part of the "all righteousness" to be fulfilled: some step of obedience in some way, in some connection, and they have stopped. Perhaps they have discussed it with others, perhaps they have taken the counsel and advice of men, perhaps they have tried to find a back-door out of it. But, no, God does not move, and by reserving their obedience their spiritual life has been arrested at that point and they have begun a course of decline, and we have seen many spiritually go to pieces upon just some question of absolute obedience to the known will of God. The Lord Jesus said "My meat (that by which I live, upon which I am maintained and sustained, that which is the secret of my strength) is not the bread that perisheth but the doing of the will of my Father, of Him that sent me and finishing His work."

Now I do not know why I am led to speak like that. We very rarely do know why we are led to speak as we do, but this has a strong emphasis in my heart, to say that, and the Lord may be touching some life that does know

His will in a certain matter, and there has not been obedience following, going on, it has been suspended, excuses have been made. You know, I do not, and the Lord knows just the meaning of that word now. The way of going on into the fulness, growing up into Him in all things, the way of a testimony to the absolute satisfaction in Christ, the way to a strong position in God, the way to usefulness to the Lord, is just the way of unreserved and undelayed obedience to everything that has been known of His will. The people of open spirit and honest heart, who are ready and who without any hesitation, recognising the will of God, do it, are the people who go ahead spiritually by leaps and bounds. This is not a matter of years or time. Spiritual growth never was a matter of time. A youth may be leagues ahead of an old man spiritually, upon this simple basis of doing the will of God. Samuel was far ahead of Eli spiritually simply because his heart was open to the Lord and obedient, and Eli's was not. That is the way of fulness, the way of satisfaction, in brief.

The Object of Fulness.

Now the object of fulness. Of course, the object is clearly unto making others full: unto ministry. You may take some of the features if you like a little Bible study for a minute or two. You have to begin with five thousand. Now thousands in the Bible always stand to represent figuratively, multitudes. I suppose that lies on the face of it—multitudes, a large company. Here you have five thousand, and five in the Bible is the number of grace, and what is figuratively represented here is a multitude whose life is by grace. Lest they die in the wilderness they are going to be saved and satisfied by grace. The Lord was under no legal obligation to meet their need. They had come out, they were in need, they might perish, they might faint: the Lord is moved with compassion. Grace is that by which they are saved and satisfied. A multitude, therefore, whose life is by grace is what is before us, and Christ is their life. Five loaves; the loaves, of course, speak of Christ, the Bread. That is borne out in chapter vi., as you see further on. Christ the Bread of life, and five loaves, grace comes in again. Christ is made life unto us by the grace of God. It is the grace of God that has given the Lord Jesus to us. Marvellous grace of God which has shown itself in giving His Son from heaven to be our very life, that is clear, and very simple. Two

fishes. Fishes as we know by now in the Scriptures are symbols of what is universal. The sea is a type of universality, the depth of the sea, the breadth of the sea, the expanse of the sea; if you want a word that speaks of universality, well, the sea speaks of that, it embraces very much, it covers so much. Oh! the fulness of the sea, and the expanse of the sea. Get out into the middle of the Atlantic and you will get a good sensation of what universality is, and if only you knew what was in that ocean you would have a deeper sensation still! Fishes speak of universality. Two is the Bible number of testimony or witness. What is here? The testimony to the universal fulness of Jesus Christ given to men. This is only a figure leading on to the epistles, leading on to Colossians i., the universal fulness of Christ, that He fills all and that all fulness is in Him. Two ways of the fulness of Christ are revealed in the epistles, that in the intention of God He will fill all things, and in the same intention of God all things are summed up in Him. It is the expanse of the ocean and the inclusion of the ocean in the fishes, and the *testimony* of the two to the universal fulness and all-embracingness and expansiveness of the Lord Jesus. You are well on your way to see what satisfaction is when you know the Lord Jesus. That is your foundation.

Twelve disciples. Twelve is the number of administrative responsibility. You can study all the twelves of your Bible with that in mind and see how that is so. The disciples represent for the Lord, an instrument of administration and administrative responsibility in relation to the need out there and the desire in Him. Now you are beginning to see the object of fulness—ministry. Ministry which has two sides, the realisation of His heart's desire, and the satisfaction of men's need by Him. Twelve baskets come into view in the end. And it is interesting and significant to notice that the Greek word there is the diminutive which means "hand basket." It is not a big clothes basket, it is the hand basket, which means that within the corporate instrument, the twelve, every man has a personal responsibility. It is not three or four men carrying one big basket, it is every man carrying his own basket. We very often put a good deal of our own responsibility on to the corporate instrument, and get out of something. No, the idea of the Lord in the corporate instrument is that everyone has

individual responsibility. We must be careful of the application of the corporate which relieves us of our share of the responsibility. We put it on to the Church when the Lord has put it on us individually.

Twelve baskets, hand baskets. And there is a lad here, and he introduces another law. He is without a name altogether. He is not some well-known person. He is not here on the basis of what he is in himself, or of his ability, his accomplishment. He is here on no other basis than that he has got something.

Now take that right to heart. Ministry, beloved, in the realisation of the Lord's desire and the meeting of the need of which He is conscious, is never upon the basis of official appointment nor popularity nor brilliance, ability, nor reputation; ministry is upon the basis that we have got something. Many people are marvellously brilliant without being able to give you a crumb of spiritual food. This lad is only in the picture because he has got something, and that is a law of spiritual ministry. The Lord requires that. You see you have got the typical elements in this story and when you put them together you come to a remarkable thing. Take account of this. In John, (it is not the same in the other Gospels because another thing is in view, therefore this point is not there), it is all the way through what the Lord Jesus is. He is kept pre-eminently in view as the centre of everything in John's Gospel, all the way through it is the Person of the Lord Jesus.

The significant thing about this narrative of the event is that they are not called the twelve until they have discovered what the food is and have fed upon it. You look, and you will see that it is at the end of this story they are called the twelve for the first time. "He called unto Him His disciples," but it does not say the twelve. At the end it comes in "the twelve." They were twelve, but they were twelve disciples at the beginning when they were used, but when they had learned the lesson that the Lord was seeking to teach, and when they themselves had partaken of that bread, recognising what that bread represented, then after that they were called the twelve. That is, beloved, that they were recognised to be the administrative instrument of the Lord when they themselves had got experimental ground upon which to minister; that they themselves had come into the administrative responsibility on the ground of their having

discovered the spiritual secrets of the Lord Jesus, and in type, had fed upon Him, themselves. That is no subtle thing, but is very much to the point. You see that John vi. opens with the story of the feeding of the five thousand but almost immediately passes on to "I am the bread of life," and this was circling round the feast of the Passover, so that what the Lord Jesus has got in the back of His mind in this whole thing is Himself, the Bread of Life.

What Ministry is.

Now He is going to give them a great experimental object lesson in what it means to have Christ as your life, as your life in a wilderness, in a place where no bread is, in a day of famine. So He said to Philip "Where shall we buy bread.....? This He said to prove him for He knew what He would do." Why should He say that to Philip? For two reasons. Philip was one of two men who, in a special way represented ministry. Philip and Andrew are always to the fore in doing things: always—so to speak—the active men in the matter of service, and so they in a special way represent service. That is one reason. The truth of ministry is in view, and ministry is, as we have said, the imparting of Christ out of our own knowledge, our own hearts, our own lives; ministry is not giving out truth, preaching something out of the Bible; ministry is the imparting of the Lord Jesus in the Holy Spirit. Another reason why He said this to Philip was because He knew that Philip was not seeing who He Himself was. Afterward, later in this same Gospel, Philip said to Him "Lord, show as the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus said unto him, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" What does that say in effect? "Philip, you have been having your eyes on me all these months, and these past three years or so, your eyes have been on me but you have not seen me. You have been watching what I have been doing, hearing what I have been saying, going round with me all the time, but you have not seen me yet, Philip." And so He turns to Philip in order to add one more thing to Philip's education, and the education of these disciples. So all is bound up with the discovery of who and what the Lord Jesus is. That is the education to ministry; the best kind of training; discovering all that the Lord Jesus is for the heart and for the life; and you can only minister in the measure in which you know Him, and no more. Ministry

is in view, but it must be upon the basis of our experimental, personal, inward apprehension of the Lord Jesus. And so they are not called the twelve—that is the responsible administrative vessel—until in a practical way they have come to know who He is: and you can imagine that their eyes were very widely opening as they saw five small loaves and two small fishes growing, and growing, and you can imagine in the end when they went round with their baskets—there was only one conclusion, this is not an ordinary man, this is the Son of God. Thus they were brought to know Him in order to constitute them God's responsible instruments in a day of spiritual starvation. We have not much further to go. The food question is an acute one to-day. No matter where you go in this world you will find people who tell you that a state of spiritual starvation abounds. There is much hunger and much need and we know all too well how real that starvation is. People go many miles just to get a little bit of real spiritual food. We could tell many wonderful stories about that. People who will walk 20 miles to get one meeting where there is spiritual food. Perhaps you are not so acutely alive to it if you are constantly getting good food, but if you got out you would discover this is so. There is the need, there is the state, there is the hunger.

On the other hand, there is the Lord's passion and the Lord's desire that that state should not continue but that it should be met. But then the Lord is not going to meet that in a kind of sovereign way independently, because He has bound Himself to operate through an administrative instrument. His Church. But in order that it might be something more than a merely financial thing, an ecclesiastical thing, a formal thing, in order that it might be living in its ministry, it has got to come experimentally where it truly and deeply does know the Lord, apprehends Christ and appreciates Him, and has found its own life in Him, and Him to be its life, without Whom there is no living. That is the basis of the ministry. So that the Lord would make everything very practical in that sense and very experimental, and take us into those experiences which land us out of our depths. "Philip, whence shall we buy bread enough to feed this multitude?:" He had landed Philip clean out of his depth. He knew what He would do. He was proving Philip. "Two hundred pennyworth of bread....." Immediately Philip begins to talk within the

compass of what is natural, and the Lord is trying to get him off that level altogether into a place of faith's appropriation of what Christ is.

Beloved, that is just what the Lord is trying to do with us all the time, and He would put us out of our depth, bring us up against propositions which are absolutely beyond us, and break our hearts with a situation over which we are so conscious of our utter insufficiency. I believe, beloved, that one of God's laws of increase, enlargement in usefulness, in service, in ministry, is to bring us recurrently, again and again, into a new position where our hearts almost break with the consciousness of the need, the situation as it is, and we despair afresh of ever being able to do anything which would anything like adequately meet that need, and it seems as though we come to a new end of possibilities and of our resources. The Lord brings us there and then that very heart-break, that very burden has become God's necessity for enlarging us with Himself.

But oh! before I close, I would lay this upon you again. That an administrative instrument to take responsibility for the need, and for the Lord's desire, must have laid upon it a burden which is far too big for itself, that it

might discover Him and how big He is. And the question that should come to us as the Lord's people is this, are our hearts well nigh overwhelmed and broken with the need as we know it, as we see it, and our own absolute insufficiency to meet it? If so, that is the Lord's way of bringing us into a knowledge of Himself which will more adequately meet that need. We have to be baptised into the passion of His heart, and the only way is by seeing a need and that need coming right home to us and at the same time a consciousness that we can do nothing in ourselves to meet it. The Lord must do it, and we turn to the Lord to meet that need. That is the law of spiritual and effectual ministry.

We shall never pray aright for the Lord's people until their need has become an acute aching in our own hearts. It must be.

The Lord then, in the first place give us the obedient heart to all the known will of God, that we may increase and be satisfied, that the whole membership of Christ may get the increase of God through us. The motive for obedience is the satisfying of His heart by the meeting of the need of His own. T. A.-S.

Continued from page 111.

Holy Spirit prayer of the Lord's people. There is a need along that line to-day:—the liberation of ministry, the destruction of limitations imposed by the enemy upon ministry. Do enter into that. Ask the Lord to give you the privilege of fulfilling a great world ministry along that line and making possible what hell is out to make impossible. T. A.-S.

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Christ the Power of God

(Continued.)

No. 2. The Cross and Deception.

READING : 1 Corinthians i. 18-31 ; ii. 1-5.

1 Cor. i. 18 : "The Word of the Cross.....is the power of God."

1 Cor. i. 23 : "We preach Christ crucified..... unto them that are called.....Christ the power of God."

1 Cor. ii. 2 : "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

"THE Word of the cross," not as in the A.V. "The preaching of the cross," that is quite an unfortunate translation, for here it is the Logos of the cross: the same word and title as given to the Lord Jesus in the beginning of the Gospel of John, "In the beginning was the Word" (the Logos). And you will have noticed from the context and the other passages that we have read, what is in view, it is Christ crucified, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It is not a doctrine, a teaching, it is a Person, and that Person crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God. The Word of the cross. That is comprehensive and includes a very great deal, but there is one specific emphasis in my own heart for this particular hour in relation to the times in which we are living.

It is said in the Word that "In the last days perilous times shall come," and I think most of us, certainly those who have spiritual perception, will agree that these are very perilous times. Perilous times spiritually, perilous times for the people of God, and a very special word from the Lord seems to be necessary for His own people in these times to secure them, to establish them, to hold them, to make them safe, and bring them into a place where they are established, because the peculiar nature of the peril of these days is that of deception, delusion. What is delusion? Well, it is to lead from truth into error. It is to mislead the mind or the judgment, to beguile, to lead astray, to cheat, to frustrate, to disappoint, to impose upon; something that is not the truth: and these are days-peculiarly marked by that peril. There is a sense in which we may say that the

gospel itself has, as one of its main features, the deliverance of man from deception. Of course, it is delivering them into the truth, into the light, but in a very real way it is for their deliverance from deception, and we shall see, I trust, in a little while how true that is. I feel, beloved, that the Lord has a very great need of a ministry by which His own people will be safeguarded in a day when deception and delusion is so widespread, many-sided, persistent, and so extremely subtle. The Lord surely would serve His Body by such a ministry, and so it may be that we gathered here are in line with that desire of His, both to safeguard us, make us sure, put us in a safe position by light, and through us minister to others who are in peril of making shipwreck of their faith and being led astray by what is abroad to-day as the imitation of the truth.

Now that would lead me just at this point to move right on to the end, to see exactly what happens at the end of the dispensation. We find at the end that a great angel descends having a great chain and he lays hold of the dragon who is the Devil, and Satan, the Deceiver, and casts him into the abyss that he shall deceive the nations no more. There you have the titles of the adversary: the Dragon, the Serpent, the Devil and Satan, and the Deceiver, and his work of deceiving the nations. Now such words occur more than once in the Book of the Revelation if you care to look them up, almost the identical words occur on two occasions. You have it in the 20th chapter, the other occasion is in the 12th chapter where, the Man-child reaching the throne, the Dragon is cast down and there is no more place found for him in heaven, he is again designated Dragon, Serpent, the Devil, Satan, the Deceiver.

We could gather a very great deal of scripture containing the very same thought and expression, as to the universal activity of the Adversary as being the work of deception and delusion, and the Lord Jesus related that activity in a special and intensified form to the end time. "Many shall come in My Name saying I am Christ and shall deceive many."

"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." "He doeth great signs that he should even make fire come down from heaven upon the earth in the sight of men, and he deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth."

Now these are marks of the end time and it is but one strong emphasis and stress upon this, that the end times (and we believe that we are in those times) are going to be marked particularly by an intensified activity on the part of the enemy along the line of deception, and deceptions *are* deceptions. That is, they are with very great difficulty detected, and require a very keen, clear insight and perception to recognise that there is a deception there. This, of course, is, while true in a special way at the end, true of all times. The chief peril of all ages has been deception. Paul tells us that it was so. In a reference to what happened at the beginning he said: "For the man was not deceived but the woman"; deception was the first weapon of the enemy against God, and the first method of the enemy by which he would secure his end, attain his object, accomplish his purpose, and as the result of man's complicity and sanction, or failure to resist what he knew to be contrary to the express will of God, the whole race has become a deceived race. The race is deceived universally. Deception is not something now that is out in the air, objective, apart from man; deception is now something in man as a part of him. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Beloved, deceitfulness was not a constituent in the man that God made. Deceitfulness is something that has come into the nature of man, a foreign something, and it is in the race. It is in man, it is a part of his very nature. God's greatest opportunity is always with the honest in heart, and God never stands a chance when there is not honesty of heart. His beginnings are there. A contrite heart, an honest heart, the open spirit, where there is no covering things over: for that was the very first thing that happened when deceitfulness found a lodgment in the race, man went to hide himself, and deceitfulness is always that which is hiding something, keeping something under cover, not transparent, clear, open before heaven. God always demands absolute openness and honesty before He begins negotiations, and God can always get on very rapidly when He has an

honest heart to deal with, and that life with an honest heart will go ahead with God by leaps and bounds, and those who will not be honest with God, meaning business whatever it costs, will make no progress. (That is somewhat aside, we want to get to the real main factor in all this.) We have said that deception is a universal method of the Deceiver. It is universal, but it is adapted to the special realm in which he may be active: that is, his deceiving work is suited to those with whom he has to deal, and there are, I think, mainly three realms.

Three Realms of Deception.

There is the realm of the ungodly, there is the realm of the religious and there is the realm of the spiritual. In every one of these realms the Deceiver works projecting his deceptions, but he adapts his deceptions to suit the realm.

We touch lightly upon the first and the second in order to come to the third more specifically.

I.—The Ungodly.

The deceiving work among the ungodly, for "the whole world lieth in the Wicked One," and "the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them that believe not," they are in the "kingdom of darkness," they are utterly deceived though they know it not. So utterly deceived that this letter to the Corinthians in its earlier passages tells us that in its very wisdom, at the very height of its wisdom, it slew the Lord of Glory, it killed the Prince of Life, so blind was it. Saul of Tarsus was an excellent specimen of the wisdom of this world in setting his hand against the Lord, and the Lord's own, to hound them to death, and when the light came and he was undeceived, how completely he saw the blindness in which he had been; but the ungodly are even more deceived than that. Many of them before they close their earthly course wake up to the fact that they have been deceived, and you find in the end of their life so frequently they realise that they have been out full stretch in quest for something to make life complete, to make it full, to satisfy themselves, and now, well, in some cases disaster has overtaken them, calamity has befallen them and all that they set their hearts upon has been lost and they have nothing left of time or ability or strength or any kind of resource to begin again, and life has gone and now laughs back at them. Everything was put out to reach an end which has eluded them, which they have missed, and the only thing that they can honestly say is, that they have been deceived. On the other hand

many reach their goal, accumulate wealth and possessions, position, influence, power and still heart-hungry they end their lives.

Well, we have had many instances of late. We have read of one who took his own life, not because things had gone wrong, he had accumulated his wealth, he turned his hand upon himself because he had nothing more to live for, and if that is not deception what is? Oh, yes, beloved, the ungodly are in the grip of a mighty deception and in the end the Deceiver is going to laugh at them whether they succeed or whether they fail in what they set their hands to in this life. In the end they are going to discover that the thing for which they were given a being has been missed and life has been just one delusion. That is the meaning of the commission given to the Apostle Paul. He had had his eyes opened and the Lord said to him "Thou shalt stand before kings and rulers, and nations to whom I send thee to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Turning from the power of Satan unto God, from darkness to light, is the result of having eyes opened; thus becoming disillusioned undeluded by having eyes opened. They are blind and the blindness is the work of one who has got them in his grip. Kings, rulers and people, yes, many of them repudiating any such suggestion that they are blinded or deluded, but the Lord knows, "to open their eyes." That is what we meant when we said that the Gospel in a sense is peculiarly for delivering men from deception, universally. So much for the ungodly.

II.—The Religious.

A word about the religious, for the same thing holds good here adapted by the Deceiver to the realm in which he is working, the type of people with whom he is dealing, the religious. Yes, religiously deceived, to put it in another way, deceived by their very religiousness, and that is a strong and a mighty delusion. There is power in that delusion that seems so often to defy every kind of attempt to deal with it. Deceived by religiousness. What more can be expected than the recognition of the fact of God and the giving to God of reverence, acknowledgment, and recognition: of taking active interest in things which relate to God, attending religious services, and being very busy in religious activities and interests, and finding your chief interest in religious things and the religious realm? What more can be

expected? What is the matter with that? Be patient, bear with me if I say with very great emphasis, that may be one colossal delusion. So often that very thing obscures one fundamental thing, a true and living relationship with God. "Ye must be born again," and religion very often obscures that issue. Oh, religion is no argument for salvation. Religion can be found in the darkest places of the earth, universally there is religion; depraved and very low in many places, but universally there is the consciousness of standing in relationship to some supreme object of worship, demanding worship: and then men's minds or imaginations get to work to give some kind of expression to that consciousness, of that supreme object of worship, and the imagination produces that sometimes out of a tree, a stone, or in the heavenly bodies; somehow it is expressed, but it is the thing that is there, behind all the forms of expression which is universal. All the highly civilised forms of that brought into the realm of Christendom are only the same thing developed. It does not say that Christendom's more intelligent, civilised, educated interpretation of God, even though it gets its ideas from the Bible is salvation. It may be a mighty delusion and very often is.

I have asked people if they have been born again, and they have said "It is not necessary, I have been confirmed." Such may be an extreme case, and I do not take it up for criticism but by way of illustration. You may take on religion because you have got a religious temperament and that does not mean that you are saved. The devil may be holding you just as firmly, tightly, in the grip of an unsaved state by your religion as he does the worldly by his pleasures. He does not mind how he holds you. By the most aesthetic religious activities, self-denials and such like, so long as he can keep you from the main thing. Now one could pursue that for a long time, there is so much more, but it is merely indicated. It is the deception that we are getting at. There is a vast difference, beloved, between vital union with God in Jesus Christ and religious formalism, and as we said at the outset, there is a very great need for a ministry by which deception, even amongst religious people, shall be shattered and broken and the fact of an essential, vital union with God by new birth shall be brought home to religious people. Along that line the enemy is destroying the whole testimony of the Church by packing it

full of active, energetic, unconverted people. That is where he is sapping the strength of the Testimony of God.

III.—The Spiritual.

Now we come to the third, the spiritual people, and we are now dealing with the truly born anew children of God, the spiritual people. The enemy will adapt his work of deception to this realm as cleverly and even more cleverly and ingeniously than to any other realm, but he does not give up the children of God as incapable of being deceived, for it is here that we find delusion and deception in its finest, its most acute forms. It is here that so often dear children of God have been utterly led off into error by something which bore all the semblance of absolute gospel truth. It is in this realm, amongst the Lord's own children, that the deceptions of to-day are most rampant and active.

What is the mark, the peculiar mark of the Deceiver's deceiving work for the Lord's own people? It is the counterfeit of all that is of God. The counterfeit system which includes anything that is of God. Now if you will get down with your Bible you will be able to trace that counterfeit system as it moves into every connection with God. First of all you will see that there is a counterfeiting of the very Godhead. That is saying a terrific thing, but it is true. A counterfeiting of the very Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The counterfeiting of the first Person in the Trinity, God. What does the scripture have to say, : "The god of this age hath blinded....." The god of this age, and Satan is seen in the Word of God to set himself up all the way through as the supreme object of worship to draw away from God Himself. You have not to go very far into the Bible to see that. It is implied in his very first act. "Hath God said?" Well, "I am a greater authority than He is." That is what is implied in that. "You listen to me;" and so by subtle insinuation he captured God's place of reverence, of fear, of acknowledgment, in the heart of man and in so doing became man's god, you see, getting worship. His subtle insinuation by which he did it was, "God knows if you do that you will be as God knowing good and evil, and God forbidding you to do that is simply robbing you of something which, being yours, would make your life fuller and larger and greater; and so God after all is not favourable to you, and is keeping something back. He is making

life smaller and narrower than it need be, and if you will only do as I tell you you will have a life higher than that." Yes—become a Christian, give your life to God, and life will become a narrow, mean thing, and you will have to give up this and that. That is always the insinuation of the enemy, he never lets you know what you are going to gain by going on with God, and the deception works, that instead of gaining you lose, when you give heed to the enemy. "The god of this age hath blinded."

When Israel came out of Egypt, the supreme object of their coming out was not the coming into the land or the wilderness, but that they should come out to the Lord, belong to the Lord, be His people. "Let my son go," that was the word:—coming out to, belonging to, the Lord. They had not been in the wilderness very long before Moses went up into the mountain for a period with the Lord, and the enemy broke into the company. What was God saying to Moses in the Mount? "Let them bring me gold and silver and brass and precious stones and fine linen, and let them make me a sanctuary." The enemy broke in at that time and said in effect, "Not if I can help it," and he provoked the people to bring their gold for a molten image, taking the gold away from God. What is gold? That which is representative and typical of God Himself—the Divine nature. This thing runs all the way through. Some principle back of things: the god of this age is seeking to get the worship due to God, and he simulates the first Person of the Trinity, imitates, counterfeits along the line of religion to get worship. Then the second Person of the Trinity (you recognise that we cannot stay to thoroughly exhaust each one of these) is the Lord Jesus, God Incarnate in the Son. We read: "Many shall come in my name saying I am Christ and shall deceive many." Antichrist is the simulation of God Incarnate. Taking the place of God amongst men in human form to capture the worship of men's hearts. Sitting in the temple of God giving out that he is God. Christs many, "there shall come false Christs." The Deceiver is out to counterfeit Christ, simulate Him even to the point of incarnation, the devil incarnate, Antichrist. As far as possible he takes all the semblance of Christ.

Counterfeiting the Holy Spirit.

Then, as to the third Person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, so much should be said here. He is out along this line to counterfeit the Holy Spirit, there is no doubt about it. If this is the

dispensation of the Spirit, this is the dispensation of the counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Well, it is many-sided, but, beloved, the enemy can give false signs, which are an imitation of the signs of the Holy Spirit. The enemy can give false guidance which is an imitation of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Experiences? Yes, you can have experiences, supernatural experiences, which are a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. Teaching? yes, teaching as from the Bible; doctrines of demons, false doctrine. But they would not be deceptions, delusions if they were not based upon Biblical content. Yes, imitating the Holy Spirit. Miracles, working great signs and wonders, calling down a fire from heaven to deceive them that are on the earth. Miracles, signs, wonders, power, yes, and even life, to give life unto the image, power to give life unto the image, and—now listen—conversions: apparent new birth, changing lives; and here we are on perhaps the most terrific ground when we say that. The question would at once arise, "Does the devil make men pure and turn men from godlessness to a life of God interest?" "Does he really change men for the better?" Is that true? He will stand at nothing if he can get his ultimate end. If he can give you a false baptism of the Holy Spirit so that you have a wonderful experience, full of wonderful sensations, sublime sensations, and accompanied by remarkable gifts, powers, supernatural abilities: if he can give you that and let you glory in that for a time and then withdraw it, and with the withdrawal suggest to your mind at once "you have sinned against the Holy Ghost," "you have committed the unpardonable sin." Thus he has cut from under your feet the ground of any hope whatever. The power of the precious blood of Jesus Christ is no longer of any value to you because there is no more pardon. What is the good of the blood if there is no more pardon? All the atoning work of Christ is slain for you if once you take that suggestion on. Christ and His cross have lost their value for you. Yes, Satan will stand at nothing if only he can really strike a vital blow at faith in Christ, and he has done that with many, and he is doing it. There are many dear children of God who, if only they knew, if only they had light and the knowledge, would be saved from the most awful state of mental hell to-day under that pressure of accusation from the enemy that they have sinned beyond forgiveness, they have grieved

the Holy Spirit from them. There are many dear children of God like that to-day. I say we need help in these days for the people of God to be made secure, to be saved from these awful deceptions. And in many other ways the Deceiver is imitating. He can use scripture as much as anybody. He can provoke worship, he will set up his own church, "the synagogue of Satan," imitating; he will teach wonderful teachings, Biblical truth, to get people in a corner and bewildered and eventually get them into such a mess that they do not know where they are, they get into a place of fatal inertia—can they ever believe anything again? You see, delusions!

The Ground of Deception.

Well, now, that is the position. Unfortunately, having said all that I only get to the beginning of my message because at this point, beloved, we have to say that not one scrap of that deceiving work of the devil has the vestige of a chance apart from something in man himself. There must be some ground for all this in man or it could never, never work. It would stand no chance of success. Deception is not something out there that is put upon us willy nilly, or in spite of ourselves. All deception has its own ground in man. What is that ground? It is the fact that man is now a psychical being. Now if you can get to the bottom of that, if you can apprehend that, you will understand the whole thing.

The ground of all this is in the fact that man is a psychical being, and when Satan interfered with man at the beginning and man consented along the line of his own soul-life, Satan made man suitable to his own government. It was not that he came and set himself up as man's ruler and subjected man by sheer force to his own government. How did he do it? By breaking into that realm in man's being where man was linked with God, and that was in the realm of man's spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." and man was in fellowship and communion with God by means of his spirit, not his soul, not his body; these two were under the government of his spirit. The enemy, the Deceiver came to man's soul, and instead of man reacting by his spirit-fellowship with, and knowledge of, God, he dropped down on to his soul, came out of his spirit and reacted in his soul. What is soul? Reason, emotion, feeling, desire, and then, of course, choice, will: and the enemy reasoned through the desires and captured the will by

deception. You see what happened when man violated the very organ of his union with God, his spirit. He was in the deepest sense, in his unfallen state, a spirit having a soul and a body, but he violated that with the result that it was severed from God, and, as a means, an instrument, a vehicle of Divine fellowship, it died. It does not mean that it was annihilated, or it ceased to have an existence, but it fell out of fellowship with God, and that is spiritual death, to fall out of union with God with the result that soul has taken ascendancy, and from that time man is another species from that which God created. He is now a man of soul, and in securing that the enemy had adapted man to his own government, and the enemy governs man, and the whole of the race now through the nature of the soul life. What is the basis of deception? It is just that! How do you get a counterfeit Holy Ghost operating? By reason of your psychical nature. You can become mediumistic in your very psychical nature and open all the avenues of your being to supernatural guidance and come under the power, the sway, dominion, of deceiving spirits operating in a multitude of ways. You can so suspend your soul and come into a state of utter passivity that you are open to everything to play upon you. You can have your quiet hour in your soul, which is the most perilous hour of your life. That happens by suspending all spiritual activity and becoming utterly passive and opening your psychical being—a dangerous thing.

God never asks you to become spiritually passive. Waiting upon God is not being spiritually passive. God wants us active in spirit even when waiting on Him in silence. You see what I mean. It is the very nature of man, now adapted by the enemy to his government, that has made possible all this mighty system of counterfeit in its success. Now leaving a whole mass of evidence I come to the point.

What Christ did at Calvary.

What did the Lord Jesus do in Calvary? He took that man to death and made room for a spiritual man; and in Christ Jesus we are no longer soulical men, we are spiritual. That is the whole argument of the first Corinthian letter. Now, says the Apostle, "the soulical man (he is the "natural" man) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them." "The Spiritual judgeth all

things." In the new birth of a man his spirit is brought back from the realm of spiritual death and banishment from God, into new creation union with God, joined to the Lord one spirit, and the right organ of Divine government is re-established to bring man's soul and his body under Divine control, and the Holy Spirit takes up residence within the born-again spirit of a man to govern his desires, his thoughts, his reasonings, his decisions.

What I want to close with is to remind you of the tremendous thing that Christ did in his cross. We have never fathomed Calvary yet. It is a blessed thing to see Him taking our sins and bearing them in His own body on the tree, but let us see that He took the whole ground of Satanic activity in man, He took that to the cross and put that aside, and the deep meaning of the Word of God is just that we were crucified, we were buried with Christ. He did not deal with sins alone, He dealt with man, the race, and put it aside; not just to bring a race to an end, but to bring the sphere of the devil to an end: not to end man in his fallen state, but to break the power of Satan and destroy his work as Deceiver. He did that in the cross. It is a tremendous thing to see that the Lord Jesus was not just striking a fatal blow at man in dealing with the flesh, but in dealing with the whole body of the flesh He was striking a blow at the Satanic activity in man. That is the word of the cross. What is the bed-rock truth for the people of God in perilous times? This, that they should come to that and recognise the fact that the backbone of nature has got to be broken by the cross of the Lord Jesus, and that everyone of us in Christ must come to the place where we know that the backbone of nature has been snapped and that no longer can we, dare we, follow nature in things, reasonings, desires, affections, choices and decisions. All must now come out from God, to be given by the Holy Spirit to govern our lives, and we must not in any way lean to our own understanding. Nature's backbone has got to be broken and we have to be men who, like Jacob, go for the rest of our days leaning upon our staff because the sinew of our natural strength has been touched, broken, dried, withered. Yes, to carry the testimony of Calvary all the days of our lives, to the fact—

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I....." "I have been met and smitten and there must be no insinuating of "I" any

more. It is no longer "I." We have perhaps thought of the cross, death union with the Lord Jesus, in the hard light of having to let go, having to give up and having to die: being crucified, and all the pain of it: but, beloved, it is to translate us out of the kingdom of darkness into that of the Son of His love; from the power of Satan, to deliver us from deception. Now unless our soul life is met in the power of the cross, and subjected to God, and we know what it is to live in and walk after the Spirit, we are exposed to deception. You will find where the counterfeit Holy Spirit works, there is a tremendous amount of soul excitability, soul emotion, lack of soul control and sometimes indecency; and yet supernatural things—yes, but that is not the Holy Spirit. There has been a reaching out of soul in an intensified quest for some kind of ex-

perience, a supernatural experience. That has opened the being to the other and you can get anything. You can get guidance, you can get miracles, anything along that line: but beware! The counterfeit, beloved, has its ground of success in the very nature of us, and nature must be broken. That, of course, must be applied more carefully, but do take the truth of that, and if the Lord is going to save His children in these days from delusion and deception, He has got to bring them back to the bedrock truth of identification with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection, and what that means as to the passing of one kind of man and the coming in of another kind of man.

In this matter, as amongst many others, we see that Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

T. A.-S.

(To be continued.)

For Boys and Girls

The Gospel in the Farmyard (No. 15).

Losing Little to Gain Much.

"Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—" John xv. 2.

I STOOD recently in a field watching the farmer shear his lambs. It was not a very pleasant process for the lambs, for the farmer would take each in turn from the sheep pen, turn it sharply on its back, grip its head firmly between his knees, and then with a pair of shears trim off its wool. I was greatly impressed by the cleverness of the farmer in shearing. He went at his work so quickly but, as it seemed to me, so carelessly, that I was afraid every moment he would cut the lamb's body and do it harm. But no—although I watched him shear several lambs not one did he cut or prick with his shears. He even cut off the wool from the faces of the lambs but never a scratch did he give them. I am sure you or I would have cut off their noses or ears by mistake! I very soon came to the conclusion that the farmer knew exactly what he wanted to do and how to do it, and that I need not be anxious that he would spoil his work by blundering or carelessness. But why was he doing it at all!

The Mystery Solved.

Compared with their appearance before shearing, the lambs looked such poor scraggy little things afterwards. I almost imagined I could hear one of them protesting at what seemed like such cruel and useless treatment. "There was I," it seemed to say to the farmer, "standing quietly in the pen doing no harm at all and suddenly you come and throw me on my back, clip off all my lovely wool—and you told me that you wanted me to grow plenty of wool—and now here I am stripped of my nice warm coat and I am good for nothing. If that is what you call the kindness of a good shepherd, I don't." I must say I was strongly tempted to agree with the lamb and so asked the farmer why he was spending so much time on such a task, for the quantity of wool which was cut off from each lamb was so very small and certainly not worth all the trouble; and besides, the lambs looked so poor afterwards. "Oh, it isn't the wool that I am *now* getting that I care much about," replied the farmer. "but if I cut off this first crop the lambs will look much finer when the new wool grows and I shall get a much better and bigger crop next time."

So it was a *better crop* he was after! That reminded me at once of what Jesus said about purging or pruning a fruitful branch of a vine in order that it might bring forth more fruit, and I began to think hard. Must we lose what we have in order to gain something better? Was this what Jesus meant when He said "he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. x. 39)?

The Glorious Gain of the Cross.

Let us look for a moment at the example of the Lord Jesus Himself. We read of Him: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Is. liii. 7). Was He "shorn"? Yes: first of all, though being the Son of God He laid aside His heavenly glory and came down to live on this earth as a man: and then, despite all the beauty of His life and character, He was shamefully treated at the hands of wicked men, who crucified Him at Calvary, and He was cut off out of the land of the living. Do you wonder why God His Father allowed Him to be thus "shorn"? Oh, how much more reason He had than any of our lambs to ask why He should be thus treated? Had He not lived in perfect obedience to His Father's will and done always the things that pleased Him? And yet all this suffering had come upon Him? How He might have murmured, but no complaint passed His lips, for He understood the reason for it all. When Jesus was here on earth God had only *one* Man who was sinless and fit for His presence, but it was His desire to bring "many sons to glory" (Heb. ii. 10). He was seeking "a bigger crop"; and in order to make this possible, the one perfect, sinless Man had first to lay down His holy life as a ransom for all the rest, for they in themselves were sinners and unfit for God's presence—that by His sacrifice all who believe in Him might receive forgiveness of sins and be brought to God. What a troubled and dark way it was for Him to take—the Way of the Cross; but what rejoicing there will be when the Crucified One, now raised from the dead, comes before His Father, not alone but with a great host of redeemed sinners with Him—and many boys and girls amongst them! A "bigger crop" indeed! "For the joy that was set before Him"—the "bigger crop"—"He endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. xii. 2). Will you be in that crop? Oh, you may be—you *must* be! Yield your heart to the Lord Jesus now,

make Him your Captain and let go everything for Him and you *will* be "joined unto the Lord, one spirit." Where He is there shall you be also.

The Cross is always Love.

Now none of us will ever have to do what Jesus did in bearing away the sin of others, but the Way of the Cross that He went is God's gracious way for all those whom the Lord Jesus will bring into God's presence. Our Heavenly Father is so eager that "the bigger crop" should be the very finest that it can be, that once we have given our hearts to Him He works constantly on our lives to make them more and more like the perfect life of His Son, our Lord Jesus, and He has only one way of doing this. He does not improve *our* beauty but in its place He gives us the beauty of the Lord Jesus which is infinitely better than our own—His holiness instead of our so-called righteousness: His love instead of our love: His patience for our patience: His strength in place of our own. But He brings this to pass by methods which sometimes seem very strange to us. Often, like the lamb, we find ourselves as it were suddenly thrown on our back, and it seems as if everything in our lives has gone wrong—as if we are rendered helpless and all that we possess, even what we thought was good, is being taken from us, like the lamb and its wool. Perhaps we cannot understand at all why God has allowed us to get into such trouble and it may be that we are even tempted to complain that He must have ceased to love us if He deals with us so harshly. Ah, God is after a "better crop." Be sure that even though He is taking away something of yours, He is purposing to give in its place a far greater treasure, something of the Lord Jesus. And it may even be that by your difficult experience He is going to win some other heart to Himself and so the crop will be bigger still. Happy is the boy or girl who can love and trust their Heavenly Father when He deals with them thus, even when it is impossible to see or understand what He is after. This is faith like that which was in the Lord Jesus Himself, and Oh, how it delights God's heart when He finds this in us!

Never Fear the Cross.

He can never make a mistake, and is so skilful and sure in His work—He will never harm you. I noticed some of the lambs kicked and struggled with all their might when the farmer commenced to shear them. But it made

no difference—he only held them the tighter till they ceased to struggle and then he completed his work. God loves us too well to allow us to miss His blessings by struggling against Him and He often has to hold us firmly till we cease to resist. You won't murmur at God the next time things "go wrong," will you? Instead, tell Him that you want to work with Him through the difficulty in order that "a bigger crop" may be secured, and you will be amazed how much more easily and happily you will go through.

The Cross leads to Glory.

And this is the Way of the Cross—losing *our* life that we may gain *His*. To those who do not understand, it is often a dark way, but for those who have learned the secret of the "better crop" every dark place in life's road becomes a fresh opportunity for entering into some new treasure of the Lord Jesus: and should we then be afraid? No—rather let us choose this Way of the Cross for it is always the Way of Glory too.

The True Sign of the Cross.

The last thing the farmer did after shearing a lamb was to stamp with painted letters his own initials upon its bare white back, and then he allowed it to run away into the field. And I noticed that of all the lambs and sheep in the field, the ones with the clearest mark of their owner upon them were those which had been newly shorn of their own wool. If you truly belong to the Lord Jesus He will so deal with you in His love that little by little the things of yours which hide His Name upon you will be removed and all men will see clearly that you belong to Him. Paul was such a man, who had counted all his own things as mere refuse in comparison with gaining Christ and being found in Him, and he was able to say, "I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (Gal. vi. 17, R.V.). And how clearly everybody could see them!

I wonder what name other people see stamped on you? G. P.

The Holy Spirit in Relation to The Glorified Christ and The Believer

(Continued.)

Where shall we begin when we want to consider the revelation of the heart of God in Jesus Christ in those years? "God so loved the world." Think of John's usage of the very term "Father." That is a new revelation, for the most part, to humanity. It comes in in a fulness and depth of meaning in the New Testament which is quite fresh. The heart of God is laid bare in the Lord Jesus. Oh yes, to the shame of us Christians so often, to my shaming, perhaps to yours, our attitude towards sinners, the discredited, the loathsome, the repulsive, the antagonistic, the rejecting, the despising, the malicious, so often, is such a different attitude from His. What an attitude He took. Without condoning sin, and never justifying evil, nevertheless, He went on with a love and a forbearance and a patience and a yearning that, I say, shames us. One has a reason and an object in view in saying this, to which we are working in a minute. And then, of course, His three and a half years were for

the manifestation of the power of God, the mighty works of God which were wrought by Him and through Him. The power of God was clearly set forth and administered by Him. Men had very ample opportunity of seeing the power of God manifested through Him. Of course, the appreciation of men, carnal men, worldly men, lies very largely within their own realm of what is physically demonstrated. They cannot appreciate spiritual power in the spiritual realm. But the power of God was displayed to them in the realm where they could recognise it. All manner of sicknesses and infirmities, as well as power over nature, power over temporal conditions, power in many realms, and, of course, power in the spiritual realm, but man could not go that far; but these years were occupied with the display of the Father's power, mainly in the behalf of man for his good and blessing and benefit. Well, that is all very clear, I think. But what about the third phase, the forty

days? It is a testing phase. It has a meaning of its own, and it was unto the establishing of the fact and nature of the perfect redemption which He had accomplished for man in spirit and soul and body. The record is that "by many infallible proofs" He appeared unto them—was made known unto them—after His resurrection. There was the establishment first of all of the fact that He was risen, the fact that Christ who had died was alive. Read in Acts xvii. 31 "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." Here in the resurrection you have—while God, very God—yet Man in a state of perfect redemption where the whole man is represented in his completely redeemed state. The forty days represent man in Christ as God intends man to be. Why does He call attention to Himself as He does, "Handle me and see: a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." "Reach hither thy hand and put it into my side"—"feel these hands, it is I myself—handle me and see." Why is it? And yet that body, that humanity, which could be handled, felt, touched, could pass through doors that were bolted, and be found at great distances in a moment of time. That is not a spirit, this is a spiritual body. There is all the difference between a spirit and a spiritual body. We are not going to be disembodied spirits floating about in the air. We are going to have glorified bodies, and here is the earnest, here is the type, here is the representation. Forty days is the Bible probation period which is always intended to issue in glory. Forty years for Israel ought, in the purpose of God, to have issued in Canaan. His forty days were a probation period for manifestation ere He entered into glory:—the manifestation, the establishment of the fact and nature of redemption for man, which He had accomplished and which He gathered up in His Own Person as representing man fully redeemed, spirit, soul, and body. That is why Christ spent thirty years, three and a half years and forty days here on the earth.

Now then, what has that to do with the Holy Spirit? Beloved, why did the Holy Spirit come? We said, to take Christ's place here. In other words, the Holy Spirit is here to inwardly work towards that in the believer:—as the Spirit of the glorified Christ, to bring to birth, so to speak, Christ within. The One who fully forms Christ in that believer, and

conforms that believer to the image of Christ until, apart from His Deity and His Godhead, there is a manifestation of Christ glorified in every believer in the consummation of the redemptive activity of God. That is the Holy Spirit's purpose in being here. To take up Christ in the completeness of His work and Person as Son of Man glorified, and work toward that in every believer. But go back over the ground. The Holy Spirit is here in relation to the thirty years to bring Christ glorified into a vital relationship to us, a vital relationship; there is the spiritual counterpart of the thirty years. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" and the Holy Spirit is here to link Christ with us and us with Christ in a vital oneness and relationship so that it is "Christ in us" and "Christ our life." You cannot have anything more utter than that. Christ our life. There is the relationship. It does not mean He loses His personality or His individual identity, but it does mean that He links Himself with us and us with Himself in new birth so that we are one, and we can say "I am His and He is mine for ever," the oneness is absolute.

Then the Holy Spirit is here also in relation to the purpose of the three and a half years, the manifestation of the mind of God in the believer:—taking of the heavenly, the Divine things, and showing them. There is no knowledge of God in reality, apart from the Holy Spirit. There is no knowledge of the mind of God without the Holy Spirit. But He has come that within us there might be a revelation of the Father's mind in Jesus Christ. Says the apostle John, "The anointing which you have received abideth in you and ye have no need that any man should teach you, the anointing in you teacheth you all things." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." "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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The revelation inwardly of the mind of God is the work of the Holy Spirit. "He shall take of mine and reveal it unto you." "He shall not speak of Himself but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak" "All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I, he shall take of mine and shew it unto you." You see it is the Father's things given to Christ, taken by the Holy Spirit and revealed

to us:—the mind, the love. Oh, let us stay here in heart if we cannot in word, stay here in heart for this is where we need the Holy Spirit, if we need the Holy Spirit anywhere. A revelation of the Father's heart. The Holy Spirit has come as the Spirit of Christ glorified, to take up that object of His being here, and work that object out now, not as merely a public historic testimony, but as an inward spiritual reality, "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." It is the work of the Holy Spirit to do that, and there is no love that is truly the love of God, and will stand the test and go all the way that God's love goes without the Holy Spirit, but given the Holy Spirit love becomes almost, I was going to say—omnipotent, given the Holy Spirit there is little impossible in the realm of love: but oh, we know so little of that. That is why I am talking about the need of the Holy Spirit; but if you and I need one thing more than anything else, it is more of that love of God shed abroad in the heart, poured forth in the heart by the Holy Spirit. We will have to come back to that again before we are through, I think.

Then the third thing concerning the three and a half years—the power of God. This again is a thing to be considered by itself, but we merely mention it in this connection. "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you." "But if I go away." What is bound up for us in the coming of the Spirit? "The works that I do shall ye do, and greater than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father." This is, in effect, because in my going the Holy Spirit comes! "And greater works than these shall ye do." How? Why? In as much as the spiritual and eternal are greater than the physical and the temporal, in that degree the greater works are wrought by you in the power of the Holy Spirit. They could not appreciate that in those days. "Whether it takes more power to say 'Rise, take up thy bed and walk' or 'Thy sins be forgiven thee'—'But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power to forgive sins'—a sign of that greater thing—" He said to the sick of the palsy, "Rise, take up thy bed." It was a sign of greater power in the spiritual realm. It is a far greater thing to raise the spiritually dead than the physically dead; a far greater thing to open spiritually blind eyes than the

natural. The physically raised from the dead will die again, those who are blind physically may have their eyes opened and be given their sight, but it is only for three-score years and ten "and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow." The opening of spiritually deaf ears is greater than opening naturally deaf ears. "Greater works than these shall ye do because I go to the Father." "The Holy Spirit is coming to do in the spiritual realm what I have been doing in three and a half years as only a sign." Well, they passed from that realm to a realm where everything was heavenly, everything spiritual, where God was no longer going to do things to judge and condemn doubly an unbelieving race. "Greater works because I go to the Father." You see the power of God is to be manifested by the Holy Spirit in the higher realm of spiritual resurrection, enlightenment, quickening, and all those counterpart activities of what Christ did in the three and a half years. The Spirit is here to take up the three and a half years, but He is also here to take up the forty days. Oh no, not to give us glorified or spiritualised bodies now, but, beloved, if the Holy Spirit does not come inside and begin to make us spiritual men and women, with a spiritual mind and spiritual apprehension and spiritual sensibilities, senses and faculties, and develop them, you may take it for granted you will never have a spiritual body. It will take a spiritual inner man to have a spiritual outer man. "And to every seed its own body." The seed of the resurrection body is the New Man, the Christ within, and that man is being formed now. As Paul prayed, "My little children for whom I travail again till Christ be fully formed in you." That forming of Christ within, and that conforming to the image of Christ is the Spirit's movement toward clothing that inner new man with the heavenly body. "To every seed its own body." And the forty days represent that full model, pattern of God's glorified humanity towards which the Holy Spirit's incoming and activity is directed for every man.

Now that is all elementary and simple, for I said we would reduce it to a few concrete propositions. There are some basic primary facts which must be laid down once and for all by us, and in mentioning these perhaps we will close.

Firstly, salvation from the start to finish,

from the first simple exercise of faith right on through all its course and development to the last touch of an instantaneous glorification, the whole from beginning to end is inseparable from the Lord Jesus in Person. That is a simple statement. You need not use as many words as I have used, put it in your own way. Salvation from the start to finish is inseparable from the Lord Jesus in Person. It is the "salvation which is in Christ Jesus," and there is none outside. That is the first thing that has got to be settled once and for all. You cannot come to the Lord Jesus as you would go to the grocer's shop and get salvation and take it away in a parcel. Forgive that way of putting it but, some people talk about salvation as though it was *something* they got. We never get salvation as some *thing*, but as some *One*. The whole of salvation in every part and fragment is bound up with Christ in Person and you cannot separate the thing from Him. It is Christ, and not salvation as something in itself.

Secondly, Christ is the personal representative of God's new creation, that is, in resurrection. See Christ in resurrection and you see the personal representative in fulness of God's new creation, God's new creation man.

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit is the personal representative of Christ. They are one, He is the Spirit of Christ. As such, He is the Spirit of the new creation.

Now you put those three together before we go further and you see: salvation in its entirety is inseparable from Christ in Person. Christ is the representative of God's new creation: you have Christ, you have God's new creation, you have got all that is included in the new creation. The Holy Spirit is the personal representative of Christ; they are one, and He is the Spirit of the new creation: therefore, when we are saved, it is that the Holy Spirit has brought Christ as God's new creation into our hearts, the representative of God's new creation has come in, and from that moment everything is related to Christ within us, the Holy Spirit working in relation to Christ in us. And then finally, the new creation therefore, is all of God. If Christ is all of God, and the new creation is Christ dwelling within the renewed spirit, then the new creation has a new nature. That is not in our own selves, that is Christ, and that is Christ in our renewed spirit. Whether we live in the new or in the old depends upon whether we are living in the spirit

or in the flesh; that opens up the whole of that realm of flesh and spirit. If we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, but there is that indwelling Representative of God's new creation which is all and utterly of God in its nature. Yes, in mind, the mind of Christ; the heart, yes, the heart of Christ: the will, yes, the will of Christ, as the mind, heart and will of God were in Him now they are in us by the Holy Spirit. Divine disposition is there by the Holy Spirit as Personal Representative of Christ, it is there, a divine disposition. Now as we have just said, everything for us from that time depends upon whether we are going to be utterly, absolutely surrendered to and governed by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, and let Him so work in us and we so co-operate with Him in His working in us that the mind which is the mind of the Lord, the heart which is the heart of the Lord, the will which is the will of the Lord, the disposition which is the disposition of the Lord, grows, transcending all the time the old mind, heart, will, disposition, and Christ thus being fully formed in us. That is new creation in Christ Jesus.

My emphasis at the moment is upon this, that the new creation is all of God, and in so far, beloved, as we are not all of God in mind, heart, will, disposition, or in any other way, in that degree we have come short of the full work of the Holy Spirit. Now that is not said to condemn or judge, for who on this earth can ever claim to have reached the fulness of the Holy Spirit's work in them? Not one of us here would make such a claim, but one says it in order to point out that when we come into evidence with our mind, will, disposition, when we begin to allow that to assert itself, show itself, intrude itself, when we permit that in any way whatever, and do not immediately turn upon it in the power of Christ's death and impudiate it, in that measure we are not walking after the Spirit, in that measure we are failing to recognise this great thing, that the new creation is all of God. Oh, that we should immediately turn upon any kind of showing of ourselves and say "that is not of God," not excusing it, not covering it up, not saying that that is my weakness, infirmity, my temperament; no, that is not of God, that is not the new creation, that is not the Holy Spirit. That is the way we must deal with things. Yes and I must learn to deal with things thus and that is walking after the

spirit. You find the Holy Spirit co-operates with that, for He has come as the Spirit of the glorified Christ. And what is that? Every-thing that can not be glorified has to be put away by that cross, for God has never glorified the old man yet and the Spirit has not come in to glorify or excuse our old man, He has come in to do with him what Christ did with him in the cross, rule him out. We have got a lot of work to do, haven't we? But remember this is the Spirit's way and while that may seem to be an appalling proposition from the positive side, beloved, "He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world." The Holy Spirit is mightier than our flesh. The Holy Spirit is mightier than the old man. Christ, by the Eternal Spirit gathered up all the old man of thousands of generations and

proved more than a match, triumphant over all the power of fallen humanity; and the power of the Spirit, that Spirit of the glorified One is for us. To me it is tremendous that God has glorified man, a thing that He could not do with one man of all the teeming millions from Adam to Christ: He could never glorify a man until Christ came and put away that man for ever, and all the sin associated with him, and then arose as apart from Adam's humanity into a new humanity, God-glorified man, and He is the type and representative of the humanity that God will have when redemption has run its course. That is our hope, and that One is in us by the Holy Spirit. What hope—"Christ in you the hope of glory."

(To be continued.)

T. A.-S.

The Cross and Higher Ground

A Message as Spoken.

READING: Exodus xxiv. 1-18 "He said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord." Verse 12: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up unto me into the mount."

If I were asked to put into a sentence, a phrase, that which I believe the Lord has been saying in my own heart in relation to this season together, I think I should say that it is "The Cross and Higher Ground." I believe the Lord is saying to many of His children, and desires to say, "Come up unto Me in the mount." And when you come to look into it, it is very clear that the Lord's fullest, highest, greatest thought for His people, is that they may occupy high places, that they may in a right sense be an exalted people. All the movements of God are in that direction for His people. The man of whom it is said, in the midst of many others who knew the Lord, that he walked with God, terminated his career here by going up to the Lord. Israel's end of a wilderness journey was going up to possess. Elijah finished his course with an upward movement to the Lord. Israel's later history, when in right relationship with the Lord, was governed by those great seasons of going up to the Lord at Jerusalem, and we have a series of songs called 'Songs of Ascent' or

Psalms of 'Going up.' The Lord Jesus did not finish His course on the Cross or in the grave, but going up; and the Church, His Body, is destined to follow in that way, to go up.

All these movements represent God's highest thought for His own. To fail of this means to have failed of God's fullest purpose. The Lord is an exalted Lord. He is represented as being "High and above all," and He desires His people to exalt Him above all, and it is a remarkable thing that when you do exalt the Lord you always go up yourself. The Lord desires us to have high thoughts about Himself. If we have low thoughts about the Lord we live a low life. If we have high thoughts about the Lord we always go up ourselves. This contains this simple and yet very rich truth, the Lord desires His people to be in fellowship with Himself in high places, an exalted place, in a true spiritual elevation. If the end of the Church's course is to be marked by the Church's going up, then I think we may rightly conclude that towards the end, the Lord will be making a great emphasis to rest upon spiritual and moral ascendancy in His people: that He will be calling on to higher ground, for as we, I think, believe, and we have certainly very often said it, the chronology of things is bound up

with the spirituality of things. The dates of God synchronise with the conditions of His people; there will be no translation of the Church only on the ground of the Church's preparedness for translation: the fixed time for going up is fixed by God to tally with a state unto which the Church has come. There will be no mere mechanical and automatic translation of the Church. It will be entirely related to the Church's condition and, therefore, there must be a spiritual side as well as what we might call a chronological side, and the going up literally must be bound up with our going up spiritually and morally. The Lord is seeking, I am quite sure, to get His people on higher ground. The higher ground of faith, the higher ground of love, the higher ground of fellowship, the higher ground of spiritual vision and revelation, the higher ground of spiritual power, authority, the higher ground of moral ascendancy; and it is significant to note that the Scriptures contain mountains which represent all these things. That will probably be the realm of our meditation at times during these days.

This afternoon we do not go any further than the first step. We survey first of all, in brief, this fact, for it is a fact, the Lord is calling to higher ground, and then we take into consideration the first and the all-inclusive thing relative to higher ground. But oh! the effect of this, beloved, must be not just more information, more teaching, more knowledge, but it must have a moral effect in us, in our relationships, in the matter of fellowship; we shall have to have a reaction from everything that is low down, small, mean. We shall see that we must take higher ground in the matter of our relationships. The present level is too low, it is not high enough, it is not according to the Lord's thought. In the matter of love for one another there must spring up in us the feeling that the way in which we regard one another is too low. We must take the attitude that it is too low, we must come up higher in this matter. And so on all matters of our life in relation to the Lord there has got to be some elevation; and we must see that it is related to the ultimate purpose of God. This is not some little homily for daily life, that you must try and be more loving and show a greater consideration, and so on; it is related to the great end which God has in view; that we must see as we go on.

All Advance is connected with Elevation.

But I want here to point out how striking it is, and impressive, that in the Word of God all increase and advancement of the Lord's people is connected with elevation. In fact, we may say that all connected with the positive side of the testimony is brought in by an eminence. When the Lord is going to do something on the positive side of adding to and increasing His people, or advancing them spiritually, almost invariably, if not invariably, it is connected with some high place. That is striking, that is impressive. This 24th chapter of Exodus is one great outstanding example of that. We make the observation now in order that we might be arrested by this. I emphasise the word "positive" because there is a negative side, and that is the Cross side. We are speaking about the Cross and higher ground. There is that wilderness level where the Cross operates in order to make possible the higher ground. The wilderness is not God's positive ground, that is the negative side; that we must be crucified is not God's end but God's essential method. The setting aside of man by nature is what we might call the negative side, the positive side is to bring up that which is of God on to a level of God's purpose and God's power.

The Pavement of Sapphire.

And so we see that all that is related to the positive side of the Lord's people and of the Lord's testimony is bound up with some high ground. But before we go on with that we want to see what is all inclusive, that in which all else is bound up in this matter, and that is, to see God's pavement, that upon which His feet rest, so to speak, the highway of God in relation to His people. Come to Ex. xxiv. and you have it (verses 9-10): God's pavement, that which was under His feet, as it were a sapphire stone, as it were the very heaven for clearness. We see that as the thing upon which the feet of God rest, that, so to speak, on which the Lord walks up and down, the basis and the foundation of all that follows, and you know what follows. "As it were a sapphire stone." I do not propose to turn to all the passages in scripture where the sapphire stone is mentioned, you can do that when you desire to make a little study of the Word. All I desire to do is to point out what this means. The sapphire stone has a great place in Scripture. You will find it in relation to creation, in relation to grace, in relation to government, and you will find it in relation to glory, both heavenly and earthly glory. Here it

is in Ex. xxiv. beneath the feet of God. In Ezek. i. 26 and x. 1, you have it seen as above the crystal like expanse of the firmament. Lam. iv. you see princes of Zion spoken of as sapphire stones. In the Song of Songs, chap. v. the beloved is spoken of as a sapphire stone; and then in Is. liv. the metropolis of the earth is seen to have its foundations laid with sapphire stones, and then in the New Jerusalem in Rev. xxi. the second foundation is a sapphire.

What is the sapphire? I think if you look into the Scripture you will find that the sapphire stone undoubtedly represents Christ in universal glory. "As the very heaven for clearness." You know the sapphire is the stone of heavenly blue, transparent blue, as the very heavens for clearness. Do you notice what is happening here? "Under His feet as it were a sapphire stone and as it were the very heaven for clearness," for transparency; and immediately following this chapter, coming out of this chapter, the instructions for the tabernacle. That tabernacle is to be a representation of the Lord Jesus through and through, from centre to circumference, it is Christ presented. The predominant element in the whole thing is the heavenly blue. The high priest is the central figure, he wears an ephod of heavenly blue; and every man, woman and child throughout all their generations is commanded to have a bit of that same blue upon the fringe of their garments. The predominating element throughout this whole thing which is to be a revelation, unveiling, representation of the Lord Jesus is the heavenly blue. It is something that has come down out of the mount. It is a reflection here on earth of that which was under God's feet, the feet of the God of Israel. Earth and heaven are united in that blue. Heaven and earth joined, and joined to reveal the Lord Jesus in universal glory.

That is the nature of everything in the Word of God. That is where you arrive in the revelation of the eternal purpose and thought of God, heaven and earth united in the revelation of the glory of Christ. That is well known, that is perfectly clear, but do not let us make a common-place of it. Familiar as we may be with the truth of it beloved, it is no small thing that when God reaches His end this whole universe, heaven and earth, will be united in the display of the glory of His Son Jesus Christ. That is no small thing. God has fixed that, and God will reach His end. But for the moment the thing that is before us is this,

that everything is related to that in the activities of God. God has that in His view all the time and all that He is going to say and do and require is bound up with that, the glory, the universal glory of His Son Jesus Christ. So that before ever a hand is put to work to realise that representation in type, before ever there can be a movement in the practical realm of accomplishment there has to be a vision and a revelation of Jesus Christ in glory.

A Representative Instrument.

If the Apostle Paul in a special way was given the ministry concerning that revelation of Jesus Christ in the mystery of His Body, before ever he can utter a word in that connection he must have a revelation of Jesus Christ in glory; that is basic to all the purpose of God, and we can neither do anything, nor endure anything until we have that. See God's end and that upon which God's eye is resting. Why had Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to ascend the mount and see the God of Israel and that which was under His feet? In order surely that there might be an adequate representation of what was according to God's mind. This was a solemn responsibility that was being conferred upon these. They were being brought to see what was under God's feet in order that they might be charged with the responsibility of having everything constructed and maintained in accordance with that. Seventy of the Elders; that is a representative number of the people of God. In the New Testament seventy is a representation of the whole Church. Seventy is a combination of ten and seven. Ten is the number of responsibility and seven of spiritual perfection, and the responsibility that was being conferred upon these men was for the spiritual perfection of God's thought in relation to the Lord Jesus. They had got to have God's perfect thought about the Lord Jesus and see to it that everything was constructed according to that thought. God's thought from eternity is the universal glory of His Son. The Lord must have some people to come into His thoughts about His Son in order to take responsibility in relation to others, and so He says—in effect—to them "Come up into the mount, your coming up is related to a great many more. Your coming up is that you might receive a revelation which will put you in a place of great responsibility, but also of great privilege unto a ministry which has no lesser object and end than the universal glory

of the Lord Jesus. Come up into the mount."

Surely these are days in which there is a very great need to come into the fulness of God's thought concerning the Lord Jesus. These are days when God's glory in Christ needs to be known, a recovery of the full testimony of Jesus. Unto that the Lord must take some at least and bring them into a special fellowship with Himself in His thought. That is a place of elevation.

The Way of the Cross.

Oh, but do you notice what had to happen before ever that could be? "And Moses built an altar under the mount." That is sacrifice. There was no ascending the mount until the altar had been built; sacrifice and the blood shed. In other words there is no coming up into those higher altitudes of Divine revelation, Divine apprehension, Divine vocation and ministry only on the ground of the cross doing its work to set nature aside, to set man aside, because man by nature cannot come into God's thought. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God neither can he know them," he has to be set aside, the Cross has to cut in there and put man by nature out of this thing before he can come into the fulness of God's mind and God's purpose; and Moses built an altar. The cross is always the gateway to the higher levels of spiritual life. The cross is always the way to the tablelands of God, and the cross is not a thing, so far as we are concerned, done once and for all, only in the matter of our justification and our acceptance. On the objective side it is finished once and for all, but on the subjective side there is to be a daily dying, a bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. But that is the way up. We sometimes think of it as the way down, that this pulling down, destroying, crucifying, when shall we get to the end of this business? Beloved, if we knew it we are going up all the time, it is the way up. The Lord Jesus came down. He existed in the form of God but He counted it not something to be held on to, to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death—and the Apostle does not stop there—became obedient unto death even the death of the Cross—there was nothing that the world would applaud about that death, it was not one of those deaths that men would take account of and say it was a noble death. It was a most

shameful, degrading death, the death of deaths. Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him.

We have nothing to give up like that, but the principle works, that the cross is applied to the pulling down of the life of nature. It does not like being set aside. How many of you like to be thought nothing of? How many of you take pleasure in people just treating you as nothing? The flesh is not made that way. The cross is applied to set man by nature aside, and as that cross is applied there is a spiritual coming up all the time; this is ascendancy, coming up into a new place, and many people never reach very high ground because they never go down very low, they do not know much of the fulness of the Lord because they know so little of the emptying.

Beloved, a new application of the cross is in the Divine thought—and intention—to bring us on to higher ground, and if the Church is to finally reach its highest ground, just prior to that it will know the deepest application of the cross. What is true for the Church is true for the individual member. The altar always leads to the mountain in the intention and determined purpose of God. It always does. It is not the exaltation of ourselves, it is the exaltation of Christ in us, and in that we find our fullest satisfaction. We shall ever feel less and less, but if it is a right state that is produced by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the cross, in God's sight there is a wonderful increase, a wonderful gain. We shall see later that there is a mountain in Matthew to which the Lord brings His own and says "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth"—you see the connection?

But now let us come back and close upon this preliminary word. What is the Lord after in that cross, with you, with me? What is it that He has in mind? Just this; everything according to Christ, heavenly blue; that is, the glory of Jesus Christ in His people individually, in His Church collectively, and in this universe at large eventually; everything revealing the glory of Jesus Christ. Do you see that that is the movement of the Church? When the Church is perfect in glory it will be the very vehicle of the going forth into the universe of the glory of Christ. That is our destiny as members of Christ. It is to that we have been called and chosen before the foundation of the world, that we should be unto the praise of His glory and that this whole universe through a Christ-impregnated Church should reflect His

glory—the blue everywhere. That is the end. God is working towards that end now. His dealings with us are toward that end. Why these difficult experiences, this discipline, this chastisement, why these sufferings? All to the glory; all to bring about the crystal clearness, the absolute transparency, the purity of the heavenly nature of the Lord Jesus in us. The Lord is just doing that thing in us, beloved, by the cross, which is clearing the film of this natural life, removing the thickness and the denseness of this corruption and pollution, getting a pure state, a transparent state which is the absolute purity, transparency, clearness of the nature of Christ in us. It is a moral thing. This conformity to the image of His Son is a moral thing—I use that word in its highest sense—something that is being wrought into the very moral fibre of our being, the nature of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has taken that in hand. Do not think of being glorified as some time reaching that position where suddenly there will be upon us a cloke of light and we shall be glorified. The glory comes by what we are, shines through from within, not from without. The mount of Transfiguration is not that suddenly the Lord Jesus was given a robing of light, it was the shining out of His Person: and glory is the result of the moral process in us, of the Holy Spirit's work through the cross. It will be what we have been made by grace, it will be His glory not ours because it is all of grace, because He made it possible and He carried it through.

This universe is to be full of the *moral* excellency of the Lord Jesus, seen everywhere. What a universe it will be. That represents higher ground for us. It emphasises and stresses the call "Come up to Me in the mount." First of all to see what is in view. When you see that you have got an adequate motive for enduring the sufferings of the cross, you have an object in view in the light of which you regard everything that the Lord does with you and to you. That is the end. We need that. We have often said that Paul got through that terrific life of his because he kept the Lord Whom he had seen on the Damascus Road always before him, and in his last words almost he has got that vision still there: "That I may know Him, Him whom I saw years ago on the Damascus Road, He is still my goal, my object, my glory, that I may be conformed

to Him, that is the only thing." It was that that carried him through. Oh, that the Lord would show us the Lord Jesus as His goal for us, and that He is operating all the time in relation to that end. He is going to have everything constructed with that end in view, according to that. And the tabernacle, while it represents Christ in Person, we know quite well also represents Christ corporate. The Body which has many members, and all the members being many are one Body, so also is the Christ. The Christ personal will be revealed in the Christ corporate in the ages to come, and they must be one, therefore, in moral nature as they will be one in glory, having been, from a certain standpoint along a certain line, one in the cross. There is a work of the cross in which we do not share, done for us and apart from us, but there is a work of the cross in which we do have a place, and it is given to us in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for Him, in His behalf. "Filling up that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ." It is unto that glory, that end of God.

Now may the Lord bring us up into the mount to see the glory towards which He is working, that in which He walks up and down. All the ways of God are connected with the ultimate glory of the Lord Jesus, His feet stand upon that and He does not move off of that pavement. God's movements are in relation to the Lord Jesus, to the glory of the Lord Jesus:—the sapphire stone to be revealed throughout the universe. Creation is governed by that, grace is governed by that, government is governed by that. Ezekiel is government. "And above the firmament a throne and as it were a sapphire stone," the glory of "one like unto a Man." Government is in relation to the glory of the Lord Jesus, and the glory is His glory; that is glory, the manifestation of Him in His moral perfections in a people whom He has brought to glory:—the achievement of this One bringing many sons to glory. That will be glory for Him and that will be glory for us. The Lord lead us on to higher ground with a vision of the end He has in view, for that embodies all that the Lord has to say in these days, it is related to that. So may we get our vision adjusted at the outset and see God's end.

T. A.-S.

Taking Responsibility for the Testimony

READING : Acts xii. 1-11.

WE will not read more for the sake of time, but there is a word that has been very much on my heart of late which I feel the Lord would have passed on to you; a very important message, I feel, for the Lord's children to-day.

It is with regard to our privilege and responsibility for the testimony, especially in relation to the ministry in the testimony of the Lord. Very briefly, what we have in this chapter is this.

The Lord was doing things through His servants, the Word was going forth in power; then, as always is the case, there is a mighty reaction of hell to the work of God, and the adversary stirs up his instrument, his emissaries against the testimony, and Herod is taken hold of and turned against the testimony of the Lord. And he slew James and then proceeded to take Peter also. This whole object of the enemy is to curtail this testimony and to limit the spread thereof, and to shut up this ministry. Thus we find as a result of his second move, Peter in an inner prison with two chains on him and two guards beside him, and within a large number of other limiting things. That is the position, we may say, of the testimony at the moment. The testimony and its ministry brought under very severe limitations, brought under a captivity, for the moment checked, under arrest. Then the Lord reacts to that situation. It is always very blessed to see the throne of the Lord coming in and the sovereignty of the Lord being put into operation: the Lord re-acts to that situation, but He re-acts along two lines. First of all by the Holy Spirit in His own people. And that is a very important side of things for us: and of course that is where our main emphasis is placed this morning. The Lord's re-action through the Holy Spirit within His own people, within the Church or within the assembly. And the Holy Spirit constrains them to prayer, so that here the assembly is found praying stretched-outedly to God. The position in effect is this. "Lord, this testimony and the ministry of this testimony is being crippled, is threatened with limitation, with bondage, with restriction, with curtailment, even with an end, and we cannot

find it in our hearts to accept that situation. Rather do we find it borne in upon us that this must not be, that this testimony must be liberated and the ministry in relation thereto set free. We believe that is the registration of God's will in our hearts and so we are against this thing, and we are stretched out against this thing in prayer." And when the Lord, by His Spirit, gets His people to that position of intelligent co-operation with His throne in relation to the testimony and its ministry, then He acts sovereignly on His own part. The sovereign acts of God do not operate, beloved, independently of the spiritual exercise of God's people. We must bear that in mind, for so often in a situation we sit down and say, "O Lord, do this thing," and in a kind of folded arms attitude wait for the Lord to act sovereignly for a deliverance, when the Lord first of all would energise in us unto stretched-out co-operation with Him before He would stretch out His hand in sovereign activity. But then He did act sovereignly by the angel, but the angel worked in fellowship with the Holy Spirit Who worked in the people of God. Now, beloved, the word for us this morning is on that other side, our privilege and our responsibility. Of course, there must be a position, a condition in us which provides the Holy Spirit with a ground of operation in relation to the Lord's will. I mean that we must have a very lively concern for the testimony, and that necessitates our having a clear apprehension of what the testimony is, and of the absolute importance of that testimony; how indispensable it is.

I do just wonder how far we are in that place, that position, that condition which is a lively concern for the Lord's testimony in an active way. How much we are concerned for our own testimony for our own spiritual life and state, and we circle round ourselves very largely, spiritually. That may mean bondage, that may mean depression. There is nothing so strengthening, so emancipating as to be occupied with the Lord's testimony at large; and there is nothing so depressing, so paralyzing as to be occupied merely with our own personal spiritual life. And I think that probably nine out of every ten of the frowns and unhappy looks which we carry are because we

are occupied with our own spiritual condition ; whereas if we were emancipated out into the Lord's great world testimony, we should be very much freer and a happier people. We want to be delivered from ourselves spiritually by all the Lord's universal interest. Now are we out in that ? Have we an intelligent, a lively interest, concern for the Lord's testimony in the earth ; that which the Lord is after and that by which the Lord is going to get what He is after ; the end of God and the means to secure that end ? That is being in the testimony, and that specifically at any given time. Are we in that ? Do we recognise what it is the Lord is seeking, what He is aiming at, what He is after at this time in the history of the world ; this that we call the end time ? Has it come to us ? We have heard it a good many times ; heard it with the ear, but has it broken upon us. Has it come to you, are you livingly in it ? Has what the Lord is after at the end time gripped you ? Are you intelligently in that thing, spiritually in that ? Well, if you are, that is bound to issue in a real concern that that testimony and all the ministry in that testimony shall be absolutely free to go on, and that all limiting things, all binding things in that realm shall be broken, and that concern must be to stretched-out prayer ; and, of course, the praying is the betrayal of our concern and intelligent understanding. You can always tell from how people pray just how much intelligence they have spiritually, and just how much really they are in the thing. You cannot pray really in a thing if you are not in it. If you are in it you cannot help yourself. That is a test, isn't it ? Well now, in just a very few moments, let us sum this up in a two-fold practical proposition.

First of all, from the standpoint of concern for the Lord's testimony, do we recognise limitations which exist within the realm of that with which we are associated in the Lord. Do we see a handicapping within that circle, a limiting ? Do we see that if only certain things were dealt with how much more could be realised for the Lord. Let Peter represent any one, or any thing that is of interest to the Lord. If only it were liberated it would mean that the testimony would come out and the Lord would be able to get so much more. Are you alive to the limiting elements in the testimony with which you are connected immediately ? That is a realm for investigation, for prayerful contemplation. We must pray intelligently, we must pray in a

living relation to the situation. We cannot pray theoretical prayers, abstractions. We have to recognise where loosing is necessary ; where those things which are crippling need to be dealt with, and we have to come right in fellowship, stretched out on that. You may think that is calling you again into strenuous, laborious work. Believe me, you will find your liberation, your joy in that. This assembly here would not believe their prayers were answered, but do not let us altogether blame their unbelief, let us give them credit for something else as well. Credit for the Lord having done more than they asked or thought (Perhaps they asked for or thought of an acquittal at the trial.) And you know, when the Lord does things like this you are always a little incredulous, sometimes you cannot believe it has happened. Everyone of us has been there, have prayed with all our might for the Lord to do a thing, and when He has done it we have rubbed our eyes ! Is it true ?

Oh, that the Lord would find Him an adequate company of men who are free in the Lord spiritually, from every shackle, from every chain of system where they are free in the Lord with a sovereign work of God at their back and an open way before them, and who can say, Now I know that the Lord has done this, no man could have done this, the Lord has done it, brought me out here ! We need men and women who stand in that position and say the Lord has wrought a great emancipating work for them ; and in relation to ministry, whereas hell rose up to bring an end to that ministry, God acted because He had chosen, He stood and delivered. But remember the sovereign act of God in that direction is in conjunction with the Holy Spirit—energised prayer of the assembly. This is our ministry, our privilege, our responsibility. What must that assembly have felt when Peter went on in his ministry and travelled far and wide and wrote his letters to the saints scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. That little assembly could have said, " The Lord used us to liberate that ministry, to make that ministry possible : if the Holy Spirit had not lead us to pray and we had not been obedient what a lot would have been lost." You do not know, beloved, how much the mighty world ministry of the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter, not only in the days of their flesh (it has gone on ever since in the 2000 years) is due to the

Continued on page 92.

The Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre, HONOR OAK ROAD, LONDON, S.E.23.

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Editorial communications with regard to this paper should be addressed to Mr. Austin-Sparks.

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A Witness and a Testimony

SEPT.-OCT., 1932

VOL. 10. No. 5



“Wait for the Lord:
be Strong, and let
thy Heart take
Courage, yea, wait
thou for the Lord”

PSALM xxvii. 14.
(A.R.V.)

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“ A Witness and A Testimony ”

EDITORIAL

THERE is cause for particular praise to the Lord for His goodness to some of our friends who are serving Him in other lands.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster

write to say they have had the joy of bringing to the Lord a young man—their first convert since entering Colombia. Much patient ministry has led up to this happy issue and our friends are greatly encouraged in the Lord. Already this newly born soul has been cast out by his own people on account of the stand he has taken, and Mr. and Mrs. Foster have taken him into their own home and are training him in the Word of God.

In other directions too, there have been tokens of the breaking down of resistance to the Gospel, and there is good reason for believing that other souls are under real exercise by the Holy Spirit. It is not surprising, therefore, that our friends should report also that they have of late been conscious in the spiritual realm of strong spirit-organised opposition. They covet our continued prayer that they may be strengthened to meet the challenge of the enemy to the Name of their Victorious Lord, and that they may be used to manifest the reality of His Calvary triumph in leading many out of darkness into light.

We rejoice to add that the Lord has laid His hand upon our brethren, Herbert Graham and James Birkbeck to go forth to join Mr. and Mrs. Foster, and they are at present occupied in preparations for departure. We shall value prayer concerning the details of their outgoing and provision for it, and particularly that the special permit required for missionaries to enter Colombia may be granted. Application for this is now before the Colombian Government.

Mr. and Mrs. Speedy.

There is little to report concerning development of the work of our friends in Ethiopia, but we rejoice with them in the news received early in October of the gift to them of a little daughter, Laurel Grace. The very brief news to hand by cable at the time of these notes is of an entirely satisfactory character.

Miss Forel.

Our sister is located at Mangungu in the Belgian Congo and is encouraged by evidences that the Lord is at work. She feels that there are great possibilities for the Lord on her station and longs that the deeper truths of the Gospel might go out therefrom over wider areas. She asks for prayer that she and her fellow worker may know continually the deepening work of the Cross in order that the Lord may be more and more released through them. How good a prayer to pray for ourselves and all the Lord's servants!

Mr. Yankovsky.

Our brother is exercised concerning the will of God for him in regard to the district in which his ministry should be exercised in Poland and has written asking for prayer co-operation as to this. He continues to stand in much need of intercessory help.

Recent Ministries.

The period since our last issue has been very full of vital ministries at home and abroad, and we give some little account of them that our praying friends may be encouraged by the knowledge of how the Lord is answering prayer, and that all this going forth of the Word and extending of ministry may be followed with renewed joy and earnestness in prayer.

ON THE CONTINENT.

Switzerland.

It was a very great joy to visit our dear brother Imburg at Gumligen and to share the ministry in the convention held there for a week. It was the first of such conventions, and our brother undoubtedly had good cause for encouragement and rejoicing. This centre is ordinarily a training home for deaconesses of whom there are some ninety in residence. A considerable area is occupied by the various buildings for residential and training purposes. There is a hospital with some fifty beds; a home for aged pilgrims; a school; a well-equipped laundry; a delightful little chapel, etc. A continuous stream of activities goes on in both the lectures and practical aspects of the training. The atmosphere of the whole place is one full of the Lord, and it is a real joy to move amongst these devoted and spiritually-minded children of God. During the convention all the deaconesses voluntarily gave up their rooms and their beds and slept on mattresses on the floor to make room for the guests. These guests came from near and far.

and all available space was taken. In addition to them many came for the day or for such gatherings as they were able to attend. The messages were all given in German, either directly or by interpretation. The mornings were usually occupied by the ministry of Pastor Imburg. The afternoons by Mr. Sparks, who also had an open session for questions following; and the evenings were given up to various servants of the Lord, and usually there were several shorter messages. It was a time of much blessing and the presence of the Lord and we have reason to believe that the fruit is definite and far-reaching.

There is to be another shorter conference in November (26th to 28th) and our brother asks for strong prayer-fellowship in this.

Dieulefeit.

From Switzerland we went on to the tenth Dieulefeit convention and had fellowship in the ministry with the brethren of the "Brigade Missionaire" again. The convention this year was peculiarly strenuous, mainly because of the stress caused by perplexity and difficult conditions issuing from certain religious movements which are gaining great followings on the Continent. There were large gatherings of the Lord's people from many places both near and distant, and I see that the official report says that it was the best convention of the ten. Apart from the general gatherings of the convention, we were able to have some private sessions with Pastors, Evangelists, and those whose whole time is given up to ministry. These were vital times and made possible a getting to close quarters with the various pressing problems of the work. Some seventy such workers were in these private sessions.

Paris.

From Dieulefeit we proceeded to Paris to have some days with Pastor Urban and the Russian saints. Once again we were accorded a very warm welcome in that way which, peculiarly amongst our Russian brethren, savours so much of the New Testament spirit. Here for several days to these hungry and eager children of God, with all their background of tragedy and suffering, the Lord enabled us to minister of what He Himself in resurrection is to His own as their life, their disposition, their prize, their strength. In true apostolic fashion a company of these fellow-members of Christ came down to the station and fare-welled us in Christian love.

Other Ministries.

During the first week in October Mr. Alexander and Mr. Sparks visited Dublin and shared in the ministry of the annual convention in the Y.M.C.A. The gatherings were very good again this year, and in view of all the unrest and atmosphere of crisis in southern Ireland it was nothing short of wonderful to see these hundreds of spiritually-hungry souls, with such a large proportion of young men and women, gathered night after night to receive the Lord's word.

Following Dublin Mr. Sparks was joined by Mr. Faunch and together they went to minister in Bradford, Otley, and Hoyland, Yorkshire. These were times of blessing and we trust will be of abiding value to the Lord.

Our brother Justin has been ministering in a series of special gatherings in South Wales up to the time of going to press. We know that there has been power and blessing, but so far we have not a full report.

The Caravan.

Our three brethren, F. Davies, G. Harpur and A. Musgrave, came to rest with the van in Hoyland, Yorks, where a door was opened to them for ministry in a local mission. Here they have been ministering for some time, and now at length our brother Davies has been asked to take the permanent responsibility in the Lord for that work. The other two brethren will probably remain to co-operate for a time, but the thought is that Hoyland may take the form of a base for outgoings into the district. Here is a live little gathering of children of God, and we shall follow His ways there with prayerful interest and fellowship.

FORTHCOMING MINISTRIES AND GATHERINGS (D.V.).

Honor Oak, London.

Special gatherings on the first week-end in each month: i.e., the week-end governed by the first Sunday. Saturday at 3.30 and 7 P.M. Sunday at 10.30 A.M., 3 and 6.30 P.M.

Glasgow.

In the Douglas Hotel, Bath Street; on Friday, November 18, at 8 P.M.

Edinburgh.

Second and fourth Tuesdays in the month in the Gartshore Hall, George Street. Second Tuesdays at 3 and 8 P.M. Fourth Tuesdays at 8 P.M.

Newcastle.

Last Friday in the month in the Church Institute, Hood Street, at 3 and 7.30 P.M.

Bradford.

Next quarterly conference, in the Bradford Home Mission, January 14 to 16.

Miss Sinclair.

Our sister is expecting to return to Spain during November. Will friends renew their prayer co-operation in relation to this going forth and ministry. On this occasion Miss Sinclair will not be going out in relation to any other work as before, but quite free in the Lord to be guided by Him.

The 'Witness and Testimony' in French

It will interest our friends to know that the

WITNESS AND TESTIMONY now has a French edition. Its title on the Continent is *Christ Our Life*. The translation from the English is done by our Brother Pastor Jacot and it is printed in Switzerland. Please pray for the first issue of this paper which has just gone forth.

The Motto for 1933 is now in hand. It is printed, as usual, in two colours, and the wording is:

"The exceeding greatness of His power to usward" (Ephes. i. 19).

"That I may know HIM, and THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION" (Phil. iii. 10).

"According to the POWER that worketh in us" (Ephes. iii. 20).

The price is 2d.

The Power of His Resurrection

READING: Ephesians ii. 1-6.

Colossians ii. 8-15 and 20; iii. 3-4.

"That I may know him and the power of his resurrection." "HIM, and the power of His resurrection." It is the power of His resurrection with which the Lord is engaging us at this time, and we should link with that especially this clause at the beginning of chapter 3 in Colossians: "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of of God." "IF then ye were raised together with Christ....." "If"—in other words—"you were united with Him in the likeness of His resurrection": if the power by which God raised Him from the dead has also operated in you, in raising you from the dead spiritually, then there must be a certain outworking of that, that must show itself in a continuous life in relation to the Lord Jesus, where He is at the right hand of God, and in relation to heavenly things. The proof of union with the Lord Jesus in resurrection life is that: that now everything for us is related to Him where He is, and to the things above, things heavenly.

That from which we have been raised.

We come back just a little before we arrive at that to notice some of these very strong things which the apostle is saying in connection with that. In this letter to the Ephesians we notice: ".....when ye were dead through your tres-

passes and sins wherein aforetime ye walked according to the course of this age, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience: among whom we also once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest." Now all those clauses are features of our past state out of which the power of his resurrection has brought us, and that represents a very serious and a very sorry condition. We were dead; that is one thing. We walked according to the course of this age; that is another thing. We were governed by the order of this world. We were also under the prince of the power of the air, in bondage to him, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. Of course we did not know of this, we only knew of this when our eyes were opened, but this is the statement. Many of us are quite prepared to admit now that it was true. The fact that we are alive now, in contrast with what we were, makes us quite ready to say that we were dead: in comparison with what we are now, we are able to recognise what our former state was. I trust that the contrast is so great in your case that in comparison with what you are now, you are able to say "Well, I *was* dead, there is no doubt about it, I *was* dead"! You never know what it is to be dead until you know what it is to be made

alive. Paul is speaking in the afterward of a great experience of the resurrection union of the Lord Jesus. When you have that then you know what the other is, and you do not want any more of it. We were dead, and we were also in the bondage, the grip of the course of this age; and even believers, saved ones, and raised ones, are able to recognise how true and how real this is. You have a lively sense of the "old man," the flesh when you have come on to the living ground of union with Christ and then you know how influenced you are by worldly standards, worldly judgments, what the world thinks, the world's attitude towards you. It is the collision of the believer with the world-spirit that makes him know that he was once according to it, according to the course of this age: now that you are no longer according to it you know how different the thing is. You do not know how different it is until you really come out with Christ from it, then you begin to feel the clash of the world-spirit, the world's judgment, the world-state, and the very fact that you were once insensible to it, and there was no clash, shows how completely you were in it. The course of the believer's experience is the accentuating and intensifying of the clash between their spirit and the spirit of the world, and yet at one time there was not that sense of clash: many of you know that. Now we go out in the world and, well, we are strangers in it, utterly strangers in it. As we move about we discover that something has happened to us, we are not in *that*, we are not *of* that, but we are now able to look back to a time when that may have appealed to us, we did not feel the clash of that as we feel it now, which means that we were in it, part of it, walking according to the course of this age.

Is there a mighty clash of the spirit of the world with your spirit? That is a very good sign, beloved, and if you can feel at all comfortable and at home in the world it is a bad sign. If your whole inner being does not revolt with a terrific revulsion from the course of this age, you have reason to ask serious questions about the state of your soul. We were in that, says the apostle, "walked according to the course of this age and according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." Well, here again we only discover how true that is when we recognise how completely the spirit which governs this age is not the Spirit which governs our lives. The Spirit which governs

us, the Spirit of Christ in "the kingdom of the Son of His love" has made a very, very great difference in this matter of government. The world is governed by one spirit and we are governed by another, and there is no inter-communion. The bondage of Satan—we know how great that bondage is when we are out of it by realising how terrific the clash and difference is. Well, that was our state, "..... according to the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience, among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh....."

"The lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind"; that was another state in which we were. And then, "...and were by nature children of wrath." Now you see all the things, one upon another, representing the grave, the living grave in which we were dead, a very living grave, a very powerful grave in which we were dead. Now our deliverance therefrom represents the power of His resurrection, but oh, what power that is, what tremendous power that is!

The Hopelessness of Death.

The power of His resurrection. It has destroyed the power of death, spiritual death, and beloved, taking death only, that is a desperately hopeless thing. How hopeless death is! Think about it. We say, "While there is life there is hope" and how desperately the fight is put up against death, everything resorted to to prevent, to circumvent death; great activity, tremendous resourcefulness, everything conceivable brought into play while there is any sign of life, but once that life has gone and death is there everything falls back into utter impotence, it is no use. Death! The most hopeless thing, and when death is once accepted as inevitable what a hopeless situation we are in, when once it is said by the final authority, "It is no use, nothing can be done, death is inevitable." We are paralysed, helpless; what can you do? Death is a mighty, mighty tyrant which renders utterly paralysed every resource conceivable.

We have illustrated in the natural, the physical realm, but, oh, beloved, carrying that into the spiritual realm, what a terrific thing death is, spiritual death. Have you ever met a soul who has definitely and fully accepted the idea, the thought, that they have sinned beyond forgiveness and that there is no more hope of their forgiveness, that there is nothing even in God Himself which can be found for their forgiveness? Have you ever met such a

soul? (and there are such). You know the helplessness, the utter helplessness of the situation. There is nothing you can say, or touch, or do that can in any way help that case, and what is more, that is a living hell, a living torture day and night. That is spiritual death when you become conscious of it, and the Word of God says that the whole creation is there by nature, but it does not know what spiritual death is. If the creation could suddenly be awakened to this state of spiritual death, hell would almost be universal; and that creation which rejects Christ will one day wake up to the fact that hell exists, but hidden from their consciousness; it is only becoming alive to the fact that they are cut off from God, dead to God, dead to salvation, dead to hope. What I am getting at is this, that we were in that state, though we were unconscious of it. The state existed, it was a true state. If we had been made suddenly alive to our awful condition, in the fulness of God's knowledge of it, ours would have been a desperate state of soul. It is a desperate day when a soul wakes up fully to the light that it is lost; a terrible thing is spiritual death. The power of His resurrection has conquered that, broken that, destroyed that, and if we have been united with Him in His resurrection, if the power of His resurrection has brought us to new birth, we need never know anything about that. We have been delivered from that for all eternity and never need taste it, but the others will taste it; the full consciousness of that evil state in which they are, but concerning which they are blinded. It is the blinding work of the Devil to hide from souls the real nature of their condition. When God opens eyes souls cry out in agony. The Devil keeps them blinded to their state, but for us there never need be an awakening to such a condition. The responsibility, of course, is with us once we have heard this word of Life. The power of His resurrection has come into the most hopeless realm, where there is no power whatever in the universe that can help but the power of His resurrection. But that is only the beginning. We have been delivered from the course of this age. What is the course of this age. Well, it is a state of things which lies definitely under a Divine curse. A curse, as we have often pointed out, in the Word of God, always bears certain signs and has certain features, and those features are there, that a thing that lies under a curse

can never realise the object for which it was created. The realising of that end of its creation has been rendered impossible and it will go so far and then it will fall, never get further than that. As you know, in the case of the curse pronounced by Joshua upon Jericho, later the people came to the prophet Elisha and said "The situation of this city is pleasant, but the waters are bad and the trees cast their fruit before their time." That is the curse, that nothing comes to ripeness, everything falls before it reaches perfection. That is the course of this age. It can never attain unto God's end, God's purpose in its creation, it will break down, it will fail. Men talk about the conquest of this and that, supremacy in this realm and that. There is no such thing. The conquest of the air! There never will be the conquest of the air. They may bring things to a certain point of efficiency, but the thing will break down. The conquest of the ocean! Yes, when the *Titanic* was launched the chief officials who saw her launched said, "God Almighty could not sink that ship; there goes the conquest of the ocean; and on her maiden voyage they were banqueting in honour of the conquest of the ocean and the 'unsinkable' ship and suddenly the crash and down she went within seven minutes, the most terrible marine disaster in history. You see what I mean? There is no consummation, no finality, no completeness, no perfection, no attainment unto supremacy, but a breakdown when it reaches a certain point. And we were in that realm of activity where it was utterly impossible for us to reach the destiny God had intended for us because we were under the curse of God upon a creation that had departed from Him. A hopeless situation; born into it, children of it. Here in this age, in this world, born under a curse, "children of wrath," impossible of realising the end for which the world was created, and we were created; a hopeless situation, by nature utterly hopeless. But the power of His resurrection has dealt with the curse, He was "made a curse for us" in order that we might be delivered and reach God's intended end, the manifestation of the sons of God in glory. The power of His resurrection has done that, broken in upon this cursed creation and delivered us out of it so that we can go right on to perfection. That is only the second feature.

"The prince of the power of the air." You see we have got first of all a state in ourselves,

spiritual death. And then we are in a state immediately around us, "the course of this world," the death, the curse. And then you widen the circle, "The prince of the power of the air" around that. How hopeless the situation. The whole satanic force holding the creation and the age and every one in it in bondage and in death. The tremendous power of Satan! The tremendous range of his organized kingdom to see to it that so far as his ingenuity and cunning and wit and strength can possibly affect the end, not one soul shall escape, and if one soul does escape he will pursue, persecute that soul right on to the end to try and recover his lost property. "The prince of the power of the air." When Christ went to the Cross He "stripped off principalities and powers." The power of His resurrection has dealt with that also. The power of His resurrection has become effective for our deliverance. "So great salvation," Paul calls it. Are we rejoicing in the greatness of our salvation? Have we apprehended the meaning of this verse, "...the power of His resurrection"?

Unto what we are raised.

The apostle goes on and shows what the power of that resurrection did in Christ. It not only raised Him from the dead, not only took Him out from this age, but took Him through the ranks of principalities and powers as a conquest; for as He passed through He stripped off, He broke through and triumphed; but not only so, God put Him there at His own right hand far above all these, and put all things in subjection to Him. That was all the outworking of this power of His resurrection, what God "wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies, far above principality and power and might and dominion...and hath put all things under his feet..."

The Holy Spirit says, through the Apostle, "that power is to usward who believe," and He is able "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us..." that power! You see how far that life that you and I received in new birth is capable of taking us. We have received it, as it were, in its infant form in new birth, but oh, within that infant life there are all the potentialities of that vast range of triumph right up to the throne. All that which was accomplished in Christ is pos-

sible in us by exactly the same power that worketh in us; it is all there.

What the Believer must do.

Now, then, the fact that we have possessed that, become possessed of that, puts us under an obligation and a responsibility, "If, then, ye be risen with Christ.....set your affection on things above," "Where Christ is." It is only another way of saying "Put yourselves in line with the direction of the life that is in you, for the direction of that life is thitherward to Christ, in conformity to His image." Put yourselves right in line with the direction of the life within you, that is the way it is going. Set your heart upon that, get into oneness with the upward movement, the spiritual and moral upward movement of that life. Because of the tremendous potentialities of that life you must be in fellowship with it in its direction, otherwise you will not come to the realisation of those possibilities and potentialities. Because it is the life of Christ, victorious, it is intended to lead you on in victory in every realm. The hope of victory over spiritual death is in that life; the hope of victory over the lusts of the flesh, the desires of the mind is in that life which is given to us, a life which is a victorious life in its very nature. The hope of our being delivered from all forms and phases of the operation of that curse which brings us under arrest, that we go so far and no further, is in that life. The hope of our rising triumphant over spiritual forces, intelligences, principalities and powers, is in that life. The hope of our reaching Christ and gaining Christ, and being conformed to the image of Christ is in the life that we have already received.

Therefore, for all these reasons, put yourself into line with it, co-operate with it, consent to it, adjust yourself to it. "...seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth...." Seek, and set your affections upon the things that are above where Christ is if you be risen with Christ. There is a responsibility resting upon us to see to it that voluntarily we do not in any attitude, or in any contact, touch the thing from which we have been raised. If we do we counter the operation of that life and we bring ourselves again under arrest and under defeat. Let me illustrate. When Israel crossed the Jordan, they in history, typically, did what is put here before us spiritually in the letter to the Colossians, they passed typically by way of the cross, which represented the passing from an old life of bondage to the

flesh and an earth life where nothing came to perfection, into the heavenlies, into a resurrection union with Christ. The Jordan for them was the cross and the grave by which they passed from one set of conditions to another, and they passed into this resurrection union with the Lord, in type, when they passed through Jordan and came out on the other side.

Now they enter upon an entirely new phase, a new order of things. They have come into a spiritual realm, they have come, in type, into Ephesians where the seven nations of the land represent "principalities and powers and world rulers of this darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness. How are they going to be dealt with? Jericho illustrates an entirely new order of things. Not a sword drawn in the flesh, not a sound made in the flesh, all fleshly activities are silenced, are ruled out. All the recourse to natural means put aside. It is a strange, mysterious kind of thing this, marching silently around a city, besieging a mighty city in silence, without a weapon being used, day after day, seven days, and then on the seventh day seven times, and then a shout. But that was not a shout in the flesh, that was the shout of a perfect faith in God. If you had been in the realm of nature according to men, after having been round that city fourteen times silently and seen nothing happen, you would have said "Well, what is the good of shouting; it is a ridiculous thing to shout, all this is futile." But that is the flesh talking. But the flesh is so thoroughly gone that after all this seeming futile kind of thing, which was according to the commandment of the Lord, they believed; and it was the obedience of faith, faith brought to maturity. Well, they shouted and Jericho went down. It represented the nature of spiritual warfare in the heavenlies. So different from carnal warfare in the earthlies.

Now notice, God intended that to establish for ever the nature of their triumph; that their triumph, their victory was not according to the methods of men; that their ascendancy, their conquest was not on any natural, ordinary fleshly, human basis: that it was a spiritual thing in the heavenlies where man's reasoning, man's wisdom is ruled out. But this thing is a thing in heavenly union with the Lord, and they could have gone on and swept the seven nations out of the land on that principle, but you notice how that course of things was arrested, checked, and the whole course was upset and they did not go on in that way. One man, like

a link in a chain, brought a union between them as up there and the cursed realm as down here: brought them back into touch with that which lay under the curse. Achan took the accursed thing and all Israel by that link of one man was brought again into a contact with the thing that was under the curse, and their next movement was disaster, defeat, and the whole thing had to be investigated and brought to the light. "Set your affection upon things above." If we have been raised with Christ, what is contained in that union with Christ is victory over all the power of the enemy. Victory in the spiritual realm back of things seen. The enemy's strategy to bring that victory to an end is to get us to mind something earthly, to just form the link again between us and that which is the realm of death and the whole of our conquest is paralysed, we have touched something that is under the Divine ban; we have just reversed the direction of our inner life; we have violated the law of "the Spirit of Life in Christ."

Beloved, if we will adjust ourselves to the course of that resurrection life we can go on in victory, and from victory to victory, and go right on to God's end: but there is a responsibility with us to see to it that voluntarily we do not form a link between us and that from which we have been delivered in the power of His resurrection. We set our affection on things above, not on things that are upon the earth, we mind heavenly things: all our life is above. It is a blessed thing, and it ought to be a constant source of strength and comfort to us that having received eternal life in being born again we have received, potentially, the perfect work of God in Christ, and that now, God, by that very life, is bringing us to His own finality of perfection in Christ.

A Change of Dispensations.

The Seventh Day and the First Day.

We have often tried to explain this. Perhaps the best illustration of it is the change of the dispensations between the Jewish and the Christian. You know that the dispensation changed when Christ rose from the dead. In more senses than one it was a change of dispensation—His resurrection; but do you notice what it says in John xx. Something is introduced, almost imperceptibly it creeps in there, and unless you are very much awake you do not notice what has crept in; something has come in which is absolutely startling if only you are alive to it. "On the first day of the week cometh

Mary Magdalene early....."—you have changed the dispensations. The Lord's day is the first day of the week ; in Judaism it was the seventh day—but do you notice what that carries with it? The Jews worked six days and rested on the seventh. The believers rested on the first and worked the six. Believers start their work with a day of rest, and work six days. Jews work six days and rest on the seventh. You have got a change of dispensations, but it carries with it this tremendous truth that God is now working, *from* rest, not *to* rest ; the old dispensation was working *toward* rest ; in the new it is working *from* rest. God has come to His rest in the work of Calvary in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and having reached His finality, His fulness, His rest in Calvary in the resurrection, now He is working from that, and He is working with us from a position of perfection, out from a fulness, not toward a fulness ; He has got the fulness and it is of His fulness that we are receiving. And unless you apprehend that rightly you will be in unrest, but when once you see that God, having given us resurrection life, has given us—with that—rest, His own finality, His perfect work, the completeness, the finality of His work in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus ; given to us in the life that He gives us in resurrection union with Christ ; and with the gift of that life He has given us everything ; Then you are in the place of power. But the danger is that we should fall short of what we have got, that we shall fail of the realisation, the possibilities of the life that is in us. So we must place ourselves in perfect sympathy, and direc-

tion, and co-operation, with the life that is in us and come into line with it, because in it is all the perfection that is in Christ, given to us.

We have seen something, I trust, and while we see great vistas, vast ranges, tremendous possibilities, let us recognise that this has got to come down, must come down to the practical matters of our daily lives. We are to know in a multitude of ways, here, every day of our sojourn on the earth, the operation of that life ; and we can put that life to the test daily and it will prove itself equal to any test if we are not wilfully, persistently, in opposition to it. That is, doing the thing which is against it ; permitting the contact, the interest, the association which violates it. But if we are in sympathy with it, in adjustment to it, it will take the strain of any test. It will take the strain of a physical test (Romans viii. 11) : " 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." It will take the strain of a moral test, of a circumstantial test, when you are in a difficult situation circumstantially, carry you through triumphantly ; it will take the strain of any test so long as you are in sympathy with it. And forgive me that I have said so much about " it " because after all, it is " Him." " That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." We must not regard this life as some *thing* apart from the Person. It is " Christ in us the hope of glory," but Christ in us in the mighty energy of His resurrection life.

T. A.-S.

For Boys and Girls

The Gospel in the Farmyard (No. 16).

Eyes Front ! Heads Up !

" Forgetting those things....I press toward the mark...Christ Jesus." Philippians iii. 13-14.

IN a small field on our farm, close to the cow-sheds, lived a calf ; and every day at milking time the farmer supplied it with delicious warm milk in a pail. The calf, of course, liked the milk immensely and had learned to know the sound of the handle clanging against the side as the farmer stood the pail on the ground waiting for the calf to arrive ; and I can assure you the

latter generally did not keep the farmer waiting many moments ! On the occasion of which I am now telling you I happened to be standing in the middle of the field just as the farmer came out of the cow-shed with his pail, and I found myself directly in a line between the farmer and the calf. The farmer called, and rattled his pail, and the calf needed no second invitation. It came charging straight ahead *at me* and proceeded to push its nose up against my legs as much as to say " Where is the pail ? Where is

the pail?" I, of course, pushed it away and pointed towards the farmer, trying by every means to make the calf see reason. I wonder if you have ever tried to carry on an argument with a calf. Dogs and cats will often understand you, but calves are different, and nothing that I could say, and not all my pushing, could make that animal realise that he had come to the wrong person. There was only one thing to do—I moved away towards the farmer, the calf following hard after me and looking all the time for the pail. At length we approached so closely to the farmer that the calf caught sight of the pail—and then our troubles were over! He had at last found the supply of all his need and he worried no more about me. A bee-line for the pail—and that milk soon disappeared! I can assure you I was not a bit offended with the calf for preferring the farmer's company to my own—especially as it taught me a valuable lesson which I want you to share with me.

"Look Unto Me and Be Ye Saved."

It is this. Just as the only way I could bring satisfaction to that calf was by leading him to the one who could meet his need, so the only way I can help you in the deepest need of your being is by bringing you to the Lord Jesus Christ—the only One Who can give to you the gift of Eternal Life, and with it everything else of which you truly have need. Do you remember reading in John i. how John the Baptist drew the attention of two of his own disciples to Jesus one day, and said "Behold, the Lamb of God!" And the two disciples at once left John and followed Jesus. Poor John! Do you feel sorry for him? He was not at all sorry for himself, for he had come to point men to Jesus and gladly said "He must increase, but I must decrease." And then Andrew, one of the two disciples, having found Jesus for himself, went away and found his own brother Simon and brought him also to Jesus. Wise brother, to bring Simon direct to Jesus instead of being satisfied with merely telling him about Jesus!

"Come Unto Me."

This is the precious secret for you and me, boys and girls. Be sure you come directly to the Lord Jesus Himself, to know Him personally. Be sure you talk to Him yourself and are not content for others to do all your praying for you. Read His Word for yourself, that He may talk to your own heart directly, and do not be satisfied only for others to tell you what He says. Little calf! come straight to the One Who has the delicious, Life-giving supply and

understand that nobody else can take His place or meet your need.

No Saviour but Jesus.

How the Apostle Paul suffered because many foolish people at Corinth had not learnt this lesson. In 1 Corinthians i. and iii. we read that though he had tried his utmost to point them all to the Lord Jesus Christ there were some who said in effect, "I am one of Paul's men." And Paul cried out against their foolishness and said "Was Paul crucified for you?" No, not even Paul could save: the Lord Jesus only can do that. Will you be sure, boys and girls, that you are not allowing anybody else to take His place in your life, even though they love Him and talk about Him? Have you come to HIM, and are you drawing all your supplies from HIM? Or does all your knowledge of Him consist of what others tell you about Him? Be sure you are right with Him in this so important matter.

"Not I, hut Christ."

And then there is the other side—such a privileged one. You may be the one to point and lead others to Him. Don't try to win others to yourself so that they say "What a wonderful boy or girl you are. How much better if they say "What a wonderful Saviour yours is." Be sure you point them directly to the Lord Jesus and help them towards Him by yourself seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit to live nearer and nearer to Him every day. And then the day will come when they will see Him truly for themselves and run to Him for salvation: and though it may be that after that they will think and talk more about their Lord than they do about you, shall you mind? No—rather say with John the Baptist in exactly similar circumstances "This my joy therefore is fulfilled."

"Looking Unto Jesus."

There is another thing the calf seemed to say to me: what a great deal of blessing we miss when our eyes rest upon the wrong thing—often our circumstances, or our difficulties or our earthly possessions—instead of upon our Lord. That calf fastened his whole attention upon me and was in danger of missing the blessing that was awaiting him. And so will you be, if you become so occupied with other things that you fail to keep your gaze fixed on your Lord. Trouble and loss always come by losing sight of His face, but our hearts have perfect rest, when He is all and in all to us. Press toward Him continually, with your mind stayed upon Him,

and He will keep you in perfect peace. (Can you find a passage in the Old Testament that tells us that?) Seek first the kingdom of God—which means put the Lord Jesus first in everything—and all other things needful He will add, without our being anxious about them. And more than this—as we gaze upon Him continually we shall be changed into the same image from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. iii. 18) until to our watching eyes one day He will suddenly appear as the glorious Lord from heaven and we shall be caught up to be with Him for ever; and “when He shall appear we shall be like Him” (1 John iii. 2). What a joyful day for those who are ready! But what about the others who are so busily occupied with other things that their eyes and

hearts are not fixed on Him? I am quite sure every wise boy and girl would choose to be amongst the ready ones. Are YOU ready?

“Jesus Only.”

Now, all eyes upon the Lord Jesus! The present Saviour and the soon-appearing Lord of Glory!

Now none but Christ can satisfy,
None other Name for me,
There's love and life and lasting joy
Lord Jesus found in Thee.

* * * * *

Keep your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

G. P.

The Secret Strength of the Lord's Servant

Oh, it is hard to work for God,
To rise and take His part
Upon this battlefield of earth,
And not sometimes lose heart!

He hides Himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God;
He is least seen when all the pow'rs
Of ill are most abroad.

Ah, God is other than we think,
His ways are far above,
Far beyond reason's height, and reach'd
Only by childlike love.

Workman of God! O lose not heart,
But learn what God is like,
And in the darkest battlefield
Thou shalt know where to strike.

Then learn to scorn the praise of men,
And learn to lose with God
For Jesus won the world through shame.
And beckons thee His road.

So sang Faber, with profound insight, seventy years ago. The standards of spiritual success are all focussed in Calvary, and can only be understood in the light of the Cross. In this matter man's thoughts are strangely different from God's thoughts. Crowded gatherings, eloquent addresses, warm appreciation, popu-

larity, these are still sought and considered as signs of the blessing of God by many, whereas often the most vital work is done when human signs of success are completely absent. Calvary itself, viewed from the human standpoint, was the world's biggest failure, and, in the service of God, the servant is not above his Lord.

This fact is illustrated in the lives of many of the Lord's greatest servants, and particularly in the ministries of the prophets of old. How Isaiah and Jeremiah, to mention only two, poured out their souls year after year in burning indignation, denouncing the sin of the people and interpreting God's mind to them. The passion that breathes through their utterances! what fire; what earnestness; what consuming zeal for the glory of God and the healing of the nation; and with what result! These men appeared to be complete failures. Isaiah's glorious ministry simply brought added judgment on the people, and all Jeremiah's warnings went for nothing. They were not only unheeded, but he himself was imprisoned as a public nuisance. Notwithstanding all their entreaties, their travail and pain, Judah followed the way the ten northern tribes had gone and was carried into captivity.

Jeremiah has left a record of the agony of his heart in a series of great Hebrew poems. The Book of Lamentations is a wonderful composition. It consists of five Lamentations, each a separate poem, occupying one chapter

in our English Bible. Chapters 1, 2 and 4 contain 22 verses, each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order. Chapter 3 has 66 verses (22×3) three consecutive verses under each Hebrew letter, in order. Chapter 5 also has 22 verses, but no alphabetical arrangement. In the Septuagint the book begins: "And it came to pass after that Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented this lament over Jerusalem, and said: How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow!" That we may appreciate his suffering, let us recall some of his expressions. "For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." (Ch. i. 16).

"Behold, O Lord; for I am in distress: my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; (verse 20).

"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath" (iii. 1). "My flesh and my skin hath He made old; He hath broken my bones" (verse 4). "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord" (verse 18). He closes his fifth lamentation with these direful words: "But Thou hast utterly rejected us; Thou art very wroth against us." Truly the iron had entered into his soul.

How was this forty years' ministry maintained? What was the secret strength which enabled him to endure? It is true that at the very outset he had been told what would happen. (Jer. i. 18-19). He had been strengthened by the promise of the presence of God. "They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, said the Lord, to deliver thee." But forty years was a long time, and Jeremiah's powers of endurance must have been tested to the uttermost.

The secret is revealed in the heart of the central Lamentation. Chapter iii., verses 22-26, strike an entirely new note and at first seem out of place in the middle of such a wail of woe. But the breaking heart must have some resting-place, the sorrowful spirit some refuge in which to hide and find consolation. And here he unveils it. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him." It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the

salvation of the Lord. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." That was the secret. Jehovah was *everything* to His servant. Jeremiah had anticipated the lesson which Paul learnt so well. "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through (in) Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. iv. 12-13). Jeremiah had come to enjoy a very intimate and blessed relationship to the Lord Himself and to find all his wellsprings in Him. This made him independent of success or failure and gave him power to endure. Hoping continually in the Lord, he could proclaim his message, though with breaking heart, whether the people would hear or whether they would forbear.

Jeremiah shows by this word that he had, as a prophet of God, been brought, in experience, into the secret strength of the priestly position. The priestly office was quite different to that of the prophet and yet both had to represent God to the people. They both occupied a middle position, standing between God and the people, and therefore came into a special relationship to God. Both had to know the Lord as their portion in a peculiar way.

When God's people, as a whole, fail of His original purpose for them, the method of God is always to bring a smaller company into a specially intimate relationship to Himself, and use that company in ministry to the whole. Such a company come by revelation into an understanding of the full purpose of God for His people and stand therein on behalf of the rest.

It was so in Israel's day. God's original thought for His chosen people whom He had redeemed out of the hand of the enemy, was that they should be "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," a peculiar treasure above all people" (Ex. xix. 5-6). A kingdom of priests, exercising a ministry on behalf of God to the rest of mankind. Israel failed to remain in the covenant of Grace and came under the covenant of Law, thus making another method necessary. As a consequence God chose and brought into a special relationship to Himself a family and a tribe. Aaron and his sons, together with the tribe of Levi were separated from the nation and God's thought for the whole, represented and expressed in them. They were given a ministry both to, and on behalf of, the whole people, and their effectiveness in that ministry

depended upon their appreciation and enjoyment of the peculiar privileges bestowed on them.

To Aaron it was said, "Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part (portion) among them: I am thy part (portion) and thine inheritance among the children of Israel" (Numbers xviii. 20).

Of Levi, too: "Wherefore Levi hath no part (portion) nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance" (Deut. x. 9).

Thus both the priestly family, and the tribe separated unto the service of the Sanctuary, were brought into a specially close relationship to Jehovah Himself, and had to find in Him all their satisfaction. They were to rejoice in Him. He was to be their portion.

Not only were they to find spiritual satisfaction in the Lord, but their physical life was to be sustained by partaking of the offerings made by the people to Him. "The priests, the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and His inheritance" (Deut. xviii. 1). They were therefore constituted a holy company, engaged exclusively in holy ministry, coming continually into the holy place, in intimate relation with the thrice holy God, and sustained, in their ministry, by holy food. There were many long periods in Israel's history when the Priests and Levites failed disastrously to fulfil their ministry, but Jeremiah, looking forward to the still future kingdom when "He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. xxxi. 10) prophesied of the priest, "I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness" (Jer. xxxi. 14). That is the priest according to God's thought. Living entirely on holy food, his whole being was to be completely satisfied with God. The Hebrew word *Rawah*, translated "satisfiate" is rendered "abundantly satisfied" in Psalm xxxvi. 8: "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures." A priestly company thus finding the Lord to be their portion, every craving of their being satisfied with Himself, could stand in the full good of the truth as to the people of God, and, being also a living representation of it, were spiritually competent to minister to the whole. Jeremiah, as a specially chosen and prepared prophet of God, had learned that he could only fulfil his difficult and costly ministry as he personally

came into the secret strength of the priestly position, and found Jehovah to be his satisfying portion.

That which the Lord is seeking To-day.

We are persuaded that God is pursuing the same method to-day. The professing Church has signally failed to realise its heavenly calling and ministry. The line of demarcation between it and the world has been almost obliterated, and spiritual fornication is rampant everywhere. Nevertheless God still seeks a representation of His mind. His word to His people is "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Peter ii. 9). Into the fulness of this position and calling, those who would go on with God must come. Such will be entrusted with a ministry of prayer on behalf of the whole Church, and given a ministry in the Word to the whole. As increasing revelation comes to them along the line of God's original purpose for His people, and they are led out by the Holy Spirit in a ministry of intercession on behalf of all saints, their hearts will be wrung with pain as they enter into fellowship with their Lord and see present conditions from His standpoint. They will not be popular. Their ministry in the Word will be misunderstood, and they will know what it is to share the rejection of Christ. But they cannot compromise or accept a lower standard than the original thought of God. They will perceive that the Lord Himself is deeply concerned at the failure of His people. "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance" (Deut. xxxii. 9). Paul wrote of "The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. i. 18). And they will be deeply exercised, therefore, to bring as large a number as possible into a place where, separate from that which fails to realise God's intention, they come into intimate fellowship with their Lord, and together do express the Divine mind.

Such a ministry will bear very few marks of success, judged by human standards. It will be a day of small things. There will be much ostracism, opposition, misrepresentation, ay, and even persecution. Not only will such as exercise this ministry meet these things from their fellow-believers, they will also know in a fierce and terrible way the enmity of Hell. The Adversary is always out against everything that really represents, in however small a

measure, the true mind of God. As the days darken and the end draws nigh, the opposition of the enemy will intensify—and the fellowship of His sufferings be increasingly known. How is such a ministry to be maintained? Only as the priestly position is realised and enjoyed. Only as there is a continuous feeding on Christ. "The Lord is my portion saith my soul." It will be an experience of mingled joy and sorrow. The soul satiated with fatness, rejoicing in the fatness of His House and drinking of the river of His pleasure. That on the one hand; and, on the other pouring itself out in intercession that is travail, and a ministry which is as a fire in the bones; only to find too often that the word is not received and apparently fails of its purpose.

It is the way the Master went. It is the way of the fellowship of His sufferings. Shall we turn back because of the cost? Surely not! Is there not always, for our comfort, the assurance of the ultimate triumph? Again and again in the ministries of the prophets of old time, in the midst of their prophesies of woe and judgment, in the midst of their experiences of pain as they found their words rejected, there broke upon their vision the flaming glory of the final victory. Isaiah is radiant with the thought of the coming glory. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generationsthou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates, Praise.....the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory (Isaiah lx. 15-19). Hear Jeremiah also. He finishes his last Lamentation: "Thou hast utterly rejected us, Thou art very wroth against us." But he also says: "Thus saith the Lord; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast; even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem.....The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the

voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of Hosts: for the Lord is good; and His mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the House of the Lord" (Jer. xxxiii. 10-11).

And the servant of Jehovah, suffering, toiling, often heartbroken at the condition of God's people, can rest in the assurance that at last God's purpose will be realised, the Church will be purified and presented unto Christ a glorious Church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. With the completion and rapture of the Church of the Firstborn, the Lord will have obtained the administrative instrument He has been seeking through the ages. The Lord Jesus will come in power and great glory to deal with the evil in the world as headed up in Antichrist. He will purge His Kingdom of all things that offend, breaking His enemies with a rod of iron and dashing them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Then will the prophecy of Daniel be fulfilled. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii. 13-14). But He will not reign alone. His overcoming saints share His kingdom, for it is also written: "But the saints of the most high (places) shall take (receive) the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (verse 13).

So we march on, through weakness and seeming defeat to the ultimate triumph, singing with Faber as we go:

For right is right, as God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter were to sin.

S. A.

The Motto for 1933 is Now in Hand

Christ Crucified, the Wisdom of God and the Power of God

(Continued.)

READING : John iv. 20, 21, 23, 24.
Ephesians iv. 23, 24.
Hebrews xii. 9.

Just link these passages together. "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "The new man which is after God created in righteousness and holiness of truth." "The Father of our spirits."

IN our former issue we were dwelling upon the great counterfeit system which has been launched into this universe by him who is called the Deceiver, and we were seeing how that he has counterfeited the whole heavenly system, from the Godhead through all orders of spiritual beings and all forms of spiritual work, and that there is not a thing which is true of God and in relation to God, but has been imitated by the Deceiver; so that there are two great systems; there is the Divine system and there is the counterfeit, the satanic system. We have also seen that God created man suitable to His own system, that He made man in a way which was perfectly adapted to His own Divine government and method; and man made according to God's mind was supremely and essentially a spiritual being having a soul and a body; but primarily spiritual, because his spirit was his essential self by which he was joined to God, Who is a Spirit, and that therefore, the communication of God to man was by his spirit, everything Divinely spiritual was apprehended by man through his spirit. The Deceiver, in order to capture man and secure the success of his system—the counterfeit of God's system—must of necessity make man suitable to his ends; so that in the garden there was, so to speak, an interference with man which, because of man's sanction, resulted in man becoming another being than that which God had created; a soul-man with spirit severed from God, and on the Godward side, in death; the soul in ascendancy, and man a man of soul instead of spirit. Everything in the fallen man is on the soul-level of life and operates along the line of

the soul instead of the spirit. This whole world is constituted and organised and run upon a soul-level, "and the whole world lieth in the wicked one." What we have been aiming at seeing in the main is two things. One, that all deceptions, delusions, errors, have their seat and their ground of success in the very nature of man, in what he is as adapted to the work of the Deceiver. The soul is the seat and the ground of all deception. And the other thing, that in His work in the Cross, the Lord Jesus carried that whole race away under the judgment of God, to death, when He poured out His soul unto death; that race was finished with, and in doing that He cut the ground from under the feet of the Deceiver for any further work of deception for those who by faith take their place in all Calvary's meaning. Hence the issue is the tremendous importance of our rightly apprehending and becoming obedient unto the truth that when Christ died—we died, and that from the time of our taking that position in Christ crucified we know that we may not, we dare not, we cannot live after the flesh, or walk after the flesh, or live merely upon a soul level of life, but that henceforth it is after the spirit in the power of the Holy Spirit. Wherein will you find greater wisdom than this? Tho universe is full of one big question: how can you destroy the power of this whole counterfeit system and the Deceiver back of it? Find the wisdom that will outwit that, find the wisdom that will outplan that. See all the cunning, all the wit, all the craftiness, all the diabolical subtilty of this system of deception, of counterfeit, of error, from this one known as the Deceiver, who has deceived the whole race and all the nations, and where will you find a wisdom to meet that and successfully triumph over it and break its power, and rid the universe eventually of it? The answer is "Christ crucified the wisdom of God." And in what way does that supreme, transcendent wisdom work as by the Cross of the Lord Jesus? In this way, that in Christ crucified the whole race

in its fallen nature is carried out in death and the ground of the Deceiver is removed. Therein is the wisdom of God manifested in Christ crucified. Oh, that we should be able to grasp that more fully, the wonder of the Cross, the matchless wonder of the Cross. May we use such words as the transcendent "ingenuity" of God in the Cross; one would almost say the cleverness of God. It is the wrong word to use of Him, but therein is the wisdom of God displayed.

The Bed-rock Truth for the People of God.

Now for days of growing deception, even amongst the people of God, the bed-rock truth is the truth of our death, burial, and resurrection union with Christ. We just want to pass over for a minute to see the resurrection side of this. We have seen the mighty power and the mighty wisdom of God in the death side in putting away the race, the man, the nature which is in essence Satan indwelt. That does not mean that people are devils incarnate. That is not what I am talking about. There is a difference between that and there being something of Satan in the very nature of the race. We have pointed out one thing before, that there is such a thing as deception in the very nature of this fallen race. The Word of God says "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" and believers who walk nearest to God know best how desperately wicked the natural heart is. The nearer we get to God the more we loathe ourselves. Now deceit was never in man unfallen. That is not of God. There is no deceit in the Divine nature and there is no deceit in man who is made after God. One of those superlative features of the New Jerusalem, which after all is only the designation of the Church, is its transparency, it is said to be clear as crystal. That means that everything filmy, deceptive, subtle, double, cunning, crafty, will have been absolutely rooted and purged out from the people of God, and they will be absolutely transparent, clear as crystal; there will be nothing dark, sinister, untrue, insincere about them. It is the root of Satan, and that is in the natural man, a nature which is in essence Satan-indwelt, and God is not going to pluck that out of us, He is going to put us out, and have a new creation. It is of tremendous importance for us to see the significance of death union with Christ; not only what we call our sins, but ourselves. But on the resurrection side, the wisdom and the power

of God are wonderfully displayed. What happened again at the beginning when Satan interfered and man assented? The spirit by which man was joined to the Lord one spirit fell out of that functioning union, and on the Godward side became dead. That was Satan's triumph. Now upon that fact the whole system of Satanic government encamped and was constructed—severance from God in spirit. When the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, He rose, beloved, in the same representative capacity for a new order, a new creation, as in His representative capacity for the old order. That is, on the death-side He represented by voluntary acceptance of our sin and taking on Himself this sinful creation in His Cross, He accepted representatively the position of the fallen race and went out carrying it in His inclusive person to death. In resurrection He is the first-born among many brethren, and in resurrection He is representative of God's new order. You see what has happened? In the cross of the Lord Jesus, at a given moment, Christ as representing the old order was severed from God, He entered into that place, that position, that state of being cut off from God, God-forsaken. That is because of what He is doing. He is taking the place of a race severed from God; He has entered the depths, the awful depths of the state of man severed from God. In the power of resurrection, all the Satanic might, all the Satanic wisdom was broken in bringing back Christ from among the dead, bringing back one representing a race from a place of separation from God, and that new fellowship with God carried with it, and implied the fact that all the work of Satan was destroyed. A tremendous thing that. The power of God. "the exceeding greatness of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand far above all..." He has brought Him back into closest fellowship and union; but He had been severed from God. It may only have been in the matter of time a moment, but if you knew anything about separation from God, real separation from God, though it might be for a moment it would be like a lifetime, beloved, for one who had known fellowship with God to have, for an instant, separation from God—it would have aged you so that your hair would be white; and the Lord Jesus tasted that. He did meet this. He as man, had gone into the place of that spirit-separation

from God, for the moment He lost God, but when God brought Him back from the dead into fellowship right into His presence it meant that all which was responsible for lost fellowship with God was destroyed. Now resurrection union with Christ, in Christ, is just that "the exceeding greatness of His power which is to usward who believe, according to that energy of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead"—"To usward who believe."

What lies behind our Union with Christ.

Now, many Christians ask the question, and might well ask the question, "What does that mean?" "I do not know that I am conscious of that having been true in my case. Is that something future when we are going to be raised from the dead in the resurrection? Is that Scripture *then* going to be fulfilled?" "The exceeding greatness of His power to usward, according to the energy of His might... when He raised Him from the dead," "is that when it will be?" No, you may not have had the consciousness of the exceeding greatness of His power in proportion to that energy of His might which He energised in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, but I ask you this question, "Do you know spiritual fellowship with God?" "Do you know what union with the Lord is?" If you do, beloved, that has called forth the exercise of the exceeding greatness of God's power. You never came into union with God only on the ground of the whole power of Satan being broken, and all the result of Satan's work being set aside. Our fellowship with God is an enormous thing. The spiritual life, beloved, is no small thing. Resurrection union with the Lord Jesus, to walk in newness of life, means that God in Christ by the Cross has done an enormous thing. Oh, for a right estimate of the work of Calvary. Oh, that we should come with our eyes open as were those of the Apostle, so that our chief glorying and our one determination is to know nothing save "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," and the "Cross of our Lord Jesus by which the world is crucified to us and we to the world." That is why Paul gloried in the Cross. That is why Paul determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, because he saw the momentous thing that Calvary represented on the death side and on the resurrection side. Now the Lord would have us spiritually in that position. The power of Satan is destroyed when once a

believer stands on resurrection ground, and keeps there, and refuses to come down on to the lower level of soul-life, self life. The battle of the believer's life thenceforth is not to attain unto some spiritual position, but to maintain a spiritual position which has been given in Christ—"He *hath* made us to sit in the heavenlies in Christ"; not something to be struggled after, but the whole object of the enemy is to bring the believer down out of that place on to a lower level, and that is why the Apostle says "Our warfare is in the heavenlies" and that we have got to "Stand, withstand and having done all remain victor on the field." That is, in other words—keep your position, the position which is yours by resurrection union with Christ. So the enemy is out with a down-drag, or an on-pressure, or a subtle device, snare, trap, by any one of his many methods to get the believer out of position. But the Cross represents for us a spiritual life in the heavenlies where Satan's power is broken. Now this is again very largely general, and we want to get, before we close, from the general to the more specific; that is, to bring this whole thing, this great truth, into touch with practical matters. Not that what we have said is not practical, but I mean the things with which we are more closely associated in our lives; the truth must be applied there.

The Foundation and Nature of Fellowship with God.

Where does everything begin in relation to God, and therefore, in relation to the enemy in his counterfeit? It begins in the realm of worship. The beginning of everything is worship, in relation to God. That is, God having the central and supreme place of recognition, acknowledgment, of government; in our complete obedience, surrender, in every part and phase of our being, God having supreme right; worship begins there. It is a relationship not only an exercise. It is not something that we do in specified ways and methods, it is some attitude of the life, some place which God has in the entire consciousness, that is worship.

Now if Satan is to counterfeit and take God's place, worship is his objective. With the first Adam that was his objective; to draw man away from giving God the supreme place, that he might take God's place, he supplanted God in the reverence and the acknowledgment and the obedience of man and captured worship and became "the *god* of this age." When the last Adam, the Second Man, came and

entered officially, publicly upon the great work that He had come to do, the one thing that the adversary sought to capture was His worship. "All these will I give thee if thou wilt worship me." He has betrayed himself, he has shown his hand; if he could do the same with the last Adam as he did with the first he has defeated the object of a new race.

Now it is just here that we have got to have light. We have read John iv. from the 20th verse. The woman is saying "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain and ye say that in Jerusalem men ought to worship." Jesus said unto her, "Woman, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem will men worship the Father; believe Me, the hour cometh *and now is*, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." In spirit—a small "s" not a capital "S." Oh, what is this? This represents a new regime, a new order. This is the crisis of the Cross in the realm of worship, the basic thing. But what has happened? Jerusalem was definitely, divinely ordained as the seat of honour and worship. The Samaritans imitated with temple and mountain the system which was at Jerusalem, worshipped the same God; but God had brought into the world that system of worship at Jerusalem, He had projected that. It was a temple, a building, a piece of elaborate ecclesiastical architecture with priests, with robes and vestments, burning incense, offering sacrifices, making prayers, reading Scriptures, and many other things; yes, God had brought that in, and now the Lord Jesus was setting the whole thing aside, and in so doing, implying as clearly as anything could be implied, that this is not *true* worship. It is a comparison which is almost invidious. "Neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem will men worship the Father, but true worshippers shall worship in spirit and in truth." "God is a Spirit."

Where Christendom is Astray.

What has happened, then, if this is not the truth, what is the truth? That is where Christendom has gone astray. That is the divide between soul and spirit. Not something which was but a type, an illustration, a set of symbols. God never intended that to be the final thing, never intended man to make that a thing in itself, never intended that that thing should go on indefinitely. It was brought in to illustrate and represent something else and its time for duration

was until the Lord Jesus came; it all pointed towards Him, led up to Him, spoke of Him and His Cross in which that which was merely of the soul would pass, and that which was of the spirit would come in. What is the spiritual life in the matter of worship? Oh, it is not ecclesiastical architecture, it is not vestments, it is not ordinances, it is not rites. They pass out with Calvary; the perpetuating of anything like that is a contradiction of Calvary. See where we are to-day. The maintenance of that sort of thing, beloved, is because of a failure to perceive what the Lord Jesus has brought in.

What, then, is spiritual worship? It is getting back of all that and seeing the spiritual meaning. Those sacrifices which were brought and sacrificed were looked into and most carefully turned over, if peradventure there might be a flaw, a blemish, a taint, an inconsistency, a double element, two colours, two kinds; and if any such mark could be found the whole thing was rejected, but when after careful inquiry and investigation not a flaw or a blemish could be found, and God's representative with the keen eyes of an expert could pronounce over them the familiar "Tetelestai"—"It is perfect," then they were offered to God. And the truth embodied in the type was this, that the only fellowship with God is on the basis of the spiritual perfections of the Lord Jesus, and worship is no longer bringing of animal sacrifices but bringing up from the heart an appreciation of the perfection of Christ. That is worship. The vestments of old were only types and figures, and illustrations; the priestly apparel was speaking all the time in type of a righteousness and beauty and glory which is the nature of the God-Man, the Lord Jesus, and which is given, imputed and imparted to the one who by faith apprehends Christ; and that we who are in Christ, in the sight of God are wearing garments of beauty and glory and holiness. Why, then, perpetuate a system. The Lord Jesus put all that away in His cross, it is all gone; that is what He means by worshipping in spirit and in truth. The temple again, or the tabernacle; these were only types speaking of that spiritual fellowship of the saints as joined to an Exalted Head, one Body, the Temple of God. The boards of the tabernacle tied together by the bands only speak of saints with the imputed righteousness and holiness and glory of God laid upon them, bound together in one Spirit, one Body, with the

"joints and the bands." The fitting together of the stones of the temple wrought in the quarry and brought together without the sound of hammer or axe, silently fitted in, only speaks in fore-shadowing of the living stones built together for a spiritual habitation, and that God now indwelling, not temples made with hands but a spiritual body, the members of Christ joined to him.

Why, then, perpetuate a thing which God has dismissed in the cross, and keep to the lower, fail to reach the higher, the fact that "we who are many are one Body." Do you see where things are astray to-day? I know how sweeping this is but all this has to do with worship. Now note that when there is a failure to recognise, to know the spiritual meaning of all this and to enter into it, and a maintaining of the old thing, you are still on a soul level and you are open to deception, and the whole thing may be a ghastly deception. And how does that deception work? (I know you have to be very patient with me and are probably suffering a good deal, some of you, but I must be faithful.) How does that deception work? In this way, that so many good Christian people are absolutely in bondage to a traditional system which is cutting clean across Divine revelation for them. It is their traditional system which is simply barring the way to spiritual revelation, and the cross of the Lord Jesus represents the liberty in the spirit for God to lead into the fulness of His life and light. That is the whole purpose of the letter to the Hebrews. It was for that very purpose; that here was a people that had received light concerning the true nature of fellowship with God in Christ, and that the Lord Jesus had taken the place of the temple and the priesthood and the sacrifices and the ordinances, and even the Sabbath, and the Sabbath was no longer merely a point of time but related to a Person; God had reached His rest in Christ. All God's works were finished in Christ, God has entered into His rest when Christ perfected the work of God in redemption on the cross.

Now that is no longer a matter of form, ceremony, external rites, buildings, priests, sacrifices, it is all Christ. They had seen that; He had called upon them to go outside the religious formal, historic, traditional camp, and that brought persecution, ostracism, isolation, loneliness and all manner of things. The official religious people made it very hard for them because of that. The price to be paid for what

is truly spiritual and heavenly was, and is great, and they were dangerously in peril of going back to the old thing, and the letter to the Hebrews was just written to save them from that peril, and to more fully tell them about the great change that had come about in the cross, the work of the Lord Jesus; that one system had passed, the earthly representation, and the other, the heavenly reality had come in, and you know how that letter speaks about the "pattern of things in the heavenlies" and "the heavenly things themselves"—and the letter comes to the great conclusion in "We are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, to the blood of sprinkling, to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant," come to that in Him. Now you see historic Christianity as such, traditional Christianity as such, may still keep us on a soul level of worship where we must have a certain kind of building with certain kind of windows, with a certain kind of music, and certain kinds of prayers, certain kinds of people and certain kinds of dress, and all this to "aid" our worship: all this to make real our fellowship with God, and it is living back on pre-Calvary ground and it may be all soulish, and it may just be obstructing the path to a full personal inward spiritual life with God.

**To know the Lord in Life
we must be free from the
Grave Clothes of Outward Systems.**

Beloved, it is as true as anything I have said, that if you want to know the Lord livingly in greater fulness you have to be free from every external control of religion, you have got to be free and open to the Lord, you have to be free in the spirit. Formalism has got to go and reality and life have got to come in. There must be a personal life in God, and that is not dependent upon place or anything outside and round us; that is dependent entirely upon our spiritual fellowship with Him. It can be as real, as blessed in a dingy rat-infested Bedford jail as it can be in the most gorgeous ornate cathedral. Oh, yes, some of the most wonderful fellowship with God has been in the most unlikely places. You need no "helps" of that kind when you know God. Your life is with God. Now remember, that letter to the Hebrews was written in anticipation of something. The Apostle knew that before very long the whole of that Jewish system would be in ruins. The Lord Jesus had prophesied it, that there should not be left one stone upon another. It would be scattered to the four

winds. There would be no temple, no altar, no sacrifice, no festivals, no priests; the whole thing would cease and be smashed in fulfilment of the Divine prediction. What would happen to these people if their fellowship with God was bound up with that? It would go. It would go with the system, and he wanted to save them from that thing which being bound to earth, would go, and to bring them into a new thing which belonged to salvation. Fellowship with God must be of that kind, that whether we can go to meetings or not we have still got the Lord; whether we have nice soulful music or not, we have still got the Lord. We are not in that realm. "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father."

Bricks and mortar cannot communicate with spirit. Man's soul can communicate with God only through the vehicle of his spirit in union with God. That is what Calvary has done. Of course, you can understand now why the message of the cross is unacceptable, and if you are going to proclaim and stand for it, you will be outside the camp because of this strong cleaving to a historic traditional inheritance, and, too, the awful thing is this, that Satan has taken hold of the Divine representation or typical system to appropriate it, when God has done away with it, and that which God has brought in for a temporary purpose he has captured for himself to obscure the real nature of fellowship with God.

Now no one will think that I am saying that there are no spiritual people in that system of

things. I am not saying that, but I am saying that if that represents for them their spiritual life, and if they *must* have that, and if that is the realm in which they live, that they do not see beyond that and are not free from that as a thing in itself, then they have missed the meaning of Calvary, and they are bound to miss all the meaning of Christ crucified, the wisdom and the power of God. Wrestling with principalities and powers wants something more than a system of external things. You see we are up against a terrific business, we are up against a spiritual position which is colossal and only a spiritual position is adequate to that, nothing less. I trust you have received enough light to see that what has been said is justified. We do not want to be in any position less than the Lord's first best for us. I am sure we are prepared to pay the greatest price to be in God's first place for us, by His grace. May He enable us to be willing to go on with Him, "leaving the things which are behind and pressing on," or to come to the Hebrews again, "Let us go on unto full growth." The toys, the picture books, the illustrations, the symbols, the types are for children who have little intelligence: they are taken away at a certain time when God is out—not to have children—but to have sons, and there is all the difference between the two. And so Calvary dismisses the kindergarten of external things in relation to God and brings in the fulness of heavenly order to make of us full grown sons of God. May we be so.

T. A.-S.

“The Laying on of Hands”

(NOTE.—We would earnestly ask readers of the following to patiently read all that may yet follow on this subject before they come to a final judgment. This is a matter in which premature judgments may lead to false conclusions; so read all, and that with an unprejudiced mind.)

“WHEREFORE leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on to full growth; not laying again a foundation of . . . the laying on of hands.” “For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God.”—Hebrews vi. 1-2. v-12.

It is not our wish to take up this matter in any controversial way, although it may be impossible to avoid that element arising in the minds of some who read. We desire only to pass on what light we have, and be as constructive as possible. But contrasts are inevitable, and there must of necessity be a corrective factor. The present pressing in of this subject upon the notice of the Lord's people calls for some faithful and spiritual facing of it, and presentation of the truth concerning it: not, let us repeat in the way of controversy, but for clarifying, safeguarding, warning and building up of the “Body.” It would be the best thing for us first to recognise the place which “The Laying on of Hands” has in the Scriptures.

We leave the fuller explanation for later, and do little more than refer to the fact.

In the Old Testament.

Genesis xxii. Abraham was elected as head of a chosen race, and the promises were secured in him. These promises were inherited by the son who was elected by God to become the head in his generation, and were passed on by laying on of hands. Genesis xxviii. 27-34. This was repeated when Isaac laid his *right* hand upon Ephraim and his *left* hand on Manasseh. (The right hand is always the *symbol of strength and honour*).

Exodus xxix. 10-15, etc., Lev. 1-4; iii. 2, 8, 13; iv. 24, 29, 33; viii. 14, 18; xvi. 21. Here we have one truth representing the many aspects of fellowship with God, namely, the identification of the

person with the offering by the act of laying on of hands. The hands are the symbols or tokens of the entire man and in laying them on he committs himself entirely.

Numbers viii. 10. 2 Chron. xxix. 23. Here the whole people are represented as laying their hands upon the Levites. Thus the Levites in taking the place of the firstborn sons are identified with every family in Israel, and every family is identified with them. They are in effect Israel as a “Kingdom of priests,” and foreshadow the whole priestly company of the saints—“The Church of the firstborn ones.” Hebrews xii. 23.

Numbers xxvii. 16, 17, 18, 23. Deut. xxxiv. 9. Moses was commanded to appoint his successor. Joshua was appointed, and the equipment for his ministry came to him at the time that Moses laid his hands upon him.

There is another realm in the Old Testament which represents the same principles of both identification and equipment. It is that in which so frequently occurs the phrase “The hand of the Lord was upon . . .” Usually this is connected with the Prophets.

They represented God and God was with them. Their words were His words, and God stood by them. The way of expressing the wisdom, power, acts, experiences, movements, revelations, etc., was “The hand of the Lord—upon.” See Daniel, Ezekiel, Elijah, Elisha, etc.

In the Gospels.

In the Gospels the Laying on of Hands as to its practise is confined almost solely to the quickening of the mortal body, and the bringing into blessing. Thus we have the Ruler of the Synagogue asking the Lord Jesus to come and lay His hand upon his sick daughter, or rather upon his daughter who “is even now dead.”

Mark tells us (vi. 5) that while unbelief paralysed Him amongst His own people and He could do no mighty work in His own country, He did lay His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them.

In Decapolis they brought to Jesus a man with an impediment in his speech and besought Him to lay “His hand upon him.” Mark vii. 32
Again in Bethsaida they brought to Him a

blind man and "besought Him to touch him." and "Jesus put His hands upon him." Mark vii. 22.

At the close of Mark's Gospel the final commission is given to the Apostles and the promise is given that "They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." Mark xvi. 18.

Similar instances are recorded by Luke (iv. 40 ; v. 13 ; xiii 13). Then as to blessing by identification, this was the portion of the children. Mark x. 13, 15, 16. Luke xviii. 15. And finally the Lord at the time of His Ascension "lifted up His hands and blessed them." Luke xxiv. 50.

In the "Acts" and the Epistles.

As there was a sovereign act of God in the case of Abraham, Moses and the Lord Jesus, without any act of man, thus constituting them "Heads" in their respectively representative capacity, so Pentecost was another such sovereign act in relation to the Headship of Christ to the Church which is His Body. No human act is connected with that initial constituting of God. God gave "Him to be Head of the Church which is His Body" Ephes. i. 22 ; iv. 15 ; v. 23. Col. i 18 ; ii. 19. As such He was the Anointed Head and in the first setting up of the Church—the Body—the fact of the anointing had to be spontaneous. The House of Cornelius was the complement of Pentecost as the Gentile half of one fact—the One Body, Jew and Gentile. So there also it was spontaneous and the explanation of Peter was "The Holy Spirit fell on them *as on us at the beginning.*" Acts xi. 15.

We cannot get very far until we recognise that God, apart from any act of man, has set up something and anointed that with the Holy Spirit. There are no more *Advents* of the Holy Spirit from heaven, but there is a coming into and under the anointing which is upon what God has constituted. This word of explanation and warning is necessary because the truth contained in what we have just said governs everything from Pentecost onward. *It is now contrary to the New Testament and an exceedingly dangerous thing to "wait" for the "coming" of the Holy Spirit. We do not wait for Him, we move into that where He is.* After Pentecost there is not a single instance of "waiting for the Spirit." The state created by this "waiting" is often a psychical one which opens the door to any inrush of false spirit power and delusion. But we must return for the moment to the New Testament record of "the laying on of

hands." To take the matter in order it is as follows. (We include also the connection of hands with the incidents, not only the "laying on.")

In Acts v. 12 Luke mentions that many signs and wonders were done by the *hands* of the Apostles. Then Peter took the lame man by the *hand*. Acts iii. 7.

In Acts vi the deacons chosen to relieve the Apostles of the pressure of temporal demands were identified with the house of God in that capacity by the laying on of hands, so that their ministry was recognised to be essentially spiritual, as it proved to be, specially in the case of Philip and Stephen.

Acts viii brings us to the case of the Samaritan converts who had also been baptised (16). When the Apostles laid their hands upon them following or during definite prayer, the Holy Spirit came upon them. There is no mention of any peculiar manifestations or signs in this instance, but they knew quite definitely that they had received the Holy Spirit, and Simon the sorcerer saw something.

Chapter ix brings the matter in in connection with Paul at his conversion. Ananias—*not an Apostle*—in obedience to a declaration of the Divine Sovereignty in connection with Saul, went to him and in recognition of the family truth of the house of God laid his hands upon him and said "Brother"—thus identifying him with the family, and there followed restored sight, baptism, and the receiving of the Spirit. We do not know the exact order of things in this instance, but we know that connected closely with the one were the others.

Chapter xiii sees the great transition from Jerusalem to Antioch in relation to the world extension of the testimony. Barnabas—a man without prejudices or personal interests—is the Divinely chosen link, making possible this delicate transition without a break in fellowship. The great principle that all ministry is one and not personal or separate, but the ministry of all, is brought beautifully into view in this instance. There were five men—*not Apostles*—who ministered to the Lord and fasted and the Holy Spirit said to them, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul unto the work whereto I have called them. Then when they had fasted and prayed and *laid their hands on them*, they sent them away. So they being sent forth by the Holy Spirit—" That the great Apostle Paul, with all the sovereignty of God back of his election, and all the wonderful appearing of the Lord of Glory

to him, and all that he had been told as to his ministry, had to go out to his life work through an act of representative men of the assembly—not Apostles, one of them probably a coloured man, is something to think about.

As to direct references to laying on of hands, there remain Paul's words to Timothy on two occasions.

1 Tim. iv. 14. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (elders).

2 Tim. i. 6. "Stir up the gift of God that is in thee through the laying on of my hands."

We do not know whether these references are to two different events or to the same. What we do know is that Timothy was equipped for ministry when the Holy Spirit operated in connection with prayer and the laying on of hands, and that prayer was prophetic in its substance as to what Timothy would especially fulfil as to the nature of his ministry.

We should be justified, we feel, in linking in 1 Cor. xii where gifts of the Spirit are referred to as equipment for ministry to the building up of the Body of Christ. It is not said so, but from these last references of Paul and the other Scriptures cited, we may find good reason to believe that these Divine Gifts within the "Body" were connected with the laying on of hands. There is one thing that we note as we pass on, it is that Paul did not repudiate this procedure at the end of his life, any more than he repudiated Baptism as no longer belonging to the dispensation. If he had come to a time when what are called "ordinances" (we do not endorse the term) no longer applied, then, as an honest man he ought to have said so, and not referred to their validity as he did to the end. His last letters "Ephesians," "Colossians," and "Timothy" refer to Baptism and the Laying on of Hands rather with emphasis than with dismissal.

There remains but the passage of Scripture with which this consideration started, Hebrews vi. 1, 2. It is clear from the context that the Apostle was handicapped in his writing by the unduly delayed maturity of those to whom he wrote. In Chap. v. 11 he deplored that after so long a time it was still necessary that someone taught them the "first principles." Then in Chap. vi he urged that the "first principles" should be settled once for all and that they should go on to full growth. He then enumerated those "first principles" and called them

"foundations." They are six, and the fourth is "the laying on of hands."

So far we have just brought forward the Scriptures which refer to the subject. Before we go on to the interpretation in the light of the fuller range of truth we feel it necessary to say one or two things by way of bringing the matter into its right place. Let us stress very definitely the principle that the value of any one truth depends upon its being kept in its right relationship to all the rest of the truth, and of it being kept in its place. This we shall show more fully later. If this law is not observed then the results will be perilous to spiritual life. These results are for the most part of three kinds.

The "Laying on of Hands" can be, and very often is, only a MERELY RELIGIOUS ORDINANCE, gone through without any living inward spiritual foundation or outcome. An institution as a part of a recognised order, and unless family traditions or common religious acceptances are to be violated or ignored it is expected to be observed. It is a religion. Then secondly, the "laying on of hands" with a certain implied or interpreted meaning can be, and very often is, entered into and received in real and genuine religious sincerity. The aspirations are good. The intentions are the purest. There is reverence, solemnity and devoutness. In such cases the surroundings and accompaniments—building, vestments, tone, music, aestheticism etc., leave a lasting impression, and the people concerned always refer to that day as the most solemn in their lives, and think of it as having been a great "blessing" to them. Faithfulness requires that we shall point out that this also is capable of being a great peril. We must never judge the spiritual value of things by their impressiveness or the measure of religious emotion which they bestir. Mysticism and aestheticism are often confused with spirituality. There is a very wide gap between being devoutly, passionately, sincerely abandoned to religion and being truly born from above—born anew to the Holy Spirit. The artistic temperament can conceive and produce the most sublime things and pass through the most acute religious ecstasies. In the realm of religion the artistic and emotional have put more people in a false position than any amount of false doctrine. Indeed, false doctrine has captured multitudes because it has been dealt out in beautiful, fascinating, impressive, captivating forms and dress. The Serpent depended upon such for the success of his first delusion.

Not religion but regeneration is the only safe foundation of any "experience."

Much more ought to be said in this connection, and a whole disclosure of the difference between soul and spirit is necessary to make things quite clear, but we must go on, and when all is said we shall see that not an experience on an occasion but the abiding and ever growing inward knowledge of the Lord Himself is the proof and test of the genuineness of such experiences.

There is, however, a further realm in which the laying on of hands can be

Positively Dangerous and Damaging.

This is the realm where things are psychic in a more intense degree. In this realm the thing is usually something in itself, and is detached and given an importance and emphasis which is bound up almost entirely with the *experience* which may come by it—the experience as such. It is a matter of getting something, experiencing something, feeling something, bringing spiritual things into the sphere of the senses. The accompaniments and association of the imposition of hands here are usually high-tensioned atmospheres charged with emotion, worked up in some way, by singing, loud praying, etc., manipulation and movement or pressure of the hands or fingers and an assertion of soul force. Very often a mediumistic state is produced, and too often a condition of seeking to possess something is thought to be an exercise of faith. The soul is stretched out or else it sinks into an unnatural quiescence and pacivity. Such a state exposes those who are concerned to an inrush of spiritual forces which are not the Holy Spirit. The sensations may be very wonderful and seemingly subliminal, other supernatural elements may be present. Even the Lord Jesus may be praised and extolled. This may go on for a considerable time and then, without explanation, it may all go just as suddenly as it came. Immediately it is gone there is thrust into the mind the suggestion of the sin against the Holy Ghost, which, of course, is unpardonable. When once this suggestion has found lodgment and has been accepted or entertained, the individual is under the awful and deadly weight of condemnation with which it is well nigh impossible to deal. All those blessed means of saving grace which are for the sinner who has never known the Saviour are robbed of their virtue by this lie. The Blood, the Word, the love of God, the Advocate; none can help when things are "unpardonable." And so the delusion works. It is worth the Devil's while

to allow and even inspire an extolling of the Lord Jesus if he can secure the ground for such a fatal blow at Him by undermining faith in every one of His virtues by a lie and deception. (Comp. Acts xvi. 16, 17.) This is the state of not a few dear children of God to-day and it is one of the most difficult and exhausting tasks which the Lord's servants have presented to them. Indeed, the enemy loves nothing better than to get the laugh at the servants of God by presenting them with these "cases." The chief weapon against him has been paralysed by unbelief, namely, the Precious Blood. But it is not only in those concerned directly that the enemy gains his advantage, but because of such things abounding, many of the Lord's people repudiate the whole matter and adopt the attitude that *in any case* or *in any way* the "laying on of hands" is essentially dangerous. Thus a blow is struck at truth because it has been taken out of its right sphere and thereby exposed to false influences. While the manifest *results* in wonderful ecstasies and psychicho-physical manifestations prevail there is a great vogue and a reputed "great Divine movement." Let it be understood that we are not saying that everything associated with the laying on of hands is invariably false, but we are pointing out the basis of the dangerous. The normal level of spiritual life has become so low that there is a reaction towards the abnormal which is fraught with very many and great perils.

The Lord would have the life of His people to be a continuous miracle and wonder. The true life in Christ *is* this, and therefore, abnormality may be rather a mark of disorder than of the true work of the Spirit. It is significant and instructive to note how when an organ is removed from its place and connecting tissue and submitted to stimulants, from without it develops in an extraordinary way. Experiments carried out by surgeons have shown that if a portion of any organ of the body—say a piece of a kidney—be removed from its connective tissue and placed in a test tube with a nutrient medium it will immediately commence growing. While in the body its growth was regulated because it was under supervision and thus kept within limitations, when thus started *on its own*, however, and unchecked by the restraining hand of a central control, it at once begins to increase in size. As it grows, however, it changes its specific nature, becoming quite featureless, so that it is kidney no longer!

The maintenance of specific nature and function depends absolutely on continuance in corporate fellowship. Dr. J. A. Murray, of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund has pointed out that the individual cells of the various tissues are not independent, self-contained units, each going its own way. They are subject to a general controlling influence, the nature of which is still obscure, which limits their rate and amount of growth, so that a uniform proportion is maintained between the different organs and parts of the body. In cancer the controlling power is wanting, so that something abnormal and unbalanced results. It is something like that which ensues when any part of truth is taken out of connection with all the rest and made the subject of particular and unproportioned attention, having stimuli focussed upon it from without. It develops abnormally, but loses its real feature and becomes something in itself. The same thing applies to movements and departments or sections of Christian work. As in the Body of Christ all the rest of the members are necessary to give the true value and feature to each one, so each part of the "One Faith" needs all the rest and the central controlling power of the Holy Spirit. This leads us, then, to seek to see

The Place of the Laying-on of Hands in Relation to all the rest of Truth.

T. A.-S.

(To be continued).

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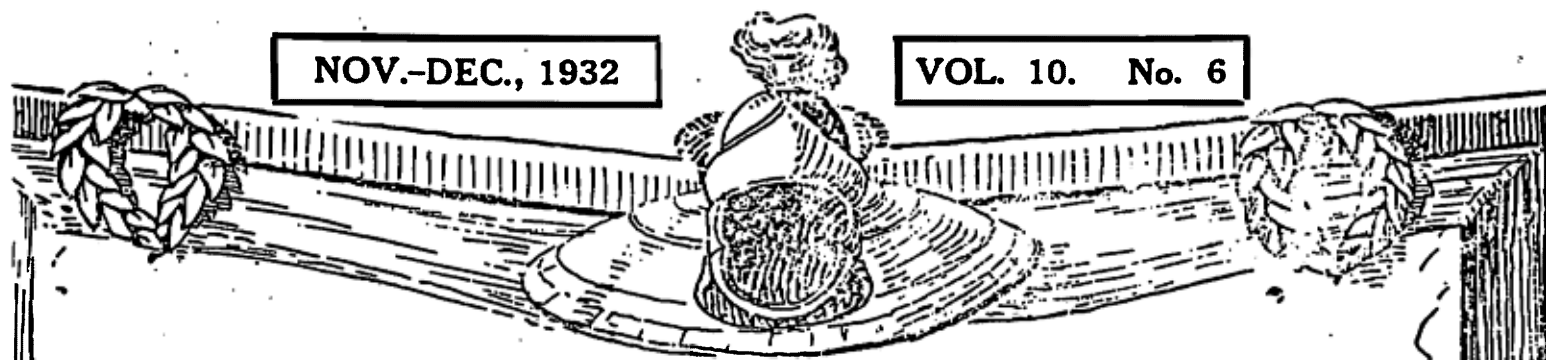
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NOV.-DEC., 1932

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“ OUR GOD
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ABLE ”

DANIEL iii. 17.



“ A Witness and A Testimony ”

EDITORIAL

1932 Retrospect.

WITH the passing of another year we are able in glancing back to discern not a little of value which we believe came out of the past eternity, and will find its full manifestation in the eternity yet to be. It has been a year of keen spiritual conflict, and there have been patches when we have just had to stand still and wonder how much further we could go. The motto with which we entered into the year has again and again challenged us, and sometimes we have in personal experience thought that we had come very much into the experience of Revelation xii. 11. It is always difficult to weigh one year against another when they run successively, and we have more than once said of a year that it was the most difficult one we had known. However, be that as it may, we have received help from God and have continued unto this present. This is no small testimony, for we are persuaded that the power of Satan and his forces has been well extended, and if it had not been that the Lord was on our side when they rose up against us they had swallowed us up. BUT the Lord has been our Helper, and so we still remain victors on the field.

It is because it is so completely of the Lord and not of ourselves that we dare to make mention of the goings in our midst. The Lord only knows with what conflict and suffering this testimony is carried forward, and because it is so there is no element of fleshly boasting in any reference to progress. With chastened spirit and with reverential gratitude we make mention of the large number of letters and messages of appreciation which have come to us in relation to the WITNESS AND TESTIMONY. This little vessel of ministry has steadily extended its message into well nigh every country of the world, and we are constantly being surprised by voices concerning it which come from remote and most out-of-the-way places of the earth. We fear that all who write to us do not get a letter from us, but we would let them know here that their words of

appreciation do greatly help to make us feel that the bitter conflict with which the getting out of the paper and its messages is accompanied is really worth while. As all who read it know quite well the paper is not of the popular order. It is well calculated to sift out readers and discover very really where spiritual hunger is.

Then we are grateful to the Lord for the many personal ministries which He has called out during the year. A large number of these are never mentioned in our issues. Our brethren are constantly visiting places throughout the country apart from the regular and standing gatherings which are held in various centres, such as Newcastle, Edinburgh, etc.

BEYOND OUR SHORES ministries have gone forth either in temporary visits or by witnesses who have gone to sojourn in distant lands. The year was young when our brother and sister Speedy went from us to Ethiopia. Every letter that has come from them during the year has had something in it as to the clear seal of God upon their going. Then, not long, before our brother and sister Foster went in the opposite direction to South America. Our sisters Lady Ogle and Miss Gerster spent some time in ministry in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria early in the year, and Miss Sinclair has had her first term in Spain. Our sister Violet Chapman has been in France and Switzerland all the year in the combined function of serving the Lord and having special training for the future that the Lord may give her. As is also known, we have had the joy of ministry on the Continent, both in the south of France and in Paris, and in Switzerland. Thus the year has been very full of personal labours in many parts.

Not the least of the specific marks of the year is the coming into operation of the new Centres.

In May we opened the new Scottish centre at Kilcreggan. It was for the most part breaking new ground, but as the Lord had so wonderfully given and furnished this beautiful house on the Clyde, we were assured that He would use it for His own purposes. Conferences have been held throughout the summer, and while at times they were not so largo, there were occasions when the accommodation was not adequate and room had to be procured outside. We have very good reason to believe that if the Lord tarries, the next summer will see a necessity for very much more accommodation being pro-

vided, and we are being engaged with this prospect.

The sojourn of three of our brethren in the Yorkshire area during the summer months issued, as we have before mentioned, in our brother, Frank Davies, being asked to take the oversight of a work in that district. This, with other live links at different points in that county, has made for something quite definite in the direction of meeting the spiritual need of many of the Lord's people who are reaching out for spiritual food.

Our brother and sister Norman went early in the year to reside in Great Malvern, Worcestershire; and they have been gathering a little company of those who want to go on with the Lord. Week by week the "church in their house" has gathered to the Lord in the "breaking of bread" and the ministry of the Word. Our brother has also had many other doors of ministry opened to him.

Then, as we came near to the end of the year CRAWLEY in Sussex has come into line with this string of Bethanies. From time to time during the past years we have been asked to help with ministry in a little centre of testimony there. Now, at length, in ways which bear the evidences of the Lord's hand, the property comprising a useful sized house and a delightful hall with nice grounds has come into our possession. Into this centre our brother Faunch and his family have moved, and we watch to see the Lord making it a strategic point for meeting the unmet need of His children out from that vessel.

* * *

At Honor Oak there have been very many causes for praise. The accommodation of our meeting hall has had to be increased by the adding of a new wing. This with its folding doors closed makes a delightful small hall for prayer and other gatherings. The vision and desire which we had at the beginning that this Centre should truly fulfil the purpose of "a house of prayer for all peoples" has been very blessedly realised, and there has been a steady passage of the Lord's people to and fro from far and near. The conferences have been marked by life and power, and rarely has there been spare room at these times in the guest house.

When our sister, Lady Ogle, went to Egypt it seemed clear that she was being set free for a larger world-ministry (Lady Ogle had been our hostess at Honor Oak Centre since it was opened)

and after prayer and waiting before the Lord it seemed clear that the Lord would have our brother Paterson move into the Centre with his family to "father and mother" the family of the Lord's children there. This step has been marked by blessing, and although it meant their giving up their own home and to some extent their private family life, we feel that the gain to the Lord's work is not small.

* * *

We have never said anything much in our pages about our printing work. Friends will have doubtless noticed that for some time the literature has very largely been, not only published, but printed by the WITNESS AND TESTIMONY printers. Nearly all of the reprints from the WITNESS AND TESTIMONY and some of them as a whole series in book-form have been printed on our own press. In our brother Ogden we have a devoted servant of the Lord who fulfils the major part of his ministry by giving the messages through the printed page. We would ask for prayer for this side of the work, for it does meet the mighty opposition of the enemy, and often he would seek either to put our brother or the printing work out of action.

There are other phases of the whole movement of God amongst us, and as we are passing toward a new year there are various things which point to still further developments.

Prospect.

It would seem that the movement out to other lands which took place at the beginning of 1932 is going to be repeated in 1933. Our brother Herbert Graham has received permission from the government of Colombia to enter that country and join our brother Foster. With him also will go our brother Birkbeck. Brother Birkbeck goes out from an assembly of the Lord's people in Liverpool. As far as we can see at present our brethren will sail about the middle of January. We shall say more about them and their going forth at a later date.

* * *

We would draw attention to the special gatherings which are in view for early in the New Year.

HONOR OAK, general conference, JANUARY 7th and 8th. Workers' conference, 9th to 11th.

BRADFORD (The Home Mission), JANUARY 14, 15, 16.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster in Colombia, report a marked hardening of the atmosphere against them, so that even the

ground which had been gained in certain lives *appears* in a large measure to have been lost. Our friends have been passing through a difficult period when discouragement could easily have weakened their hands. We praise God, however, for the note of undaunted faith and strong assurance of victory through the Blood of the Lamb which runs through their letters and we rejoice that the intensification of the enemy's resistance is but provoking our friends to a stronger stand in the Name of their victorious Lord. May all of us who bear them upon our hearts be stirred up to more faithful intercession, wielding against the spiritual enemies that lie behind the darkened souls of the people those spiritual weapons which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. Unceasing, overcoming, spirit-energised prayer in the Name of Jesus is the urgent need.

Mr. and Mrs. Speedy

send very encouraging news of the progress of their little daughter. Our friends are much exercised concerning certain very definite proposals which are upon their hearts relating to their ministry and which, if developed, might mean very much for the Lord, and we invite very special prayer for them in this connection.

Miss Sinclair.

By the time these notes appear, our sister will probably have left us again for Spain. Her destination on this occasion will be Jaca, in the north of the country, where the Lord has opened to her a home, affording special opportunities of ministry among the middle-class people who are so much upon her heart.

Acknowledgments

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Please Note Change of Date of
January Conference.

GENERAL CONFERENCE 7 & 8.
WORKERS' 9, 10, 11.

Farewell to Brothers Graham and
Birkbeck (For South America)

WEDNESDAY EVENING, JAN. 11.

The Power of His Resurrection

As Spoken

No. II.

I HAVE been very much occupied of late, I believe by the Lord, with the words of the apostle in his great declaration as to his own spiritual quest in Philippians iii. 10 and I am feeling that the Lord is continuing to emphasise that in my heart for the sake of His people in these days, especially the clause, ".....the power of his resurrection." "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." And in connection with that, very familiar words which to some considerable extent explain what Paul meant by that statement, in the letter to the Ephesians i. 19: ".....the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his 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."

The Range of the Power

Now all that which we have from verse 20, to the end, as well as the beginning of chapter ii. is a definition of "the power of His resurrection." You see the tremendous range of it; "raised him from among the dead ones," and the end of that exercise of power was in placing Him in the throne, subjecting all things to Him, giving Him to be Head over all things to the Church. It is a vast range of power that. The power operates not only in bringing back Christ from among the dead, but in taking Him through all realms, through all hierarchies, through every range and order of authority and dominion, putting Him above them all at His own right hand and gathering under Him under His authority and in subjection to Him, all those powers, all those orders, making Him Head of them all and then giving Him to be Head in that sense to the Church. We have pointed out exactly what is said here, that it is

not that He was given to be Head of the Church merely, not that He was just given to be Head over all things *in* the Church: that is not what is said, that is included, but He was given to be Head over all things, over every principality and power and rule and dominion and every name in this age, and in that which is to come, Head over all that, and as Head over all that, given to the Church so that the Church comes into all that in every realm, and that is the power of His resurrection. Is Christ Head over every principality and power? The Church comes into that, He is Head over that unto the Church; over every name in this age and that to come. He is that to the Church. Are all things put in subjection under Him? He is given as that to the church. Head; it is the power of His resurrection. You see what we come into in the power of His resurrection and you begin to see perhaps a glimpse of what Paul was after. He had got by the Spirit, a vision of the vastness, the comprehensiveness, the fulness of the power of His resurrection; what is included in it, what is embodied in it, what it leads to, and he saw that he, as a member of Christ's Body was called into that in the power of that resurrection, and so his prayer is, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection."

And if I am to come into all that, if Christ is to be that to me as a member of His body, then I must know Him also in the fellowship of His sufferings, sufferings which make Christ all; being made conformable to His death; for we can only reach unto the fulness of the power of the resurrection as we know what it is in ourselves to be crucified with Christ. That is his prayer. I merely intimate this at the moment to show what really is in view, how His resurrection is an immense thing, it touches all realms, and what we have got to see, I feel, more and more as the Lord's children is that the testimony of Jesus is gathered up into the power of His resurrection. There is, beloved, an increasing need for that testimony. You cannot move about this world at all amongst

the Lord's people without being impressed with the clamant need, and the conscious groaning, craving on the part of so many of the Lord's children for the knowledge of Christ in a living way.

The Need of Life, and the Peril of False Life

The need for life is the need of this hour. Life! Anything that comes along in the Name of the Lord Jesus which seems to have life, forms for the Lord's people in these days, the very greatest peril, and if at the end the Devil is going to give life to the Image, that is going to be his supreme strategy because at the end the one thing the Lord's people will need to know is spiritual life. Life is the need. There is much light; of course not everywhere, there is very little light over a great area, but there is light and in certain quarters, plenty of light. Truth, teaching, knowledge: but no amount of light and truth and knowledge can make up for the absence of life, and while we do not for one moment suggest that life can take the place of light, we do emphasise that these two must go together.

The peril is to have a kind of life, which is not true life, without knowledge. On the other hand, there is an equal peril of having a very great deal of truth without life; life in this sense, the power of His resurrection. I do not mean animation, emotion, activity; but life, in this New Testament sense, the power of His resurrection which registers itself in the spiritual realm not merely upon the soul consciousness of men. And we should settle this one thing, if we have not already settled it, that whatever may be the need in these end times, the need above all other things is to know Christ in the power of His resurrection. We have often said that Paul was a personal representation of the dispensation to which he was chosen and called to give its special revelation. Paul was an elect vessel chosen of God for the specific purpose of transmitting the revelation which is the revelation and feature of this whole dispensation, that is, the church which is the body of Christ. That is the feature of this dispensation, and Paul was in a special way called for the revelation of the mystery, the church the body of Christ. If he was so called, naturally God would conform him, as the personal vessel, to the truth which he was to contain and give forth, and make the vessel one with the truth so that he would be the embodiment of the truth; and, therefore, in the experience and life of the apostle, there

would be the changing phases and emphases of the dispensation. At the beginning of his life there would be the one emphasis, as there was, and as he moved on the emphasis would perhaps change; change in its direction and change in its degree, not one bit contradicting what had gone before, but advancing upon it. And so you find changes taking place in the life of the apostle, no revelation set aside but increased, built upon, and the emphasis changing.

Maturity marked by inwardness of Life

In the early days of his ministry the Divine life and power of resurrection was manifested in a large measure outwardly, as it says, "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul," and those outward manifestations of the power of the resurrection were features of his earlier ministry. When you get to the latter days of his ministry you do not read of such things, you read of his own infirmity, of Timothy's "oft infirmities," of two or three other men in the closest association with the apostle who were left in sickness, or recovered by gracious ministration of Divine life to them from serious sickness but not being healed by a miracle. The order has changed, life is expressing itself, the same life, the same power of His resurrection, but expressing itself in different forms. He is the dispensation in himself and in the end the power of Christ's resurrection in the life of the apostle, was something different in its expression from what it was at the beginning. It is now more inward whereas before it was more outward, and as we are coming towards the end of that dispensation which the apostle embodied and represented in himself, we are coming into those very features where the power of Christ's resurrection has got to be a mighty inward thing, and probably apart from outward miracles and demonstrations.

Now Paul, at the end of his life, in the writing of this Philippian letter is seeing more of the spiritual meaning of the power of His resurrection. Once perhaps in his own mind, the power of Christ's resurrection was related mostly with this outward manifestation—I say "perhaps," and not without some ground for saying it—limited to the realm where it could be recognised by the senses, registered by an ordinary intelligence, the outward forms of expressing the power of that resurrection. But he has been expanded, so to speak, he has gained a higher apprehension of the meaning of the power of that resurrection, and as

he goes on and comes to the time when he writes the fuller knowledge of his heart in these later letters, you find that his presentation of the power of Christ's resurrection reaches a range which is far beyond the sentient, far beyond the visible, far beyond the tangible, and far beyond the recognition of the ordinary spiritual intelligence where a new emphasis of "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him" is necessary to apprehend "the exceeding greatness" of that power. You see when you come to an Ephesian time, so to speak, an Ephesian position, because there is a far greater meaning than ever you have recognised in that which you already possess in earnest, you need "a spirit of wisdom and revelation" to bring you into the position where you are "strong to apprehend with all saints," where you can now recognise the exceeding greatness of that thing, that "working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead" and carried Him through all realms, and at last "gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

This is our position, I feel, our need, and the need of the Lord's people everywhere; because of the time in which we live, because we are not at the beginning of the age, because we are at the end of the dispensation, the need of the Lord's people to-day is an enlarged capacity for knowing Him and the power of His resurrection experimentally, and living it; to have intelligence in the realm of life. Oh, there is a lot bound up with that simple statement. Intelligence in the realm of life. We have said that one of the gravest spiritual perils to-day is a life without spiritual intelligence. I am not speaking of *the* Life, I am speaking of an ostensible life. Yes, errors, deceptions, have their vogue and their advantage to-day because of the deadness of the Lord's people, and they come along with what appears to be like life, and there is need for life, and they carry everything before them, and the only counter to sweeping errors and deceptions of the last days is that the Lord's people should know Him in the power of His resurrection, that is, that they should have Christ as their Life, in large measure. If you have Christ as your life you are satisfied, and no deception can carry you away. If you have not, anything that offers life will be a peril to you. Everything *here* amongst the Lord's people must be in relation to Him *there*, but on a basis of intelligent life.

Ezekiel's Vision of the Goings of God

Now of course I am thinking in Ezekiel I. You pick up the first chapter of Ezekiel, the ordinary reader will, of course, soon put it down again. but if you will take pains quietly and prayerfully to hold that chapter in the light of the rest of the Word of God, you will have a good deal of help. I simply suggest to you the features of that chapter. You remember first of all we are introduced to the Cherubim, the four living ones, the four living creatures with their fourfold appearance, the man, the lion, the ox, the eagle. You know quite well that that is the fourfold presentation of Christ in incarnation; the man, the Son of man, representation for God. The designation to the prophet "Son of man"; and the prophet was the one who represented God, spoke for God, acted for God. So that the man-aspect is representation. The lion is the royalty, the sovereignty; and the ox is the service and suffering; and the eagle is always the heavenly mystery. You know that this is presented in the four gospels; that Matthew was the lion, the Sovereign; and Mark, the ox, the Servant, suffering; and Luke is the Man, the Son of man; and John is the eagle, the heavenly mystery of the Person of Christ. That is all familiar ground, but when you get to the book of Revelation, the Cherubim are transferred from Christ as separate in Person to a corporate company, so that what you have at the end is Christ and His church represented in the Cherubim; that Christ and the church, His body, is representation and sovereignty and service and heavenly mystery, the mystery of the church the Body of Christ; there is always a mystery about the true Church.

Well, that is what you have introduced with the first chapter here in Ezekiel. When you bring all the rest of Scripture together you have something that is down here on the earth in union with Someone Who is up there. When you get to the end of the chapter you have, "And above the firmament.....in the throne one like unto a Man," and this down here 'the Cherubim-instrument' is linked with Him there. Then you come in with the wheels, wheels within wheels linked with the Cherubim, and these represent the goings of God in the earth. They are the mobile symbols of God's goings in the earth in relation to the One up there, through a vessel, an instrument, the Church; and then you see the spirit in the living creatures and the wheels, one spirit; and then action,

as the spirit moves the living ones move and the wheels move and they go straight forward, they turn not to the right hand nor to the left. The goings of God through the ages are straight, direct, deliberate. There are no deviations in the goings of God ; God goes straight on ; but there is activity, life ; it is all life, living ; one spirit in the wheels, going, going, going. I think there is no more active chapter in Scriptures than the first chapter of Ezekiel ; action, movement. Going—yes, but there is this feature, as you look you are told that the wheels are full of eyes. That is, if I may reverently say it, the ingeniousness of God to give that touch. Yes, there is a distinct instrument for the testimony here, there is the mystery about it which is here in representation. It is here in relation to the throne, the sovereignty, it is here to suffer and to serve, but it is in the thought and mind of God, a distinct entity, not an organisation. A distinct entity, and the life of Him Who is *there* is in it. Life ! It has got to be throbbing with life, in the goings of God, but it has got to be full of eyes, That life has to be intelligent life, life with clearness of vision. You come into that in Ephesians where you have the one body, “ the church which is His body,” the one Spirit, and the Spirit is much in Ephesians ; and you have the eternal goings of God ; “ foreordained,” “ predestinated according to the foreknowledge of God ” ; the eternal goings, the straight goings of God. In Ephesians you have, “ the eyes of your heart being enlightened ” ; “ the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.” Intelligent life ; and beloved, that is one of our great needs to-day. We need Life, the power of His resurrection for the testimony, but it must be in intelligence. Now if the Lord could make all the truth that we know, live, we would be *that* ; that would be Ezekiel i. fulfilled spiritually in our day ! But that is to be our object, that is to be the end that governs our being here ; not just to have more truth, more teaching, but, “ Lord, begin to

make what we know, live, in a fuller and more commensurate way.” So that we shall not be just a vessel that has a lot of knowledge, but with the knowledge shall have the life, the power of his resurrection. I believe that the power of His resurrection is the combination of truth and life. When the Lord Jesus rose from the dead He “ opened their understanding ” and when their understanding was opened they knew Him in an entirely new way, in a heavenly way, a spiritual way in which they had never known Him before, and that led on to a new power. As Saul of Tarsus, two things that came to Paul on the Damascus Road, the opening of his eyes, that is, the light came as to the Lord Jesus, His Person, and with that the power of Christ’s resurrection. It blinded him, it stunned him, it overwhelmed him, the power of that resurrection ; where it had put Christ, the position that Jesus of Nazareth held. Those two things, and that formed Paul’s testimony for evermore, and what he says at the end of his life to the Philippians is only the outworking of what he saw at the beginning of his life. He had, through the years, come to know what that meant in relation to him, for him, and he had gone on and still at the end is saying, “ That I may know him and the power of his resurrection.” “ That I may now know even more of what there is to be known of what I saw that day on the way to Damascus.” It was eyes opened, and life followed. That was the power of the resurrection—opened eyes, and life given.

Now I do not want to seem to be abstract, and to get you out of the realm of what is essentially and immediately practical, but we ought to bend all our hearts and seek that the Lord might have an adequate testimony, through an adequate vessel, at this end time, to meet the false lie and false light that is simply swamping this earth and carrying multitudes of the Lord’s children away into error. The Lord do it for His Name’s sake.

T. A.-S.

For our Younger Readers

“Others have laboured, and ye are entered into their labour.” John iv. 38.

WE recently had a tree in the garden, from which we needed to cut off one very large bough. It was no little task to tackle, for we had only an ordinary saw and a small axe to work with. However, had you come along one afternoon you might have seen me with the saw in my hand triumphantly giving the last cuts before the bough came crashing off at my feet and you would have joined with me in a hearty cheer as we saw our work successfully concluded. And you might have congratulated me on having accomplished so heavy a task, and I am sure you would have formed the impression that I must be an expert in the use of the saw and the axe when you noticed how cleanly the whole work had been done. But since the truth must be told, I must confess that hardly any of the credit was due to me, for I had come along and given only the last few strokes—someone else had been hard at work for hours before me, enduring all the strain and weariness of a very difficult task and he had passed over the saw to me only when he was so tired that he really could not continue any longer. I had the satisfaction of giving the final stroke that finished the work, but my friend who had helped me deserved almost all the praise. He had laboured and I had entered into his labour. However many of us might have taken a turn in the cutting, only one would have been using the saw at the actual moment that the bough fell: but the credit would have been not for him only, but for all who had shared in the work, for every single cut with the saw or blow with the axe meant a step nearer to the desired end.

God's Great Task.

What a big task the cutting-down of our bough was! But God has a mightier task on hand—nothing less than that of bringing a great host of men and women and boys and girls out of the power and control of Satan and sin into the glorious kingdom of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—not by *compelling* them to come against their will, but by winning them in *love* so that they choose to serve Him rather than continue any longer in sin. And in this

great task He has need of ever so many fellow-workers, amongst whom you and I may be included. He says, in effect, to each one of us; “I Myself will do all the work, supplying all the power needed for it, and I have a plan all ready prepared to which to work, but I can only carry it out through you. Give Me your hands with which to work, your lips with which to speak, your heart through which to love, your eyes out of which to shine, your feet with which to go to needy ones, and let Me do My work through you in the way that I know to be best. Leave it to Me to choose how I will work, and I will make the fullest use of you that is possible.”

God Needs His Fellow-Workers.

He will wonderfully use all who thus give themselves entirely to Him, but not for exactly the same work. He used Paul to *plant* the seed of His Word in hearts that had not before heard it, and He used Apollos later to *water* it by encouraging and helping those who had received the Word, but it was God Himself who made the Word to grow in their hearts (1 Cor. iii. 6). And it really does not matter whether you are the planter or the waterer as long as you are faithful in that which God calls you to do. He may use you to be the first one to tell someone about the Lord Jesus and then use another and then another to tell them more, until some happy day, like the bough of our tree, that one will fall at Jesus' feet and receive Him into their heart as Saviour and Lord. Can you imagine Paul and Apollos quarrelling as to which deserved the greater credit for the results that followed their work? It says “each shall receive his own reward according to his own labour” (v. 8) and I am quite sure those two servants of God were content to labour on, knowing that even if they did not themselves see very much fruit from all their suffering and toil, every bit of their faithful service was counting, and God, the great Worker, was doing something through them and through others which, when all was complete, would make up one perfect work. The object before them was not to gratify

themselves by being able to say: "I did this," but to be used of God in the fulfilling of His heart's desire; and they knew that one day there would be awaiting them His "Well done, good and faithful servant." And as they saw one and another of the people amongst whom they had laboured, giving themselves to the Lord, how glad they would be to know that their life and service had at any rate had something to do with so happy a result.

The Feeble Members are Necessary.

Yes, be sure to note, every little saw-cut helped to bring down that bough. Every word you speak for the Lord Jesus will play its part for Him; every true prayer you pray will have its effect, even though you cannot at the time see any results. You may be the sower and another may be the reaper: and you know there would be nothing to reap if you did not sow. Therefore, begone all discouragement! Never believe that it is vain to give yourself to the Lord for His service, however humble or unimportant it appears! "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord." And the next time you feel that it really will not make any difference whether you tell someone about the Lord Jesus or not, remember that when all the other saw-cuts had been made it was the last one which finally brought down my bough! And your word may be the last one needed to bring a soul to Jesus! So let the hope burn brightly within you that you may be the one to see the longed-for result! And even if you are not, believe that your word, like each saw-cut, is both necessary and valuable: and so faith and hope will be found together in your heart. (Do you know what else is needed too? Look at 1 Cor. xiii. 13 and you will see.)

The One Who Never Gave Up.

The Lord Jesus Himself was tested more than any other in this matter. He laboured so earnestly while here amongst men, seeking to bring them to know His Father, but it looked so often as though His labour was in vain. Only a few people really seemed to understand Him, and the way was so hard for Him. Often and often He must have been tempted to feel

that it was all in vain and that He might as well give up. But He had come to this earth as man in order that His Heavenly Father might accomplish through Him the most wonderful work of love that was ever done—the putting away of sin; which made necessary the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus upon the Cross in order that you and I (if we believe in Him) might not perish, but have eternal life. The very people He came to save, crucified Him. Oh, what useless suffering? What a waste of love? No!! For the joy that was set before Him He endured, knowing at each step of the hard way that though His suffering seemed to be producing little, if any, result, it was counting wonderfully and in the end would be the means of bringing many like you and me to glory. So as He sees us loving and serving Him—(are we?)—He now sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied.

The Great Reward.

In this same pathway He calls us to follow. Hoping and believing for great results from all our service—yes; but not counting the *seeing* of the results as the chief thing. Far better that for the love which we have for our Master we labour with Him towards the finishing of His work, glad of the privilege of serving such a Master in even the humblest ways, and content to know that His wisdom and love are such that when His great purpose is completed He will turn to us and say: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"—"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Oh, what a joyful surprise and reward for those who perhaps thought that in spite of all their faithful service nothing had resulted! And if on the road we are sometimes inclined to lose heart, let us turn our eyes off unto Him who "for the joy set before Him, endured"; and we shall find our own fainting hearts strengthened by His strong Spirit within us and hear Him say for our encouragement "Ye are labouring, and others shall enter into your labour."

"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

..... (Col. iv. 9.)

G. P.

Controlling the Situation

LET it be remembered that God chooses the "weak things" for accomplishing impossibilities. What could be simpler, weaker, less exciting, than a small card, inviting the reader to a meeting, and quoting the words, "What must I do to be saved?" and "Now is the day of salvation." Who would have thought of commotion being caused merely by placing a tent on the sea shore at the remote end of Ramleh, and seven miles from the main part of the city of Alexandria.

Will Moslems attend Gospel Meetings?

The answer is that from fifty to sixty attended each of the six Sunday meetings held (and they were of different classes socially), whilst smaller, but most markedly interested audiences came to two week-day meetings which closed the series.

From the first announcement of the Arabic meetings the local Moslem newspapers entered upon a campaign of bitter opposition. Fierce articles appeared, containing misrepresentations and appealing to prejudices, political and religious. The city authorities took note of the situation, fearing a public disturbance. The Chief of the Public Security Department, an Englishman, and happily well-disposed, attended the meetings sometimes with plain clothes officers. The friend responsible for the tent and the meetings being an American subject, the United States Consul took a lively (and kindly) interest, and came out from town several times. One of the highest officials in the land, a Moslem, staying in the district for a time, is reported to have thrown his influence in the direction of having the meetings stopped if possible. Local authorities, being Mohammedans, would doubtless have been glad to take this action had it been legally possible; but it was with regret we heard that one leading English official was with them in this desire.

And thus did this little tent by the blue sea, and this quiet Gospel work, become promptly a centre of acute interest in the highest political circles, to the diplomatic and consular agencies, to the local authorities, and to the police and the people.

No doubt the delicacy of the general political

situation in Egypt at present had something to do with this concern; for a riot involving Moslem, Coptic, American, and English interests might very likely have proved an unwelcome public complication.

Nor was the fear of disturbance at all unfounded. After the meetings closed we were told by those who knew the facts, that a plot was actually formed to break up the fourth Sunday meeting, so as to provoke the interference of the Police, and thus give the Moslem authorities the needed pretext for closing the tent. Some twenty or more men, well known to the said Chief of the Secret Police, were then present. One of their number was to rise in the meeting and ask a question, and upon discussion arising, the gang were to provoke an uproar.

The scheme got so far that the appointed man did rise and ask a question, but he was so quickly and neatly replied to by the speaker that he could do nothing but at once resume his seat; and he and his confederates were so nonplussed that they knew not what next to do, and so did nothing, and the meeting proceeded quietly to the finish.

And if we are asked the secrets of the work being safely carried on in spite of powerful official opposition and popular resentment and plotting, and of its being continued to the appointed conclusion (the tent being now needed at Zeitoun for the coming Converts' Conference), we answer that VICTORY WAS GAINED OVER HUMAN ENEMIES BY IT BEING FIRST GAINED OVER SPIRIT FOES. In these battles our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies (Eph. vi. 12).

This being recognised by the few workers more immediately responsible for the meetings, these "with all prayer and supplication prayed at all seasons," dealing in the heavenly places with every known fact and feature of the situation, and seeking, by definite and believing appeals to God, to provide against every contingency. Before the meetings, during the gatherings, and

afterwards; by day and by night, alone and together, this small band of soldiers fought the battle in the heavenly places, by the power of the Spirit, and by reliance upon the faithfulness of the Lord to His promise.

Taking by faith their God-given place as already seated upon the throne in Christ, and as therefore holding in Him the authority of God to further His work committed to them, these few believers controlled the situation in the interests of the Gospel. First binding the strong powers of Heaven, it became possible to restrain earthly authorities by the prayer of faith. Suspend the spirit instigators of evil, and the human actors can be restrained.

In answer to prayer, Moslems came to the meetings, prayer secured the quiet, orderly seasons remarked upon. The prayers of faith opened hearts to attend to the Word preached, and prayer supported the speakers, Coptic and English. Prayer secured a sense of the Lord's majestic spiritual presence, and prayer made possible the powerful convincing operation of the Holy Spirit.

In the light of these events, confirming as they do observation and experiences in England, India and Burma, and of work among various races, religions and classes of society, we dare affirm that whensoever and wheresoever the Lord's servants will consider **SUCH PRAYING THE PRINCIPAL AND MOST URGENT AND INDISPENSABLE FEATURE OF OUR WORK**, then and there will come true the words of our Lord to us, "NOTHING shall be IMPOSSIBLE to you."

Nothing very wonderful is possible without this type of praying, but the greatest wonders are wrought by means of it. This is fact, even if we do not understand the way of it. *Give to the prayer conflict the supreme place in study, time and strength.*

"And **WHATSOEVER** ye shall ask in **MY NAME**, **THAT WILL I DO**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John xiv. 13).

G. H. L.

The letter of G.H.L., printed above, confirms the conviction that until the Satanic origin of heathenism is recognised, no great advance will be made in the foreign field; to which we would add, "and *until* the servants of God learn to wield the weapon of prayer as described in the Alexandrian campaign." "Victory was gained over human enemies," G.H.L. says, "by it first being gained over *spirit-foes!*" And "taking by faith their God-given place

as seated upon the throne in Christ—and as therefore holding in Him the authority of God to further His work committed to them—these few believers *controlled the situation.....*"

* * *

And what was the situation outwardly? "Bitter opposition." Fierce articles in the Press appealing to prejudices, *political* and religious. City authorities ready to intervene. Moslem plots with possible trouble in the highest political circles, and actually the very men present in the meeting—yet—the small band of believers holding the authority of Christ over Satan and his hosts "bound the strong man," and "*controlled the situation!*" "Suspend the spirit-instigators of evil," and "the human actors can be restrained," writes the one who shared the prayer-conflict in the heavenly places, and now passes on the news of the triumph to the Church of Christ.

* * *

Bitter opposition! Prejudices, political and religious! Plots of the enemy through all kinds of instruments within and without the professing church—have we not these things to face in the Home-land? And *could not small bands of praying believers* control the situation in every town and village and church, if they did but *know the enemy*, and recognising the futility of wielding carnal weapons in this warfare, refuse to fight with "flesh and blood," but betake themselves to the mount of prayer, there to "lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting" until the specific need is met, and that special phase of the battle won.

* * *

And are there none who could give themselves to this *work* of prayer, not only for a certain area and a specific need, but for *the church of Christ as a whole*, watching from the Mount of Prayer the world-wide battle field, as Moses watched the Joshua company in the plains, and whilst they dealt with the flesh and blood, stood *with God* against the unseen forces of the air. The Holy Spirit of God working within the Body of Christ is making intercession for the Body (Rom. viii.) with groanings that cannot be uttered, in unison with the groanings of creation waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. Are there no members of the Body who will share His "groanings," for the *whole* church of Christ, that it may rapidly emerge into the liberty of the sons of God?

The type of prayer that "bound the strong man" in the work at Alexandria, is the type of prayer that the Holy Ghost can give for the *whole Body of Christ*; for whole countries, as well as places; for churches as well as individuals. Will all the Lord's praying ones heed the message? Will they take it to every Prayer-circle and prayer meeting within their reach, and pray that the Holy Spirit Himself will draw together the two's and three's all over the world, who will pray the church of Christ through the travail of this closing hour. Let them pray, too, not only for labourers for the harvest field, but for *labourers in prayer* at home and abroad; for leaders baptized in the Holy Ghost to lead the praying ones on to victory in the prayer-realm, able to teach them how to pray captive souls free, and to live and watch and pray for the whole church, and the whole world. And last, but not least, let them pray that the veil may be destroyed that now hides from the children of God the FULL-ORBED MESSAGE OF CALVARY, and prevents them emerging to the heavenly sphere, where they can wield the authority of Christ over the spirit forces of evil, and triumph in the Ascended Lord over the foe.

* * *

That such "councils of war" will soon become urgently necessary is indicated in a letter from an evangelist on mission work, who writes: "Oh the urgent need *everywhere* for the truth about Satan and the hosts of darkness.

It seems to me as though suddenly the Church is apprehending the true state of affairs, but through ignorance and lack of teachers there is *utter panic!* Oh for a thousand messengers to proclaim the full victory of Calvary, and so publish abroad the fact that Satan is a conquered foe." And this sudden awakening to the position is not only with comparatively hidden workers, but someone has written of a recent visit to London and the various centres of evangelical life, where he found "every speaker and every chairman" giving forth a "fearful warning cry about the evil errors abounding," but he noticed all seemed to be concerned about "defence of the old truth," and there was no "note of advance into the enemies' ranks" for aggressive attack and victory.

* * *

"This is significant," says the writer. Yes, because *fear* will paralyse, and cause panic in the ranks of the Lord's host. "The best defensive is the aggressive." No note of *fear* must dishearten the people of the Lord. *Calvary*—the full message of Calvary—is victory! There is full equipment provided at the place called Calvary. The aggressive power of the Holy Spirit may be obtained there. Let the prayer-warriors pray for a ringing note of courage, and *advance* in the Name of the Lord, to be sounded out by the leaders of the Church in this hour of need.

Definiteness in Prayer

How very difficult it is to get people to be definite in prayer! There is certainly a place for general and comprehensive praying, but there is a particular need for specific, concentrated, and executive prayer. Many of the Lord's children think that when a thing has been mentioned before Him that is enough and it can be left: but the whole weight of the record of praying in the Scriptures is against this, and shows us that concentration and persistence is more the rule than the exception. Too often we smother the specific with much that is general because we think that if we do not pray for a lot of things we have not really prayed. We would suggest one or two things

which we are sure are vital and essential matters in relation to praying with an "issue."

1. The heart and mind should be adjusted to definiteness of attitude and purpose beforehand. There should be no mere casualness in coming to prayer.

2. Difficulty and deadness at the outset, or for a time, should not be allowed to put off or set back. Sometimes the whole soul and body has to be carried in by the spirit of the one who prays.

3. It must be remembered that very often there are more issues than one bound up in the knowledge of God with the matter on hand, and it is therefore necessary sometimes to pray

round a thing seeking points of life and light so that a key to a larger situation may be given. The specific matter may be that key to much more, or there may be a key to it.

4. A definite registration on the matter ought to be aimed at, and in this sense there must be a "watching thereunto." Sometimes it is only after several have prayed about a matter that the prayer is given through one which registers the verdict.

5. Do not forget that "all prayer" in Ephesians VI is definitely related to spiritual forces, and that these must be taken into account in the matter of persistence. Remember Daniel!

We give the following extract as illustrating much of what we have said above.

On the coast of this country some years ago, in a certain village of about seven thousand inhabitants, most of the people were fishermen and depended upon catching fish for their living. At the fishing season of the year, the men went out every day but they did not catch any fish. It seemed that the whole town would die of starvation. People were hungry, the women and little children were crying because their husbands and fathers could not catch any fish. There was a little church in the community, and the pastor said, "We will have to devote an evening to prayer; we will pray the Lord to let us catch fish." He called the people together, and the meeting-house was not only filled inside but crowded all around with people. The pastor was an earnest Christian man who knew something about prayer. He spoke a few words on the subject of prayer, and how God answers prayer. He told them that the whole company must centre on one thing—that God would send fish, and that they might be able through the power and wisdom of God to catch fish. He opened the meeting with prayer, and then one prayer and another was offered. Some of the people were

not used to concentrate on one thing, and so they began to pray about everything. He would say to them while they were praying, "Stick to your text." It would embarrass some of them, but they were, though rude, yet honest and earnest people, and after a little embarrassment they would begin again, and pray for the Lord to send fish. Again and again the pastor had to keep them to the subject. One man prayed, "O Lord, pour out Thy Spirit," and then the pastor said, "Brother, stick to the fish." Finally, one woman in the congregation began to pray, and God gave her such a spirit of prayer that "amens" were heard all over the house, and the whole company was softened. She seemed to voice the need, and to utter the real prayer of every heart there. The pastor felt that they had really prayed until they believed God. So without protracting the meeting he dismissed it.

The next morning the men hung around about the store and at the corners as they were accustomed to do, not seeming to have the heart to go out for fish, for they had gone out morning after morning and had not caught anything. One man, the sceptic and unbeliever of the village, thought that all that prayer was a useless kind of a thing. So he determined to go out, and show them that God would not answer prayer. He was the only man that started out that morning to fish. He pushed his boat out into the water, and having everything ready he threw over the line. At once he felt a tug at the line that nearly dragged him overboard. He pulled the line up and landed a magnificent codfish. Then he put his line in again and caught fish as fast as he could. It was not long until every boat was out. They caught fish that day, and every day that season. God answered prayer wonderfully, and the fishermen had all their need supplied. There was praise and thanksgiving given to God in that village. May God teach us to be definite in our prayers.

NEW BOOKLET BY T. A.-S.
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Things that Differ

NEVER was there a time when the Lord's people needed to pray more earnestly for "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of the heart to be enlightened." We may be sadly led astray or be brought into confusion unless we have understanding by the Spirit in the foundational matters of our life in Christ.

We would here give one or two illustrations of what we mean. There are matters upon which not a few children of God are being made to slip up.

The Person and the Work of Christ.

There are many who put a not permissible division between these two. The Word of God does not allow of such a separating. There is no surrendering to Christ apart from a recognition and acceptance of the work of His Cross. There is no making much of His Person, not even of His deity and Godhead apart from that which He accomplished at Calvary.

Look where you will in the New Testament and you will find that the two are always related, even in those parts where the greatest unveiling of His Person is given. The Holy Spirit has put these two together, and no man may put them asunder. In different words the one abiding relationship is "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." This is followed through even into the Revelation, where to a very large extent, the day of salvation is past.

Let us beware that we do not fall into the snare of the devil in putting Christ in a place of importance as One to be surrendered to, talked about, or championed, and at the same time fail to realise or accept all the implications of His Cross as to our place therein. Such a course can never be of pleasure to the Lord Himself.

Sin in Relation to the Person of Christ.

It may surprise some people when we say that, in the eyes of God, the matter of our sin and salvation is not a question of the number or nature of our sins. It is not sins few or many, bad or not so bad. If it were so, then salvation would have to be on a sliding scale by which allowance would have to be made for good or bad heredity, training, or the lack of it; and all such considerations.

Salvation has never been based upon the confession of our sins (plural) either to God or to man. ("Confess your faults one to another" is something said to believers.) The Holy Spirit convicts believers of specific sins, but He convicts the unsaved of sin. Then sin is not regarded as something apart and by itself. It is always looked upon in relation to a Divine Person. Men often confuse sin with vice or vice with sin. Vice is usually that which relates to either the one who commits it or to the person or persons against whom it is committed. Vice is something against self or society. Sin is against God. We are never saved by ceasing to commit acts of wrong, vice, or sin against ourselves or others. We are saved when we come to see by Divine illumination that sin is what we are, and that in His Cross Jesus Christ representatively and substitutionally took us under the judgment of God against a sinful race, and has set us aside by nature, so that in Christ risen we take our stand by faith as having died to sin. This whole question is gathered up in one comprehensive statement of Christ's.

"When he, the Spirit, is come, he shall convict.....of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Of sin, because they believe not on me.

Of righteousness, because I go to the Father.

Of judgment, because the prince of this world has been judged."

Sin then is a matter of our faith union with Christ as Saviour. The one question which will ever be the basis of our justification or condemnation will be, not how many sins, or how we have sinned, but what is our relationship with Christ the Saviour? God will never say, "were you a bad sinner or guilty of few or many sins?" But, "what did you do with my Son, the Lord Jesus, in view of His atoning work on the cross?"

Righteousness is a question of relationship with Christ as having gone to the Father. No one ever yet went to the Father who was not absolutely righteous and sinless. Which means that Christ being there is our righteousness, and we have none apart from Him. Our acceptance by God is only upon the ground of our faith

union with Christ as made unto us essential righteousness from God.

The question of judgment is settled upon the same basis. The prince of this world has been judged. The Word of God says that "the whole world lieth in the wicked one." We are, therefore, by nature in the wicked one. This is the opposite of being "In Christ." Judgment was first formed for the devil, man

was never intended for judgment. If, however, we do not choose to take our place in Christ, seeing that by Adam's voluntary act he has involved the whole race in the captivity of the devil, we must share in the devil's judgment. God has provided the Way out in Christ, and there is no other way. Judgment therefore rests upon our position *out of* or *in* Christ.

A Gospel Hymn

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Do ye know the grace and glory
Of Christ Jesus, Prince of Peace ?
'Tis the one eternal story—
Never shall it's echoes cease. | 2 Cor. viii. 9; John i. 14.
Isa. ix. 6.

Rev. v. 9. |
| 2. He was equal with the Father,
In His form, and His sole Heir :
Yet He came to earth, the rather
Mortals' human form to wear. | Phil. ii. 6.
Heb. i. 2.
Phil. ii. 7. |
| 3. Then in heart most meek and lowly,
Still He stooped to shame and loss,
Yielding His obedience wholly
Unto death upon the Cross. | Phil. ii. 8. |
| 4. There He took our sins and bare them
In His body on the tree :
Holy justice could not spare them,
But the One condemned was He. | 1 Peter ii. 24.

Isa. iii. 5, 6. |
| 5. All the wrath of our offences,
All our judgment on Him fell,
And the precious blood that cleanses
Flowed, to ransom us from hell. | Rom. iv. 25.

1 John i. 7. |
| 6. Thus the Son of God was smitten—
Blest be His beloved Name !
Thus fulfilled were all things written
Of the work for which He came. | Isa. liii. 4.

Acts xiii. 29. |
| 7. Then they sealed Him in His prison
Great the stone against its door !
<i>But the third day found Him risen
And alive for evermore !</i> | Matt. xxvii. 60, 66.

Matt. xxviii. 1-6.
Rev. i. 18. |
| 8. Mighty Saviour ! O receive Him !
Praise Him that for thee He died :
They who with their hearts believe Him,
By His blood are justified. | Isa. lxiii. 1.
Heb. vii. 25; John i. 12.
Acts xvi. 30, 31.
Rom. v. 9.
AILEEN E. RENNIX. |

Dr. F. B. Meyer and the fuller message of the Cross

SEVERAL years ago on the slopes of the Malvern Beacon in an interval of a conference Dr. Meyer and "T. A. S." sat talking over the fuller message of the Cross, especially in its meaning for the Lord's people in victory and authority over the spiritual forces of darkness; the "principalities and powers," etc. At the close of a long talk when it was necessary to go Dr. Meyer said two things: the first was "My brother, if I had my time over again and knew what I know now I should make this my main note of emphasis, for I see that this is what my brethren need to know more than anything else." The second thing will be recognised as truly characteristic of the beloved old servant of God: "How I wish that we could stay here for hours and discuss this matter, but we must go. However, dear man, meet me at the middle east gate of the New Jerusalem and we will have a three hundred years' chat."

The following is what Dr. Meyer said to a gathering of ministers at a convention in connection with this message.

After some references to the Convention, Dr. Meyer said: "It seems to me without throwing any slight upon previous teaching, all that previous teaching has been leading the Church up to a new level on my favourite spiral staircase; and that, as far as I know, we are permitted to stand upon the last round in that staircase, as far as the Church has reached it.

You must not for a moment, when you have realised that, and I say it again because I want to emphasise it, you must not throw any slur or discredit upon what the Holy Spirit may have taught us in the past. It is necessary not to contradict truth we have known in the past, but to listen to the complementary truth—the truth on the other side. We are so in the habit of exaggeration, that we go from one side of truth to the other, but all progress is by extremes. Now it seems to me that God is indicating to us a new line of advance, and that we are more and more clearly realising the direction that advance is to take.

You realise that all the history of the Church

has been preparatory to this. Think of the wonderful first ten Councils of the Church, that dealt with the nature of Christ, and exposed the heresies of the Church, and compelled the Councils to lay down the great doctrines of our Saviour's nature. When that was all settled, and those ten Councils were a thing of the past, there came the time of the Reformation, when the great doctrine was laid of justification by faith. And then came Zinzendorf, and the Moravians, and the Wesleys, teaching the power of the Holy Ghost, and the necessity of the new birth. Then came the Mildmay Conference, with its teaching largely, at that time, of the Second Advent, upon which Mildmay laid so much stress. Then came Keswick, with its teaching on the indwelling life, and of identification with Christ in death, resurrection and glory, along the lines of consecration, with its surrender to Jesus Christ.

Now there is a further advance before us, that has been anticipated by a great deal of working all round. It is a very remarkable fact at this time that there never was more spiritualism outside the Church of Christ than today. Then there is the outbreak of "Tongues," which may be the soul-imitation of a spiritual fact. I do not dispute, but there are many soul-imitations on the lower part of our nature; and the air has become full of excitement along these different lines. And it does seem that all that indicates that the Church is being called on to another level. We all admit that the Church has been fighting on too low a level, when she has been called out to fight on the spiritual level.

Now this advance is going to be a much more terrific affair than anything of the past. For if Jesus Christ will lead us into this conflict, we are not going to have an easy time of it in our own personal life. We shall have to take a great deal of care how we talk about one another. The devil is going to attack us all round by bringing divisions, and you may depend upon it that spiritual difficulties through which we are going to pass, can only be over-

come by a Baptism of the Holy Spirit beyond anything we have ever known.

I cannot exaggerate the importance of such a movement as this, and I do want to say to myself, things have got to be disentangled. If you are going to take part in this, you are going to have a fight—be sure of that; and be sure that Satan will come in, in our relations with one another. That is absolutely so; and it is equally sure that the world outside will very much misinterpret an attitude like that I am foreshadowing. The Lord sweat blood in His conflict in Gethsemane, and there is no doubt there is "bloody sweat" when people come into the hour and the power of darkness.

I say these things from my heart, and I am beginning to see things as I never saw them before. You young ministers, I would give a good deal to be back where you are. I cannot get back. I am so glad I am not so old, but that I am going to have a share in this; but you young fellows: crowd all sail, make the most of this. You are going to lead the advance, and mind you get hold of it right, mind you are humble, and that you don't give the devil a chance.

It seems to me that the teaching which has

laid the stress upon the triumph of Christ over the Evil One, has led us so absolutely to believe in that triumph, as being finished for ever, *that we have not sufficiently identified ourselves with the triumph of Christ* in our attitude against evil spirits. That is, we have so entirely handed over the conflict to our Saviour, that there has not been the identification of our own personality with Christ in His victory over the power of evil; and that if there is to be any change it seems to me that we ourselves have to use our spiritual muscles, in association with the conquering Christ in our antagonism to the power of evil. Do you understand me?

As by faith we appropriate, and use, all that Christ has done for us—but we do not leave Him to do things; we appropriate them—so it seems to me in the spiritual victory of Jesus Christ over the power of evil; I am to use the power of Christ spiritually, if I am to come into triumph. It is faith that allies itself with the power of Jesus which works through us. I put my personality with Him. So it is a further advance, and I realise it. It is true that Christ has done it, but this further truth has to balance it, that *the Church has to throw its own personality—its spirit personality—into alliance with Christ in this fight.*"

"Schism" a Breach of Sympathy!

"That there be no 'schism' in the Body."—2 Cor. xii.

GOD "mixed" or "tempered it together"—the figure being taken from the union of two or more substances, as wine and water, in which *each liquid receives of the other's qualities, and imparts of its own.*

In the twenty-fifth verse we have the question of schism treated, and the latter part of the verse appears to expound the former. There is "schism" where the members have not the same care one for another. Where none care for any, there is indifference. Where there is party contempt on one side, and murmurings on the other, there is schism. Whatever breaks the oneness which love should maintain, is of the nature of schism. The word "schism" might be freely rendered into English by "mutiny." The spirit of mutiny is schism begun; open mutiny is schism in act. Schism

we learn is a question of something which takes place "in the body." "That there should be no schism *in the body.*" Nor is schism a question so much of *outward acts* as of *inward feelings* between the members of Christ. The Corinthians are rebuked for schism, not because they set up another table of communion apart from their brethren; for to this height the disorder did not reach. But there were parties among them under different leaders, and thus there was the *breach of sympathy*. Towards the party to which each belong, their love flowed forth. The other party were *opponents*, towards whom their feelings of love were checked, if not quite lost.

Now this answers to the case of a paralysed body; on the one half of which there may be intense convulsive action, while the other side is immovable. There the *continuity of feeling*, the freedom of play of part into part, is lost. Thus

it is with the Church of Christ at present. Its sympathies are not one. If one portion of it increases by the preaching of the gospel, and the Lord adds many who shall be saved, other sections of Christ's Church look on with envy, and perhaps speak disparagingly. If failures break out, there is oft-times ill-concealed joy, and a readiness to trumpet forth these subjects of disgrace. But the visible Church of Christ has gone much further in schism than in the days of the apostle. Then their whisperings, swellings, tumults of party against party, while their *visible* oneness of communion was retained. Now divided feelings manifest themselves by *openly separate communions*, each esteeming the interests of his party incompatible with the interests of the rest.

Schism, then, is not an ecclesiastical thing in its interior nature. It is a question of the state of the *heart*, a rising of the selfishness of nature, where love should be the only feeling. Schism cannot exist where there is universal love of those that are Christ's. Schism is partisanship; the over-valuing of one and the under-valuing of another, envy of this Christian, carelessness of what becomes of that.

As the opposite of schism, the Holy Ghost presents the *perfect sympathy of the whole body in pleasure and in pain*. Is the foot inflamed? Pain spreads through every particle: the hands are clenched with the propagated excitement, the heart aches with undue vehemence, the whole tone of the body is altered, pleasure has left it. On the other hand, the supply of food received by the hands and conveyed to the mouth, produces delight and strength to the whole of the body.

Thus the natural body was designed to be a lesson to the spiritual. The parts of the human frame are necessarily of different functions, and set, some in superior, some in inferior places; yet all keep concord, and are *full of sympathy*, when one is honoured, not envying but rejoicing, when one is depressed and disordered, not rejoicing, but suffering too. Thus varying circumstances only display its oneness of *spirit*, as well as *structural* and *mechanical* oneness. The exclusion of party and partizanship in the natural body is God's doing, and was designed to show how hateful such a thing must be in the spiritual body—the Church,

Govett, 1850.

The Way of Deliverance.

"I have begun to give . . . begin to Possess."

DEUT. ii., 31.

As they went they were cleansed.

LUKE xvii., 14.

If the ten lepers had waited to see the cleansing before they would start, they would never have seen it. The moment their faith began to work, the blessing came.