

# TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

(PART XVI.)

BEING NOTES OF ADDRESSES AND  
READINGS AT QUEMERFORD.

MAY, 1903.

---

REVISED.

---

LONDON :  
G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.



## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
The Truth maintained on Earth in connection with a Living Person in Heaven .. .. .	T. H. R. 1
Spirit, Soul and Body .. .. .	G. W. Gy. 15
A Harvest for God in the Hearts of His Saints .. .. .	GEO. C. 25
READING. 1 Corinthians i. 17-9; ii. 1-5; Galatians iii. 13 .. .. .	33
Jesus made both "Lord and Christ" .. .. .	E. W. 56
Christ Here .. .. .	J. A. 67
Love's Expectation .. .. .	W. T. P. W. 74
The Light of God, and the Comforter Present .. .. .	T. H. R. 82
READING. John xiv. 16-20, 25, 26; xv. 26, 27; xvi. 7-15 .. .. .	97
"The Christ" .. .. .	H. D'A. C. 127
"Be not Ashamed" .. .. .	E. C. 139
READING. Matthew xxiv. 42-51; xxv. 1 .. .. .	154
READING. Psalm xl. .. .. .	173



## THE TRUTH MAINTAINED ON EARTH IN CONNECTION WITH A LIVING PERSON IN HEAVEN.

(JOHN XV. 8-11.)

I FEEL it is no small thing, beloved brethren, at this moment to stand up in your midst, and attempt in any wise to give a direction to this meeting. Yet I feel sure I can count upon the support of the Lord, and I think I shall have the fellowship of my brethren.

In seeking to express what I conceive to be a great need at the present time, I am going to use an old-fashioned word, but I hope we still know something of the reality of it. We need to be more *in communion* with the Lord Himself. A great deal of light has come to us, but where has it come from, I would like to ask? and also, how far do we hold it in communion with the Lord in the place where He now is, for all has come from thence? He had to take that place in order that the truth which was expressed in Him here upon earth might be made good in us; moreover, in taking that place a force and power was given to the truth which it could not have had before. I trust all will understand that we are now brought by the Spirit into com-

munion with Him in whom the truth was expressed, in that place where He is and where there is no veil.

There were two things that came out in the Lord down here ; one was the perfect presentation of God to man, and the other, taking up man according to the thoughts of God as to man. If we think of the perfect presentation of God to man, what grace it was ! It was not merely that He sent a word to man, this He had done ; but He sent His Son in order to make Himself known in perfect love. And if we think of Christ having come to take up man for God—an equally blessed truth—the result will be a universe of bliss where man will be to God's glory for ever. If God manifests Himself in that universe in His Son become a man, so will all the display of blessing be in man as taken up in Christ. Here we are this morning as those taken up through grace to be part of that display, and hence it must be of the deepest interest to us that Christ has been here to take up man for God.

Whatever was manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, His glory was of necessity veiled, and He said of Himself that He was straitened until His death was accomplished. It was not till He took His place within the veil that the Spirit could come down to open out all the truth which centres in Him, and to testify of His glory.

He anticipated that moment in these chapters. He felt for His disciples; He felt they were about to be left here; an hour had come when He would no longer be with them. We read of this in John xiii., "Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world to the Father." We have only to read these chapters in order to see His blessed love and affection coming out in His last words to His disciples. His love and affection for His own have not ceased, and the Spirit of promise was to be *their* Comforter, and He is *our* Comforter now that He is gone. The Lord was conscious that He must not only die, but through death He must take a place in glory according to the counsels of God, in order that full force might be given to the two subjects I have named, namely, that He was for God to man, and for man to God. If we see man in the glory of God in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, it surely gives force to the fact that Christ came here to take up man for God; He has acquired a place for man in the glory of God, and if we see Him gone within the veil as Forerunner, He has won that place for us. Our place in glory is set forth in Him.

I do not ignore the peculiarity of the moment in which we find ourselves this morning; but if you will allow me, I will go back a little in our history to the time when the light which we

have received through grace, and enjoy and prize, first came out—we have heard it spoken about in this room—how a servant of the Lord, through reading Ephesians, awoke to the sense that he was connected with a Person in heaven. It was not that he discovered certain truths merely, but he became aware that he was connected with a Person in heaven, God's own Son, on the one hand; and that he and all other saints were united to a Head in heaven also, and thus the true character of the church became known to him in contrast to systematic Christendom around. Can you conceive a more wonderful discovery for a Christian to make? Whatever came out after was connected with that. There is a glorified Man in heaven, and that One Head of the church, His body. The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven gave great force to the presentation of the gospel in its fulness, for in the gospel God presents Himself in grace to all men; and the church as called out by the gospel was seen to be the crowning point of the presentation of man to God. "To him be glory in the church in Christ Jesus through all ages, world without end."

Now looking back this morning at the discovery made by that servant of God through grace, that a living Person in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, was Head of the church. Has that failed us, beloved brethren? Everything hangs

upon the fact that there is a glorified Man in heaven, the Son of God, Head of the church, and Firstborn among many brethren. Whatever may be the character of the moment in which we are down here, all I can say for myself is, that I want to know Him more in the place *where He is*. The light recovered to us will have very little force or power with us, unless we know Him in heaven. Others will bear me out when I say that it is only as by the Spirit we know the Lord Jesus Christ within the veil, that all the doctrines we learn get force and power in our souls, because then they are connected with a living Person in whom all is livingly set forth and secured.

I spoke of the church as being the crowning point of the way in which man has been taken up in Christ for God's glory. What gives the church its peculiar character is that it is brought into intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in whom God has been made known to us. Take a wife as a figure: she knows the heart of her husband and the secrets of her husband; as the Lord says here (ver. 15), "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you;" thus the church is brought into intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ. We get the beginning of this peculiar character of intimacy in the man born blind in John ix. He first experienced the *work* of

Christ, but he could get no support for his faith in the One that healed him from any around him, and it is a good thing for us to find no support from what is around us, in order that our faith may rest in the Person of the Son of God Himself. The man born blind was led to this. The Jews, his neighbours, the Pharisees, his parents—all failed him or were against him, and at last he is excommunicated. Then Jesus found him and propounded to him the question, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee"; and he said, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." The man knew he had been healed, but *who* had healed him? Now he knows it is the Son of God—the Son of God was talking with him; there we get the beginning of intimacy, the Son of God and the healed man are together, but all is in its proper place, Jesus talks to him, and he worships.

Now go on to chapter x., there we read, "I know my sheep and am known of mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father." I know them and they know me. How? Not in any human way, but "as the Father knows me and I know the Father." If the Lord could have been known in a human way, there was every evidence as to His Person, that so men might know and believe; but they did not, and

in the sense of man's rejection and unbelief, the Lord had to retreat into this secret place that the Father knew Him and He knew the Father. (Matt. xi. 27.) What an intimacy of divine love He walked in with the Father, though unknown of men! His thought was to bring His disciples into that intimacy with *Himself*—that marks the peculiar character of the church. It is not mere knowledge or doctrine—we may know all mysteries and knowledge, and be able to speak of this or that doctrine, but do we know *Himself*? Are we in communion with *Himself*? Do we in spirit follow to where He is within the veil? Do we know Him *there* sustaining everything for His own? Whatever fails, He does not fail, all is secured in Him there. We know His love and have to abide in Him. The Spirit is the power of communion with Him. Hence it says, "The communion of the Holy Ghost."

There is another point I want to bring before you; it is more connected with our meeting together. Cast your eyes back again to the early days of brethren, and think of what it was for people to come together apart from any system or appointment of ministry. Now there are meetings for the fellowship of saints to which we have come; they came together at first without assuming any ecclesiastical position, but in the faith that the Lord, the source of all ministry, was in heaven. I am not now speak-

ing of Christ as Head, but as Lord. They saw that all things were in His hand and they gathered to His name in the faith of that name. They saw also that the Holy Ghost had a dwelling-place on earth—the assembly—and that He was the power for everything below according to the administration of the Lord in heaven. Has all this failed? I count it a great privilege to have known those men of God who realised that the Lord had all in His hands for His people upon earth, and was ordering everything for the glory of God in them, and they counted that He would be with two or three gathered to His name. They had the sense also that the Spirit remained. Is not this also true? Hence we need not be downcast. What I feel greatly is this, that while it remains as true as ever that two or three can gather together in the Lord's name and count upon His presence, yet are we in the faith of that name as they were in early days? I am afraid our meetings often go on; we speak of being gathered in Christ's name, and in many minds it becomes a formal expression—an accepted formula without being in the faith of it. If we were in the faith of the Father having put all things into the hands of the Son as Lord, we should do nothing apart from Him. May the Lord revive in our souls the sense of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Then if we know Him as the Head in heaven

we cannot be poor. We cannot be poor with Him in heaven and the Spirit abiding here.

In regard to the Spirit being down here, He is the power for our apprehension of what there is set forth in Christ as entered into heaven—gone within the veil. If His taking a place in glory gives force to everything which was presented in Him down here, so in regard to the witness of those who are brought into communion and intimacy with Him, they know Him now where He is by the power of the Comforter down here abiding with them. There are three positions in which we can view the Lord. (1.) In His life down here on earth. (2.) As gone within the veil. (3.) As the One who is coming again to fill everything with glory. All that glory has Him for its Centre, for all that is to be displayed subsists in Him now. The Comforter has come in connection with these three positions in which we can look at Christ, so that all that we see in Him might be real and true to us. The Comforter is our link with Christ within the veil. He is the power to engage our hearts with Him now that He is there. Is it not so? Look at the disciples; they must have seen a great deal in the Lord when He was on earth, but it was not till the Comforter came that they fully understood what they had seen when they companied with the Lord upon earth. They saw His ways of grace to man, but do you think they

apprehended in Him what was so precious to the Father? That golden pot of manna which was not appreciated on earth, but has its place in heaven in the Father's heart. Do you think they understood what that life of Jesus was for the Father? Not then, but they did after He had gone within the veil and the Comforter had come. They might in some measure have appreciated the grace and mercy which came out in His words and works, but they did not understand what He was to the Father.

In chapter xv. the subject is not exactly service but fruit-bearing. Fruit-bearing is for the Father, that He may be glorified. In connection with this subject I would refer to a verse in Colossians i., where it speaks of "being fruitful in every good work." (Ver. 10.) Without altering the words I would just turn them round to give the true sense, In every good work bearing fruit. There was not only to be service, or a good work in any sense, but in that good work they were to bear fruit. How was it to come about that there should be fruit? They were to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well pleasing; thus there would really be fruit for God in the reproduction of the life of Christ down here. In order to do that there must be growth by the knowledge of God. Now it is in Christ that this knowledge has come to us, and John in the end of chapter xv. shews us the Comforter as

being sent by One within the veil from the Father, in order that we might know Jesus there. He is there as having glorified the Father here. The Comforter has come to give the apprehension, not only of what Jesus was to the Father in His life down here, but of what He is as having glorified the Father up there. What Jesus is in the glory, having laid down His life that He might take it again, will all come out in the church by-and-by. Everything which came out in His life down here, and what He is in glory, will all come into manifestation in the church. Hidden from men's eyes, but known to those who look within the veil, the Holy Spirit bearing witness of Him there, we can abide in His word and love, and thus there will be the continuation of that blessed life of Jesus in those who are His disciples. The bearing *much* fruit is, so to speak, the expansion of that life; it began with the eleven, but numberless others have been brought into intimacy with the Lord through them. It is wonderful that we should thus be brought into contact with One who is going to fill all things to the Father's glory. We not only know redeeming love, but the grace of His heart in attaching us to Himself. He imparts to us now by the Spirit the grace by which we can understand the record of that life of love and death of shame, as well as know Him in the place where He now is within the veil. *There is*

treasured the golden pot of manna, and He is there as our Advocate with the Father to maintain us in communion with the revelation of the Father and the Son. How could we look within the veil if *He* were not there, our Intercessor as well as our Advocate with the Father? Has He not sustained the souls of His saints ever since "Jesus wept" with Mary of Bethany? Have not souls been more or less maintained in communion with heaven through His ministry and intercession? The apostles could not have testified of Him down here, apart from the sustenance they got from Him within the veil. Does not this remain to us to-day? We have by the Spirit the record of the life of Jesus on earth, and by the same Spirit we know Him as living for us in heaven. Does not "the truth" subsist in Jesus within the veil? And the Comforter is the Spirit of the truth down here. Even the truth of scripture is living to us because Christ lives up there. It does not subsist in doctrines or books or lectures, though we can thank God for them, but it subsists in Christ.

We need not be disheartened, beloved brethren, although we may feel our own weakness. We sang just now :

"Yet, Lord, alas, what weakness  
Within myself I find !  
No infant's changing pleasure  
Is like my wandering mind."

But what an anchor we have in Christ within the veil! The Holy Spirit is down here as witness to us of Him there. Thus we know Him, and every truth, if we may so speak, is connected with a Person who is living there in the presence of God. The world has forgotten Him, and the church had become unconscious of His living there through slumber. What woke the virgins out of slumber? The announcement that He was there. "Behold the bridegroom!" It was not that they saw Him, but the cry was a *testimony* to Him as within the veil ready to come. In Revelation xxii. *His own* voice is heard, He is in heaven still, and there are those who respond to His voice, "I am the bright and morning star." The cry which awoke the virgins was a testimony that there was a Bridegroom, but there is an intimacy in the Lord's *own* words to which the Spirit and bride respond. The church had slumbered; while waiting for Him to come she might have known Him all the time in heaven, so that He would not have been lost to her in any wise, like we read in Canticles, but her communion with heaven would have been maintained. A few weeks or years are not of much consequence if we know the Lord within the veil, He is not lost to us. "I am the bright and morning star" calls our attention to Him, but He has been there through all the night watches, and the Spirit has been here. We are

not waiting to know Him when He comes; we know Him now within the veil. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians says, "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep [not slumber], we should live together with him." Our life is bound up with Him. Because He lives we live also. Thus we enter into the depths of His love. He has loved us and given Himself for us, but He loves us as living within the veil, and His thought for us is that we shall live together with Him.

May the Lord bring all our hearts into communion with Himself in regard to all the light and truth which have been ministered to us in past years. It is communion with Him that gives to all we have learnt freshness and power. The hidden manna never becomes stale. People want the next new thing, and Christians have to take care that they are in communion with that which abides. Christ abides, and we know Him within the veil, and the Comforter abides with us, so that we may abide in communion with Him where He is. Thus everything is fresh and real and living, because all is connected with Himself.

T. H. R.

---

## SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY.

(1 THESS. v. 23.)

I THINK, dear brethren, if you will allow me to say a few words, it is of the utmost importance to apprehend that certain things should always go together, and if they do not, each is out of course. Take, for instance, what we call objective and subjective truth. Objective truth, in a general way, is what we by faith look at, while the subjective forms the inward man of those who have looked. These must go together, if we are to keep right, and continue in company with one another.

In the verse I read from Thessalonians the apostle distinguishes between the three parts in every man. He places them in their order from the highest to the lowest. "Now the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly: and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (New Trans.) The desire started with the God of peace, and this gives character to the whole statement, and thus these three parts in ourselves are set apart for God, and then we shall be at peace with one another. There is no progress when there is war. War may be necessary

at times, but peace and progress go together. God is several times called the God of peace, that is what He delights in, and if we are to have Him with us we must be at peace. Alas! we are often more disposed for war than peace.

The renewed spirit of the believer is his highest part, by which he sees truth in order to receive it, and this is connected with the objective side. The Holy Spirit is the power; but things are apprehended through the spirit of the man; however, we must not stop there, if we do, it will have no effect upon us. It is when the soul comes into exercise that it produces its effect on the whole man, this is the subjective result. As Jeremiah said, "Mine eye affecteth mine heart." (Lam. iii. 51.) The objective produced the subjective.

It is not so much to present the three points but what flows from them which is on my mind. They present three entrances by which the enemy gets advantage over the Lord's people, so we must learn to guard them so as to resist every attack. The enemy overcomes one man through his spirit, another through his soul, and another through his body. This subject may appear to some metaphysical, but scripture distinguishes these different parts.

If we look at the history of the Apostle Paul in the Acts we find in connection with his spirit in chapter xvii. 16, "his spirit was stirred in him." Then

chapter xix. 21, "Paul purposed in spirit." This was his own spirit, although at the same time no doubt the Holy Spirit acted on his spirit. (Compare Rom. viii. 16.) The spirit is the highest part of a man, and by it he touches divine things. The soul is more that by which we touch human things. We love with our souls. (Compare 1 Sam. xviii. 1.)

Thus the movements as to guidance and direction in service were in connection with the spirit of the apostle because the spirit is especially the intelligent part of the man. What made the apostle such a blessing to the saints was that his soul kept pace with his spirit. His affections with his intelligence.

Paul said he was minister of the gospel and minister of the church. (See Col. i. 23-25.) I judge the truth of the gospel largely engaged his soul, and the church more especially his spirit. But, of course, both went together, for his body even took part in the service of the Lord.

In Acts xx. 31 we read, "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Tears are the expression of the soul. I love the company of the weepers. (See Eccl. vii. 2.) Paul was a weeper. (See Phil. iii. 18.) Notice also what he says of Timothy, "being mindful of thy tears." In the Old Testament, Jeremiah was a weeper. (See chap. xiii. 17; Lam. i. 16, ii. 11.)

The soft spot in a man lies in his soul, and nothing could be more beautiful in this hard world than to find softness and warmth amongst the saints of God.

Again, in Acts xx. 35, "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him." These were movements of the soul. Thus we can see with the Apostle Paul, that his movements in the Lord's work were connected with his spirit, but at the same time his soul's affections kept up with his spirit. If I might use an illustration, it is like two horses driven at tandem, the one takes the lead, but the other keeps up with it. Our spirits should take the lead, but our souls should keep up with our spirits. Sin entered into the world when Adam's soul took the lead in following the woman in his affection for her. Eve had to confess, "the serpent beguiled me;" that was an influence gained over the soul. She was away from Adam and the devil caught her alone, and got power or influence over her, and that brought in the consequences.

Now to make this of practical bearing to ourselves. I suppose we all know how difficult it is sometimes to get on with a brother. Perhaps it

is just for the reason one is nearly all spirit, and the other nearly all soul. The spirit was leading in one, but the soul was not keeping up to it; while in the other the soul was leading and the spirit lagging behind. Opposite judgments must then result. If we are to be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ we need to be diligent in these things.

We can read how the early Christians were affected by not watching the three entrances. The Corinthians, for example, had knowledge, which is an acquisition of the spirit, but knowledge by itself puffs up, while love, which is especially a movement of the soul, edifies. We edify one another with the soul, when guided by the spirit.

The Galatians were exhorted: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall no way fulfil flesh's lusts." (Gal. v. 16, N.T.) This was the remedy against biting and devouring one another. The apostle prays for the Philippians that their "love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." The movements of the soul were to be in accord with the movements of the spirit.

Some men in disposition seem to be nearly all soul, and their judgment is not to be trusted; others again seem to be nearly all spirit, and they are hard and cold. When such persons meet they cannot get on together.

If we are to have the God of peace with us we must keep the divine order, the spirit and soul must keep pace with each other, and the body will be guided by the influence of both.

Another passage seems to help us in connection with this subject. In Hebrews iv. 12 we read, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." The soul and spirit never separate, but can be morally divided by the word of God which may address either the one or the other, or both together. The joints and marrow allude to the body which is separated from the spirit and soul at death, until the resurrection.

If thus we were more watchful over ourselves we should get on better one with another. Even those who are engaged in the Lord's work may become antagonistic to each other. Those who devote themselves to evangelistic work may not get on with those who are more engaged with teaching the saints, and again, the latter may not be able to bear with the former.

Now there is a great deal of soul warmth, and soul energy, in those who seek souls; while those who instruct the saints are more characterised by spirit.

However, both are dependent on each other, for how would the teacher get on if the work of

the evangelist did not gather souls to be instructed; and how would the work in those souls progress unless there were those who could lead them on in the truth. Thus we need both lines of service, and in the present day much of both may be done by the same servants. If I were engaged in evangelistic work, I should seek grace that I might not do anything in my service which would hinder the work of the teacher; and if I were a teacher, I would seek grace that I might have patience with those who had first found out the persons whom it was my privilege to teach. Of course in every line of service we must be guided by the principles laid down in scripture, otherwise we shall both grieve the Holy Spirit and also grieve our brethren. I was one day talking with a brother, who was making complaints about another brother, at last I said, "Now turn him over and have a look at the other side." All was changed in a moment. "Ah!" he said, "he has often been a comfort to me, and I learned much from him," and so on. This proved he was judging only by his spirit, without any movement of his soul, but when this was roused all was changed. The uncomely parts of the brother might still remain, but love thought on the lovely things.

I have not said much about the body, because if the spirit and soul are active under the

guidance of the Holy Spirit, no doubt the body will be presented as a living sacrifice. (See Rom. xii. 1.)

Paul said, "I keep under my body." Sometimes the saints have gone astray by considering the body more than the soul. They have chosen places of residence for the health of the body, without considering the health of the soul, and while the former may have prospered, the latter has declined. The body should not be neglected, but the spirit should see how such a place would affect the soul.

I should like to refer to one very touching incident in the Old Testament as illustrating the point we are on; it occurs in the history of Elisha. I take it he was a farmer's son, for he killed the bullocks when he stopped plowing. He was plowing with the *last* yoke of oxen, instead of the *first*, he was in the most humble place. Elijah passing by, cast his mantle upon him. (See 1 Kings xix. 19.) Elisha said, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee." He had much soul affection, so that when Elijah was going up to heaven, Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

Elisha was to be a testimony of grace, but he felt himself unequal to the testimony unless he had a double portion of Elijah's spirit. The double portion was the birthright of the eldest

son. (See Deut. xxi. 17.) The judgments Elisha brought were remarkable: first on the children who mocked the *messenger* of grace; then on Gehazi, who disregarded the *time* of grace; then on the man on whose hand the king leaned, who called in question the *power* of grace. In each case grace was made light of, and so nothing left but judgment.

It has been a great help to me to see these distinctions of which we have been speaking. Naturally I should be a soul man, but I look to the Lord that my spirit may lead, so both keeping together my body may express Christ. Thus we should be able to get on with the most uncomely brother, provided evil is not working in him. If there is one who has been nearly all soul, I trust he will seek to cultivate his spirit more; and if there is one who has been nearly all spirit, that he will seek to cultivate his soul. Then there would be more happy fellowship.

It would be the same in a company, the way to get on is by the spirit taking the lead, and the soul keeping up with it. Then we should get repeated, "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." (2 Thess. i. 3.)

Some brothers we can work with better than others, no doubt, but we should have no favourites. Much trouble in meetings might have been saved if these things had been

watched over, and each kept in its proper place. It gives me great thankfulness when I return to this country to find myself in fellowship with so many, for the enemy might have divided us far apart. We can all remember some who were once with us, but are no longer so. Let us keep the watch over ourselves in connection with these three apertures, and by grace keep ourselves that the wicked one toucheth us not. I have only touched on these three parts in each believer in connection with our *responsibility*. They are also viewed abstractedly, but that is not my point now.

G. W. Gy.



## A HARVEST FOR GOD IN THE HEARTS OF HIS SAINTS.

(LUKE XXIV. 45, 46 ; MATT. XIII. 45 ; LUKE VIII. 5.)

THE verse first read this morning struck me much, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit ; so shall ye be my disciples" (John xv. 8), and I desire, by the Lord's help, to continue a little longer on that line.

In the scriptures I have read the Lord stands before us in three distinct characters of service.

First, He was here as a *Sufferer* ; we all believe that.

Secondly, He was here as a *Seeker*. He came in search of something for Himself, "a pearl of great price," a hidden treasure, He was looking for that which would bring Him unchanging and eternal satisfaction. We know what that was. "He loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Thirdly, He came as a *Sower*, and it is this which I desire to bring before you for a few moments. He came to *produce* something. A harvest for God in the hearts of men was before Him, and He came sowing in order to produce fruit for that coming harvest.

For us He came to *suffer*,  
For Himself He came to *seek*,  
For God He came to *sow*,

in order that fruit might be produced for God's eternal glory. Man, we know, had come short of it, and produced instead a crop of shame and sorrow.

I think this subject should interest us, for our need to-day, I feel persuaded, is deeper exercise rather than additional information. May the Lord produce this exercise, dear brethren, both in the speaker's heart and in your own.

The thought of sowing is common enough, especially in the way of service to others, but I am now thinking of those little bits of ground where the seed has already fallen, little bits of what the great Sower Himself has called "good ground," that is, your heart and mine. He has done a good deal of sowing at different times, and this very room has witnessed it. What has He been looking for? Fruit. What has He got? We will leave the answer for the present.

Perhaps we might first inquire, What does He sow? Well, He brings to us the revelation of God as Father, and this revelation is intended to produce fruit for God. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." But He brings His own love into our hearts. He says, "I have loved you," and here notice how the sowing and the seeking and

the suffering are all bound up together by this holy bond of divine affections. He would not have come to suffer for me if He had not loved me; nor would He have sought for a poor thing like me had He not loved me. He would not have thought of me as one to be made fit to be seen in heavenly glory beside Him if He had not loved me. His grace concerning us all is expressed in those marvellous words in John xvii., "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." As though He had said, Father, I desire for them that which was My own choicest portion—that which was mine before the world began—the appreciation and enjoyment of Thy love.

He brings the testimony of God His Father to us. He declares His Father's name, and "much fruit," for His Father's sake is His blessed purpose. Oh, is it not sadly humbling to every one of us that He has seen so little?

It is not enough, dear brethren, that we are an *outwardly* separated company of believers. Let us beware of mere outside barriers marking us off. It is the kind of crop we produce, the fruit we bear, that should mark us off from our neighbours. "By *this* shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John xiii. 35.) Is it enough for a farmer that he has a good wall or a well-kept

fence round his field, if he has nothing inside worth guarding from the spoiler's foot? It is the state of his crop he is thinking of when he makes or maintains a barrier of separation. May we learn a lesson in this. But let me carry still further this illustration of the farmer, for we have another danger to guard against. It is very important that the farmer should know something of the theory of agriculture, but all the book lore in the world, with the most diligent study of the science of agriculture, would not of itself produce a single ear of wheat. Is there, think you, no danger of our becoming mere students of scriptural doctrine, well able to discern differences and distinctions, and to admire and adopt them as valuable additions to our former stock of knowledge? I verily believe there is this danger. *Phraseology* is not *fruit*, and let us remember that God is looking for fruit—fruit that is produced by love, and not love *talked* about merely as a subject, but love *enjoyed* by the Spirit subjectively, that is, in our hearts.

If a farmer's fields are infested with thistles, not only will there be a scanty crop, but he will thereby be the means of doing positive mischief to his neighbour's field. And if there is not fruit for God in our field we shall be more of a hindrance than a help to those who come near us. Christ desires that we should be charac-

terised by love, as we have seen in John xiii. 35, and the verse just quoted by our brother expresses the same desire. "I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, . . . being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Phil. i. 9-11.) Please note that this fruit is *by* Jesus Christ, and *to* God's glory. Then we get a like thought in 1 Thessalonians, verse 12 of chapter iii., "The *Lord* make you to increase and abound in love one toward another."

How easy for us on an occasion like this to pass muster, so to speak, with one another and pass on with the most serious hindrances to true testimony practically untouched. It is not enough that we are outwardly moral, that we do not stagger people with flagrant misconduct. We ought not to be content without *fruit for God*, and there will either be this pleasant fruit for God and a vigorous testimony for men in our lives or we shall be a very great hindrance to those who come near enough to our field to look over our hedge and see for themselves what is produced there.

Now this consideration touches the commonest things of daily life. There is nothing more common, perhaps, than money. Take it, then, as an illustration of how fruit-bearing may be hindered. Is there any evil in money? None. It is in itself only a bit of dust. But, as we

read, that "the *love* of money is the root of all evil." Do you think that this kind of "thistle" could not get inside our enclosure? and if not positively cultivated there may it not be regarded with a great measure of complacency.

What, then, will keep out the evil root of "*money-love*"—more or less natural to us all? Only one thing will effectually keep it out, and that is *divine* love. And if it is not kept out, what mischief may it not work! Money will help a man to be something in this world. He can afford to get nearly everything he sets his selfish heart upon. It will help him to distinguish himself in his dress and in his house. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life can all be fostered by it. And eventually he is able to pose as a big man in a little select world of his own, that is, a world according to his own tastes, and all this while comforting himself that he holds tenaciously to orthodox doctrines!

But mark the blessed contrast to all this. A fire of heavenly kindling is burning in a believer's heart. Divine love is there. What an opportunity for me, he says. I will not spend this on my own gratification. I will spend it for love's sake, I will make someone's heart burn with gratitude to the God who entrusted me with it. I will, by His grace, be the means of grateful thanksgiving going up to His ear. I

will make a "friend" of it and use it as a witness that God has put His love into my heart. What a refreshing contrast to its fostering in the heart that which is "*not of the Father*"—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life."

Now let us turn to one in whom these lovely traits were exemplified, the Apostle Paul. Listen to his words at Ephesus. "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 33-35.)

Paul would labour so that he might shew, by the *little* money he had in his hand, the *great* love he had in his heart. This is a fine specimen of fruit for God, dear brethren—"fruit by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God."

Each one of us has a little field in which, in his life here below, he may produce fruit for God. And we all may be sure of this, that if love is not the active principle, there, in some form or other, the world will be.

May the Lord give us to consider these serious things, and to remember that as surely as He came to *seek* and to *suffer* He came to *sow*, and if

He came to sow it was that fruit for God might be the happy result in us.

In the midst of the barren profession around, may heavenly mindedness, fruit of heavenly grace, mark us increasingly. Without this the higher the ecclesiastical wall the bigger the stumbling block. The rather may we provoke to love and to good works all who may come near us. The Lord give us more simplicity and reality, that there may be "*much fruit*" for the glory of His own great name by us.

GEO. C.



## READING.

G. W. G. suggested that the difference between "the cross" and "the tree" might be considered. The special thought of "the cross," "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," and the difference between that and the tree in Corinthians and Galatians. (1 Cor. i. 17-19, ii. 1-5 ; Gal. iii. 13.)

T. H. R. I think we must look at the cross as a whole ; I should prefer to look at it so, and the idea which I have connected with the cross is suffering. Sin brought suffering into the world. I think man has to accept the cross in that way, though atonement was made there and was part of the suffering. If you speak of death it is *the end* of man, but besides that there is really that also which God has brought in in government in connection with sin ; He has brought in suffering. If we merely look at ourselves as having part in the death of Christ, we leave everything behind there. I say, Yes, I am dead with Christ, all that I was is gone in His death, and I look forward in hope to the future ; but, as a matter of fact, I am *here* where sin is and with sin in me, and so I have to keep the cross before me. The suffering of the cross is a most important point. I do not

think Christians sufficiently take in the thought that Christ *suffered* for sins.

W. T. P. W. Let the subject widen out. Will you tell us the difference between the death of Christ, the cross of Christ, and the blood of Christ?

T. H. R. Death is the end of the man; if the wickedest man that ever lived dies, that is the end of him and his wickedness, though after death there is judgment. Take up the fact that I have died with Christ, all my past is gone, and I am free for all the future; that is all right as before God, but as a matter of fact I happen to be down here with the flesh in me, and I have to bring the cross with all its suffering to bear upon the flesh. "I am crucified with Christ," and "crucified to the world." I am dead to the world, it is true; but there is more, as actually living down here I have to accept the cross as that by which I am crucified to the world. I am dead to sins, Christ having borne them (1 Pet. ii. 24); but there is another thing, Christ suffered for sins. (1 Pet. iii. 18.) I have to bring in the thought of suffering. Paul's doctrine is more connected with Christ's death. Peter's with Christ's sufferings. Peter has in view the government of God, and he was a witness of the sufferings of Christ. Paul was not a witness of the sufferings. He only knew Christ as having died for all and consequently all dead.

F. H. B. Atonement involves suffering, not merely death.

T. H. R. The great fact of suffering comes in under the holy government of God as against sin in this world, as well as being the expression of the horribleness of sin to God's holy nature, that is properly atonement.

J. S. A. You were saying at Rotherham that believers ought to enter into the sense of the bruising of Christ's heel. (Gen. iii. 15.)

J. B. The sufferings were not wholly expiatory.

T. H. R. We may see a difference, but we must look at the cross as a whole.

QUES. What does the bruising of His heel mean ?

T. H. R. That He had to suffer.

W. T. P. W. Suffer as martyr, or as victim ?

T. H. R. In every way ; it included both.

G. W. G. The circumstances were so different ; in the one, He could converse with the dying thief, but in the other He was all alone, and God put the world into darkness when He was working out atonement. The other was preparatory to it.

T. H. R. Yes ; I have no doubt as to the three hours of darkness ; then He was bearing the holy judgment of God. Christ maintained holiness as well as righteousness there.

G. W. G. I have thought that the apostle referred to the first three hours, when he said,

“Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ,” and we continue those sufferings now at the present time. The Lord spoke of a man bearing his cross; we could not take up the cross without renouncing ourselves.

T. H. R. While we have to look at the cross as a whole, yet there was that in it which created such a tremendous discussion some years ago in connection with the governmental sufferings. Christ went through sufferings not only at the hands of men as a martyr, but governmentally at the hand of God in righteousness—that which Israel has and will come under; but these were not in themselves atoning sufferings, though not apart from atoning sufferings. The cross is one whole. Suppose a saint is going on badly, and he comes under the holy government of God for it, it is of immense moment for that saint to realise that Christ can sympathise with *him*, not with the sin for which he suffers; but because atonement was wrought at the same time Christ can support him when his soul is going through the *suffering*; Christ has gone through it and can support him under the chastening, and yet perhaps he is not taken out of the suffering. The truth of the cross pressed upon the spirit would discipline the soul. Christ suffered *for* us in *atonement*, so that we never might suffer in that way, but He sympathises *with* us when we are under chastening governmentally.

F. H. B. A saint coming under the government of God would not simply suffer in body: he would also suffer in soul, he might get into darkness.

T. H. R. He would not get into darkness of soul if he knew Christ's grace in it; he would be supported in the chastening like David was. He would have the sense that he would never come under wrath for it. God brings suffering on him for what he has allowed, because he did not keep the sentence of the cross on the flesh, arming himself with Christ's mind.

J. S. O. You can hardly sever the martyr aspect of death from the governmental aspect, or the atoning sufferings.

T. H. R. No.

G. W. G. I had no thought of separating the sufferings in Christ, but we take up only one side, the martyr sufferings.

H. T. Are they martyr sufferings in Psalm lxix. and atoning in Psalm xxii.?

T. H. R. I think they are governmental dealings in Psalm lxix. "They persecute him whom *thou* hast smitten." Christ owned that the smiting was from God, and yet it was not atonement, for it adds, "And they talk to the grief of *those* whom thou hast wounded," that is, others are in that kind of suffering governmentally. Christ is alone in suffering in Psalm xxii.

F. H. B. Atonement has often been connected with the thought of smiting.

T. H. R. Smiting is governmental.

F. H. B. In connection with smiting there is scattering, not gathering.

T. H. R. Christ was smitten as the Messiah of Israel; He had come to take up Israel, and He owned fully (besides entering into the terrible question of sin as coming under the holy judgment of God) all the course of Israel as occupying the place of God's people; and hence the course of the saints down here, on the same principle, comes under the discipline of the Lord.

W. T. P. W. "They talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded."

T. H. R. Exactly. That was one of the verses J. N. D. insisted on to shew the third character of sufferings. There were sufferings in which Christ was with them in the suffering; but when you come to atonement there could not be anybody with Him, it was impossible. But there were governmental sufferings from God into which Christ entered when He was smitten.

W. T. P. W. They were not atoning sufferings in Psalm lxix.

A. J. P. What about that verse in Isaiah liii. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him"?

T. H. R. That is governmental there ; atonement comes in too.

F. H. B. It goes on to say, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."

T. H. R. Governmental sufferings must go on to atonement, or they would not be available for support and comfort to Israel, or to us under chastening, if atonement were not made. We have in Isaiah xl., "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people . . . for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." God can bring Israel out of all the governmental judgment they were under, and He will do so, but it could not have been unless atonement had been made.

E. D. The martyr and governmental sufferings go right on to the end when atonement is made.

T. H. R. You cannot separate them in the cross.

D. L. H. J. N. D. brought out that the governmental sufferings in the case of the Lord went right on to death.

T. H. R. Take Psalm xxii.—who is going to be smitten after atonement has been made ? The result is nothing but praise. In Psalm lxix. the Lord builds up *Zion*, the earthly centre ; in Psalm xxii. it is, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren : in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." Hence the assembly comes

in, and afterwards the great congregation and the ends of the earth.

E. D. In Psalm lxix. there is judgment too falling on the people.

QUES. If Psalm lxix. is governmental, what is Psalm cii. ?

T. H. R. That is governmental too. It does not actually speak of the cross there, but it is the same character of sufferings.

W. J. Would you tell us the difference between Peter and Paul with regard to this matter ?

T. H. R. Evidently Paul's ministry began when all the sufferings were over ; he was not a witness of the sufferings. He began with Christ having died and risen again. His ministry is to present man perfect in Christ, and he goes on to the full result in glory. God used Peter to lead people who had been connected with God upon earth out of their earthly associations on to heavenly hopes. Peter was trying, so to speak, to get them over Jordan ; Paul's ministry begins at the other side of Jordan.

W. J. "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

T. H. R. That is Marah. Peter does not use the word "dead" as Paul does. He brings in "dead to sins," but the sense of "dead" there is "departed from." In Marah you realise that you have been set free by the sufferings of

Another. When you are through the Red Sea it is blessed to sing the song on the other side and say all is clear. Yes, I say, but what did it cost the Lord to make you clear? Marah is taking home to myself the sufferings of the Lord. Am I to think lightly of sins if Christ suffered for them? Abraham had to give up Isaac according to the flesh; he could have gone outside his tent door and offered him up; but he had to go three days' journey before he did it, and he had thus to experience in his soul what death meant. I do not think we take that home to ourselves enough. Take the case of the cleansing of the man that was defiled in Numbers xix.; living water was poured on the ashes of the heifer, but the man was not sprinkled until the third day; he did not get the full sense in his soul of what defilement was before God until the third day. So we have to get the sense that Christ suffered for sins.

E. H. C. You said "dead" here was "departed from"?

T. H. R. Yes. Peter says; "dead to *sins*," it is "departed from" really. You have left Egypt and its judgment behind, and so you would not gratify yourself. Peter does not use the word "dead" in the way Paul does.

A. H. It is dead in the sense of having done with them.

T. H. R. Yes, you have left them behind, as

the Israelites left Egypt, and Christ having borne our sins, they are no longer on us, and we ought to have done with them.

G. W. G. What do you take 1 Corinthians i. 18 to be, "the preaching of the cross"?

T. H. R. That of a man who was put out of the world on a gibbet; what can that be but foolishness to a man of culture? A crucified man! What help could that be to the wise in this world? And yet by it God brings the wisdom of *man* to nothing. There is no hope for any but in the cross, it is the power of *God* to salvation.

G. W. G. Paul kept on so long at it among the Corinthians, for eighteen months. "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

T. H. R. J. N. D. used often to point out that it is not merely Jesus Christ, but "Jesus Christ *and* him crucified." That is at the lowest point, a shameful end.

G. W. G. Why was that brought to bear upon the saints?

T. H. R. Because the Corinthians were going on with this world's wisdom and science.

D. L. H. J. N. D. used to lay great stress upon "*you*." "I determined not to know anything among *you*," because they were Corinthians.

T. H. R. The apostle had to emphasise the cross to the Galatians also.

E. D. Is any gospel full that does not bring in the end of man ?

T. H. R. No ; but the cross is not only that man has come to an end, but see the kind of end, "the death of *the cross*." If I see what the flesh is as deserving that—that what God thought of it was to judge it like a malefactor put on the cross, then I keep the cross on my flesh.

W. B. Was it only in the three hours of darkness that the Lord was forsaken ?

T. H. R. He did not get from God deliverance from any of the sufferings He went through, but in the three hours of darkness He was alone with God and forsaken by Him ; it stands out alone in the annals of time. He is altogether alone in Psalm xxii.

F. H. B. Now what is the force of the other part of the verse, "unto us which are saved it is the power of God" ?

T. H. R. I think there was the putting away of the man in the flesh, the entire disposal of the whole question of sin ; then resurrection follows upon that.

E. D. Is not that clear from verse 24 ?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so.

F. H. B. We want to get at the force of the word, "the *power* of God."

T. H. R. I think nobody could take up the question of *sin* except Christ. He is the power

of God. It involves the altar, the victim and the priest.

QUES. Would it bring in resurrection ?

T. H. R. Yes ; I do not think any one could touch death but the Son of God, that is, could go into it and come out of it. What man could come by water and blood ? What man could touch death ? The Son of God could touch death in all its dreadful reality, and make it the way of propitiation and cleansing, and resurrection was the proof of this power of God.

A. H. Is not the power of God the means by which God will take up everything ?

T. H. R. Yes, it came out in the cross. The altar has often been spoken of as that which could bear the fire, but it was more than that : the altar was the judicial estimate of good and evil.

M. G. That is what the Lord took up really.

T. H. R. Yes ; He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Nobody could enter into the question of sin but the Lord, because no one could estimate good and evil as before God but the Lord.

REMARKED. He was not under death.

T. H. R. No ; but in Him there was the perfect sense of good and evil as before God.

E. D. I was thinking of the contrast in that verse in 2 Corinthians xiii., "He was crucified

through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God."

T. H. R. Yes, exactly. In Galatians the cross comes in with a view to another point. The apostle there refers to the subject of Romans vi. only in another way. "I through the law am dead to the law, that *I might live unto God.*" The moment the Lord died suffering was all over and He lived to God. That was the point for Paul, "that I might live unto God." But how did he become dead to the law? J. N. D. used to say that the law killed him, and so it did morally, but how did Paul realise that he was dead? In this way, "I am crucified with Christ."

W. J. Why does it say that, and not dead with Christ?

T. H. R. He had to bring that in because the Galatians were not in moral accord with the cross. It is most important that the mind of a Christian should be in moral accord with the cross. He says to the Galatians, "Who hath bewitched you, . . . before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, *crucified* among you?"

W. J. You said the death of the cross was shame.

T. H. R. Shame is attached to crucifixion. The apostle could say, My mind is in accord with the cross; "I am crucified with Christ,"

you Galatians are attempting to set right by law what God has dealt with in the cross, and I have been keeping the sentence of the cross upon all that which you have been trying to keep in its place by law. The only thing is to keep before you Christ crucified. It is one thing to say, I am dead to it; *are you?*

G. W. G. There must be maintenance in everything.

E. D. It is one thing to be in moral accord with the cross of Christ, but is there not one step back—appropriation?

T. H. R. Yes, I admit that; but I feel that I have to distinctly keep the cross on the flesh in order that I may say, "I am crucified with Christ;" I need to have the sense of what Christ suffered. It is very easy to say, I am dead to it all, but it is not so easy to bring the cross on the flesh and accept its shame.

W. J. Do not you think that if we were true to Christ in the power of the Spirit we should accept the cross? Affection for Christ would enable us to accept the cross.

T. H. R. Here is this great fact that saints are in a place where Satan can tempt the flesh. In John's epistle it does not say merely, "Love not the world," but also "neither the *things* that are in the world." Many give up the world as a system, but have we given up the things that are in the world? I may have turned my

back on the world, but how many worldly things have I in my house ?

A. H. Did not the Galatians want to get rid of the *offence* of the cross ?

F. H. B. The cross really involves the end of man.

G. W. G. Do not you think we must bring in the thought of another Man ? All Paul's line of things with the Galatians was to bring in another Man, and to that end the man in the flesh must go.

T. H. R. Yes ; all I want to add to it is the way in which the man was ended—by death but by the death of the cross. When sin came in suffering came in with it ; God made the thorn and the thistle to grow. J. N. D. said, God never meant man to be happy in a world of sin.

E. C. Was there not also the curse connected with it ? “ Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

T. H. R. The counsel of God had to be accomplished that He was to hang upon a tree, and so He was delivered to the Gentiles and was crucified and thus the curse was borne for the Jew. Three times over the Lord tells His disciples of His death. First, He was to be delivered to the chief priests ; secondly, He was to be delivered into the hands of men ; thirdly, the Jews would take Him and deliver Him to the Gentiles. Man, Jew and Gentile, were all

connected with the suffering, death, and crucifixion of the Lord. It is found in each of the synoptic gospels.

F. W. G. The tree was connected with the curse of the law, and the cross more with man's hatred.

T. H. R. It may be. It was the Gentile mode of execution.

W. W. I wish you would repeat what was said about taking up the cross, and tell us why it is given in the gospels, and not in the epistles.

T. H. R. It is said in hymns that we take up *His* cross, but it is never put in that way in scripture. No one can take up *His* cross really; but I think what the Lord speaks of is something of the same kind; you cannot separate taking up the cross from the idea of its being connected with *His* sufferings. I do not see how you can say "I am crucified with Christ," if you do not enter into the truth of His cross and take it up in the faith of your soul. We have to deny ourselves.

W. T. P. W. In Luke xiv. 27 it says, "Who-soever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

J. S. O. That could only be in His life.

T. H. R. I do not think you can separate it from following after Him when here, though the principle remains; we may not be able to teach one another what the meaning of taking up the

cross is, but we see it in the apostle; he could say, "I am crucified with Christ." He kept the truth of the cross on his flesh.

A. E. P. Was there not a point where the Corinthians thought they had competency to touch the things of God? Is it not a great snare with us?

T. H. R. Yes, no doubt. Taking up the cross must be *in the path down here*. Death introduces you into the sphere of His life.

M. G. The sphere of His life is outside the governmental part.

T. H. R. Yes.

J. S. O. "In that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

T. H. R. In that verse in Galatians ii. there are two parts of christian life: in one, you live to God, that touches the sphere of Christ's life; it is an important point to live to God; the other part is that though a Christian you still live in flesh—"the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." A man might not be conscious that he had a body if he touched the sphere of Christ's life. J. B. S. used to say, that you are so entranced that you do not know whether you have a body or not. In your own room you may be so engaged with God, and your place with Him in Christ, so entranced with Christ in spirit that you do not take account of your body at all. There is the possibility of that for the moment, and to realise

what it is to live to God in that sense ; but, on the other hand, you live down here in the flesh, and there you live by faith. The given principle of your life in the flesh is that you live in reference to a Person in heaven who loved you and gave Himself for you.

F. H. B. You would not say in connection with living to God that it is not by faith, though it is living in the Spirit ; but down here it is living by faith.

T. H. R. You could not live without the Spirit then, but you are governed by an Object in heaven.

A. H. Would what you are saying be found in 2 Corinthians v., "If one died for all, then were all dead : and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" ?

T. H. R. Yes, it is "*unto him which died for them.*"

E. D. Taking up the cross and following Him would be identification with Him in His rejection.

T. H. R. It comes out when the Lord was going away. He says, as it were, If you follow Me you must suffer. They had been with Him all through the land of Israel. Now He was going to take the path to suffer, and He says, If you follow Me you must take that path.

W. J. What is the force of "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"?

T. H. R. It is not exactly the *death*, but the *dying* of the Lord Jesus. J. N. D. said that the idea of the word is that of death in a living body—necrosis. The point is that the Lord died out of this world. In this chapter the apostle is speaking of His service and ministry, and the way he carried it out. He had never been associated with the Lord in His ministry on earth, but he had been entrusted with most wonderful ministry after the Lord had died and risen and was in glory. Ministry cannot be carried out in human power; Christ did not carry it out in that way, but in the energy of the Spirit, yet even He had to say, "I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain;" man in the flesh was not set up by Christ's ministry, and so Jesus died, and it is in the sense of this that the apostle carried out his ministry in the power of risen life in Christ.

F. C. The believer's body is a living body in which the dying of Jesus is realised.

T. H. R. Yes; another of J. N. D.'s remarks was to the effect that you can never touch death but in the power of life. It was in connection with Goliath's sword, when David said, "There is none like that; give it me;" it was the sword which would have killed him.

W. J. The Corinthians got the power of

what it is to live to God in that sense ; but, on the other hand, you live down here in the flesh, and there you live by faith. The given principle of your life in the flesh is that you live in reference to a Person in heaven who loved you and gave Himself for you.

F. H. B. You would not say in connection with living to God that it is not by faith, though it is living in the Spirit ; but down here it is living by faith.

T. H. R. You could not live without the Spirit then, but you are governed by an Object in heaven.

A. H. Would what you are saying be found in 2 Corinthians v., "If one died for all, then were all dead : and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" ?

T. H. R. Yes, it is "*unto* him which died for them."

E. D. Taking up the cross and following Him would be identification with Him in His rejection.

T. H. R. It comes out when the Lord was going away. He says, as it were, If you follow Me you must suffer. They had been with Him all through the land of Israel. Now He was going to take the path to suffer, and He says, If you follow Me you must take that path.

W. J. What is the force of "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"?

T. H. R. It is not exactly the *death*, but the *dying* of the Lord Jesus. J. N. D. said that the idea of the word is that of death in a living body—necrosis. The point is that the Lord died out of this world. In this chapter the apostle is speaking of His service and ministry, and the way he carried it out. He had never been associated with the Lord in His ministry on earth, but he had been entrusted with most wonderful ministry after the Lord had died and risen and was in glory. Ministry cannot be carried out in human power; Christ did not carry it out in that way, but in the energy of the Spirit, yet even He had to say, "I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain;" man in the flesh was not set up by Christ's ministry, and so Jesus died, and it is in the sense of this that the apostle carried out his ministry in the power of risen life in Christ.

F. C. The believer's body is a living body in which the dying of Jesus is realised.

T. H. R. Yes; another of J. N. D.'s remarks was to the effect that you can never touch death but in the power of life. It was in connection with Goliath's sword, when David said, "There is none like that; give it me;" it was the sword which would have killed him.

W. J. The Corinthians got the power of

Paul's dying, "Death worketh in us, but life in you."

T. H. R. Paul's ministry was all carried on in the power of the life of Christ. When they stoned him, he got up and went into the city. The stones could not knock the life out of the man.

F. H. B. We want to see what goes before, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

T. H. R. Exactly. The apostle carried out his ministry in the power of the God of resurrection. The idea it presents to my mind is that of the burning bush. Surely the fire must burn a bramble bush, but there was a bush burning and not consumed, because God was there. Here is a treasure in an earthen vessel. You would not put a treasure in an earthen vessel, stones might crack it in a moment. Not a bit; it is sustained by the power of God. He was nothing but a poor weak creature, but look how that man was sustained in ministry by the power of God.

E. D. And that he might know the power of God he continually kept the sentence of death in himself.

T. H. R. Yes, thus there was no human energy, no working of the flesh at all. "We which live are alway delivered unto death for

Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." God helped him.

F. H. B. That brings in resurrection too. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

J. S. O. I think you will find that "necrosis" is making a corpse of.

G. E. We use it for death in a living body.

A. H. Is it not the acceptance of death to the man here, that the life of Jesus might come out in him?

T. H. R. Oh, no question of it; only the man was in the power of the life of Jesus, and so he could bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and thus the life of Jesus be manifested. It has been said that nothing of Paul moved, but only the working of the life of Jesus in him. "So then *the* death worketh in us, but *the* life in you;" that is, the life of Jesus worked in or among the Corinthians.

F. H. B. Has it not been said that from the time He came down from the mount of transfiguration up to the cross, it was in His mind, the dying out of this world?

T. H. R. Yes, it was. It was in His mind to die out of this world, but nothing was accomplished as to man in the flesh. There is the absolute fact that He died out of this world and

spent His strength for nought; so the servant has to go on the same lines, not expecting anything from the flesh, carrying about that which does not set up the flesh; everything as to man in the flesh is gone in death, and all has to be in the power of God, so that the life of Jesus may be seen in the servant.

E. E. C. In Psalm xxii. 24 it says, "He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard;" is that Christ?

T. H. R. Yes; there you come to His deliverance. He is heard from the horns of the unicorns.

E. D. He is heard out of death. It is like Hebrews v. 7.

QUES. It says, "At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice;" why is that?

T. H. R. He was crucified at the third hour, and there was darkness from the sixth till the ninth hour. When the atoning sufferings were over He must die to bring the whole condition of man to an end, but then death becomes the blessed way for His spirit to go to the Father. When we come to John He says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again"—take it in a new condition according to the counsels of God,

so that all might exist in a new condition before God.

F. H. B. So that when all was finished according to the counsels of God, He had only to commit His spirit to the Father.

T. H. R. Yes, it was the way to the Father out of the world.

A. S. L. In Psalm xxii. the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is recorded at the beginning; in the gospels it comes at the close.

T. H. R. It has always struck me that that was the great subject of the psalm, and cast its shadow over all the other sufferings.

E. C. Do I understand you to say that was the shadow cast over the previous hours of suffering?

T. H. R. I merely refer to Psalm xxii. Verse 1 is the thesis of the psalm, and I read all the rest in the light of that.

W. J. The verse our brother quoted just now (Psalm xxii. 24) is very precious, coming after resurrection; because if He has been heard we shall be heard. We are in association with Him.



## JESUS MADE BOTH "LORD AND CHRIST."

WITH the hope of continuing the line of truth which was brought before us this morning, and also of adding a word to that which has been presented to us to-night. I have read these scriptures, Acts ii. 1-4, 29-36.

I suppose we all know that in the book of Acts we get the record of the commencement of an entirely new era—the commencement of Christianity on earth in the saints in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Three thoughts are before me on which I wish to say a word. The first is in relation to the new position the blessed Lord has taken in being exalted to the right hand of God. The next, the position the Spirit has taken in the saints on earth. And lastly, the church seen for a moment in perfection here, before failure had come into it.

As touching the ascension of our Lord, you will notice in chapter i. the expression, He was "taken up," and that we get there rather a different aspect of His ascension to that which we get in the gospels. In Matthew no ascension is mentioned. The word there is, "Lo, I am with

you alway," and consequently in a certain spiritual sense He is with His people right on to the end of the age. In John's gospel, the Lord refers to the ascension as His own act as a divine Person, "I ascend to my Father," &c. But in Acts we see that the Lord was "taken up"; taken up from the disciples—taken up into heaven.

I think we get a picture of this aspect of the ascension in 2 Kings ii. The sons of the prophets told Elisha that the Lord would "take away" Elijah from him that day. And Elijah told Elisha that if he should see him taken away a double portion of his spirit would be granted to him.

The fact of the Lord being taken up into heaven and set at the right hand of God must necessarily produce very great results. It was a new beginning in the ways of God; man is exalted to the highest place in heaven. This indicates the bringing in of a new era—a new dispensation; something entirely new must follow such an action on the part of God. That blessed One, whom God had exalted, had been here doing God's will, which He had carried out in all perfection; and I understand that His coming to do the will of God went beyond His earthly path of perfect obedience when here in humiliation; He came to establish God's will in God's world, where that will had been trampled under the foot

of rebellious man, and this will be fully effected presently when His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Meanwhile He has been taken up from us into heaven so that another divine Person might come to those from whom He was taken away. And the testimony rendered concerning Him now is, that God has made Him both Lord and Christ.

These two titles of our Lord were very blessedly brought before us this morning, and I hope we all caught their force as given to our Lord on the resurrection side of death. I think these two titles indicate the whole scope and sphere of His official dignity and glory as the exalted Man. His being made Lord and Christ is what we may call His *official* glories given to Him in resurrection, and which depended upon His *moral* glories which shone forth in Him as Man on earth.

Two things were brought before us as to the blessed Lord. On the one hand He came to set God forth, so that all that God is in relation to man might be known, and on the other hand man has been taken up in Him for the pleasure of God. There is also another thing which has come out in Him, that is, that in Him the perfect man—all that man should be for God—was fully expressed. Christ was the perfect Man; therefore we see in Him these three things: God has been fully expressed in Him, man has been taken

up for the pleasure of God, and all that man should be in the path of dependence and obedience has been lived out in Christ.

I think scripture very clearly shews that His official glories hang upon, and are God's answer to, His moral glories as Man. In Philippians ii. we read that He took the servant's form and was obedient unto death. "*Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him." The point is, the One who went down to the lowest place, has been exalted by God to the highest place because He went down. The One who took a servant's form has been made Lord, and God has decreed that every knee shall bow to Him and that every tongue shall thus confess Him. With one accord our hearts say, He is worthy, He is worthy, and we rejoice in that God gives to Him all that of which He is worthy, and we also rejoice in that He is worthy of all that has been given to Him of God. He is worthy of the highest place in the universe of God, and worthy that every knee should bow to Him and confess Him Lord.

God has made the risen Man—His beloved Son—both *Lord* and *Christ*. Notice the order; not Christ and Lord, but Lord and Christ. He is Lord on God's side, and what He is on the side of God is presented first by the Spirit, He is *Lord*.

I will briefly notice three thoughts that are

connected with the Lordship of Christ. First, He is *supreme*; He is far above all principality and power; He is Lord of all. Secondly, all *authority* in heaven and earth is vested in Him. And thirdly, He is the *Administrator* of all that is in the heart of God for man. Beloved friends, God has made Him in resurrection Lord. He is supreme; our hearts adore Him, and say He is worthy to be supreme in the universe of God. He is worthy to be invested with all authority, and He is worthy to be entrusted to administer all that is in God's mind for man.

He has also been made "Christ"—the anointed Man, and as such He is on our side. Many thoughts suggest themselves to us in His title as the Christ; in fact, I think what He is as Lord and Christ indicates, and in a certain way covers, all His official glories. He is Lord on God's side to the end that He might subdue all things to God. And He is Christ on our side so that man may be taken by the hand, so to speak, and be brought by Him into all that is in the mind of God for man.

I will just touch on three prominent thoughts in connection with Christ in resurrection as the head of man. First, He is *pre-eminent* in relation to man. Secondly, Through Him we may approach God—through Him we have access, and thirdly, He is the source of character for man.

The Son of God having become man and having

in manhood loved righteousness and hated iniquity, it is evident that He as Man must be anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, He must be first, He must be pre-eminent among men; who is there who could be in front of Him? Who could be ahead of Him, or even on equality with Him? From the nature of the case that One must be pre-eminent, that One must be the Head of every man. If the Son of God become man He must be pre-eminent among men.

In the next place we notice that it is through Him as Head that man is privileged to approach God. Through Him both Jew and Gentile have access to the Father. There is no other way of approach to God for man than by Christ, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

Beloved friends, if men have had Christ presented to them as the only way of approach to God, do you think God would hear their prayer were they to attempt to draw near to Him apart from Christ? I think God would say, "What about My Son, the One whom I have given to be the Head of every man? Why have you thus slighted Him?" Christ is presented to man that man may avail himself of Him and thus draw near to God. God is merciful to man, but we approach Him and avail ourselves of His mercy through Christ; He is the only way to

God for saint or sinner. Whatever our history may have been, Christ is available to us and anyone may now avail himself of all that is in Christ, and so approach God in all the acceptability of Him whom God has set as Head of every man.

In the next place, Christ is the source of character to man, and the centre of a new universe—the universe of bliss. When a man partakes of the character of which He is the source, then he will respond to Him as the centre. Christ is the source and centre of the universe of bliss—a universe where all is of God. It is a great thing to take in the conception of a universe where God will find His pleasure and delight, where all is brought in and sustained by Him who is the beginning of the creation of God. We get this thought presented in Ephesians iv. 10. He is to fill all things, He will fill every position in which the creature has been placed in trust with His official glory, and He will fill every person in the universe of bliss with His moral glory—with His own character.

Another thought is, He has given gifts to the church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, so that you and I may be filled with His character before the time comes when He will fill all things. The gifts are here so that we may be filled now with what is of Himself; every saint will bear the character of

Christ presently, but it is His desire that we bear that character now.

Without exhausting the subject, I think these three thoughts are prominent in regard to Christ as Head. He is pre-eminent, through Him we have access, and He is the source of that character which will fill the universe of bliss.

I would like now to say a word as to the Spirit and would remark, that while all authority is vested in the Lord at the right hand of God, there is power in the Spirit on earth equal to the authority in heaven. I dare say you have noticed that when the Spirit came down at Pentecost He did not fall upon the great religious and ecclesiastical company that had previously been owned of God. All that was great in the estimation of man was passed by and unacknowledged by the Holy Spirit, who came down from heaven and identified Himself with a few poor fishermen; a few unlettered and, so far as this world's knowledge goes, uninstructed disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, a few who had been prepared by Him to receive the Holy Spirit. What an action of the Spirit! What a new departure on the part of God! He passed by the temple, the priesthood and the heads of the nation of Israel and acknowledged these few poor disciples, to whom He came, and in whom He dwelt.

Notice also for a moment the Spirit's action

in regard to the lame man as presented in chapter iii. The man had been brought to the temple and laid at its "beautiful gate," but there was no power for healing there. "The Lord that healeth thee" was not to be found there. Peter, one of those whom the Spirit had filled, passed by and said to him, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk," and the man was straightway healed in virtue of that name.

Then in chapter viii. we see that an Ethiopian eunuch had been up to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning without having found what he had sought; but he was seeking, and they that seek shall find. He read the scriptures but did not understand them, nor know Him of whom they speak. The evangelist sent by the Spirit met him in the desert and the eunuch received in that lonely place what he failed to find at Jerusalem—the knowledge of Christ. Surely a new era had come in. The oracle had departed from the temple at Jerusalem, and divine teaching was to be found in the Spirit who had come down to dwell in men, who had become His temple on earth.

One other word. In Acts ii., iii., iv. we are privileged to see the church in perfection on earth, before sin had come into its midst to mar it; here we get a view of the church in practical perfection and in manifested oneness. First, love

marked the whole company, and for a while they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and prayer.

But, alas! in chapter v. we see failure coming in, and departure from first love, and with that departure, hypocrisy and lying. Ananias professed to have given to the poor saints more than he really had given and professed to love them more than he really did. He had sold certain property and professed to give the whole proceeds of the sale to the poor saints, whereas he kept a part of the proceeds for himself, while professing to have given the whole. In the next chapter we see that the departure from first love, that had come in with Ananias and his wife, had become pretty general; the Grecian widows were neglected on the one hand, and on their part they murmured against their brethren.

Stephen comes before us next, and in him we see the first "overcomer" in the history of the church. What enabled him to be an overcomer was his being filled with faith and the Holy Spirit; and in the presence of the greatest opposition he stands alone in the power of the Spirit, and sees the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

If the church is in ruin, as we speak, you and I should not be in ruin, for the power which

sustained the church at the outset is still here to sustain the individual, even the Spirit of God. Stephen lost his life here, but he got compensation as he looked into heaven, and he was enabled to come out in the testimony of what he saw there.

In conclusion, I would remark that the Spirit of God is not here to build up or add His sanction to great ecclesiastical systems, or great companies of men, or anything high or exalted among men now that Christ is rejected by man. He identified Himself at the outset with a few poor men, and He still dwells with the lowly, who are in spirit separate to Christ. If we would have a "double portion" of His Spirit we must see Jesus taken up from earth to heaven, and follow Him in spirit to where He is gone. He has been taken up into heaven, and is the supreme object of adoration there, and He is the Administrator of all that is in the mind of God for man; and He is also the Head of every man, so that we might avail ourselves of Him and thus draw near to God through Him.

May God grant that the One whom God has made both Lord and Christ, may become more and more important and precious to us each, and enable us to be individually overcomers for His name sake.

E. W.



## CHRIST HERE.

(HEB. X. 9 ; PSA. XXII. 1-10.)

I DESIRE to say a word on the grace of Christ. The praises that our God is entitled to, the adoration to which Christ is entitled, depend in measure upon the manner in which we are enabled to look on Christ—what He is to our souls, our apprehension therefore of what He is to God, for He must be first to God before He can be to our souls.

In the first scripture which I read the Lord has before Him to be here to do the will of God. All hope of blessing in the future, whether for Israel or the nations, must be dependent upon the will of God finding and having its place on earth. And Christ, the second Man, the Lord from heaven, begins here in blessed infancy, in entire dependence upon God. Within, no eye could look ; no measure could be taken by man of that blessed One at entrance upon this scene. But God was entitled to have His will done, and to find His good pleasure in man here in every stage of life, from birth to death, and Christ comes to give a full response in this respect, tabernacling in a body which God had prepared for Him. It was part of the blessed obedience of Christ towards God that He should enter here

in perfect dependence, in complete weakness outwardly, dependent upon parental care and the ministry of angels who were really His servants.

If blessing is to come for man, God must have One perfect from the very commencement, from birth, and if He saw well that His blessed Son should come down and be found in such circumstances, surely He was entitled to have His delight in the response of that Son who had said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God," and in proving that Son at every period of life God would have His purposes fulfilled in the end, in Christ taking that prepared body that His will might be done.

I would apply it to ourselves. A position which few have understood, it was the delight of the Lord to take because it was the will of Another—the will of One whom He, as man, acknowledged to be supreme, whom He could trust in all His love, so that He could consent to be here, born of a woman, a dependent being down here to do His will. What is the answer of God? He gives His angels charge concerning Him, and an angel says to Joseph, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word."

The will of God was the first thing with our Lord, and God Himself would become answerable for the One He had sent to this earth

because He was to have all His pleasure in that One. Will not the young Child intervene now and again, and in some measure shew His own power? No! Shall a young child be other than a young child, and have not the angels charge of Him? So the will of God had its perfect sway in Christ from the beginning, and He was the vessel of delight, God's pleasure would prosper in His hand.

We might think that it was a period of our Lord's life here when more might have been done. But He came to save the lost, the little ones even, and He began in that dependent way. God must have looked with delight upon that One He had sent from heaven, tabernacling in that body which was soon to become the acceptable offering to perfect in the fulness of time everything for Himself. The eternal Spirit could present the offering of the body of Jesus upon the cross faultless; there was the sweet savour of an obedience inherent in the Son which in life and death sent its fragrance up, and in death opened the door for love to come out.

See how the Lord was tested all through His life. There was a time when He was found in the temple answering the questions of the doctors. All were astonished at His answers. He is tested now as man, but with Him the claim of God came first. "Wist ye not that I

must be about my Father's business?" Thus in the perfect mind of Him who sent Him He does His Father's will, and gives Him supremacy over the will of the father and mother on earth. "Wist ye not," He says to His mother, for she herself had said once, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." But the moment after He returns with His parents and was subject to them. Having entered upon His Father's business, we might suppose the tie with His parents was to be finally broken—but no; He would go back with those who had parental care over Him and give up His work in the temple at the mind of Him who sent Him. It was a test, but it pointed Him out from the beginning as perfect, whether towards the Father or towards those with whom He had taken earthly relationships, "He grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

So the blessed Lord lives here in holy subjection till the time comes for Him to fulfil His ministry.

Then in Psalm xxii. He is found on the cross. He cries after the One whose will had been to Him everything, whose will has been done, but He yearns with a perfect mind towards that One who could not look upon sin. He says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He recalls to God that there had never

been a break for a moment between Him and the Son, whom He had sent, so He cries, Why? As the pure vessel of the mind of God, Christ must also give the answer, "Thou art holy." And then the blessed Lord turns to the remembrance of those who had gone before who did find Jehovah a resource in time of trouble—Jehovah, who had come in to rescue and take them out of difficulty when they called upon Him. It is marvellous!

How the will of God touches us! We shrink from many a little thing in our path if the will of God has not its perfect place in our souls; but if it has, what comfort! What leadings! What certainty of present and future blessing!

"Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them." Christ alone as forsaken was called upon to follow out the will of God to death. We know now to whom we can call. Deliverance is assured to us. We enter now. There is boldness to follow because He has gone before and opened a way in which we never can be forsaken. There is no shadow between us and our God. It has passed away in Christ.

He as it were reminds God, "I was cast upon thee from the beginning," pleading with Him as it were, body and spirit had been perfect towards Him. "I was cast upon thee from the womb. My hope was in thee." There was no

failure; there was no break. Speaking of Him in His youth the young Child was dependent from the beginning. His whole life is before God spotless.

Dear friends, may we see there is One who has been on this earth filled with the perfect will of God, His thoughts and heart turning always toward God. He is the One to fill our hearts with praises. When we contemplate Him we must adore. He is the One who ended His path by making that perfect offering by the eternal Spirit unto God without spot.

This is the Christ. No mythical person, but the very offering of a body in which sin had never a place; in which God's will ruled and ruled exclusively.

So you can understand how He could say to His disciples, Pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Pray to bring that forward! Pray for that because the will of God down here will bring in untold blessing to all!

How can we be free to address our Lord unless He is precious to us? unless our souls appreciate something of His glories and beauties? God knew them from the beginning. By the Spirit we enter into these glories, in them God has found His delight. It is more than human beings can appreciate that we should be brought by the Spirit into sharing the delights of the living God.

Now you will see how important it is that we should grow in grace and knowledge here. There is a limit in each one of us beyond which there is no work of the Spirit. Let us seek walking in lowliness to widen the limit continually, for this is the will of God, even your sanctification.

When we have left our mortal bodies, there will be no further progressive work of the Spirit in us in connection with our eternal being. I do covet for all the saints as for myself that we may not limit the work of the Spirit in our souls, but that He may attach us more and more to the Lord, and teach us more of that scene that shall be, so that when we leave here we may enter into the place of Christ's things without limit.

With Demas there was a limit. Whatever he once seemed to have, he had let in another love. He loved this present world. The work of the Spirit was necessarily limited as he had love which was not the will of God. How different if the love of God fills the heart! The things of time and sense then lose their power.

May there be enlarged apprehension of what Christ has been here, and of what God can now do for our souls.

J. A.



## LOVE'S EXPECTATION.

(JOHN XIV. 28, 29 ; HEB. X. 36, 37.)

I AM sure there is not a heart here to-night that has not been saying, as we have heard of Christ and His glory, "How I would like to see Him!" That is all you want, I believe, at the bottom of your hearts now, every one of you, just to see Him.

There is something very touching in the way the Lord puts the thought of His own again seeing Him in John xiv. Beautifully blended are His going away and His coming again; and then He makes a wonderful statement—to my mind one of the most wonderful in scripture:—"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father." (Ver. 28.)

Now we have been hearing of His exaltation and the way in which God has honoured Him, and I have something in my mind I would like to add. It is exquisitely sweet to notice that in John xiv. it is not a question of exaltation but "If ye *loved me*, ye would rejoice." He so to speak says: "I am going to a spot where I am welcome, where I am at home, appreciated." Does this delight your heart? He was going to the spot whence He came. Why He came, and what He did, have been a little before us. He had come to do the will of God, the will of the Father in John's gospel. Now, He says, "I am

going back, and if you loved Me you would rejoice." It is not a question of conferred honour, or acquired glory. Most assuredly He is blessedly worthy of all that God has given Him, and that He has won as man. But here it is more, I return to the scene from whence I came, and I count upon your hearts being glad that I am going to where I am appreciated. He knows our hearts, He knows if we love Him or not, and He says, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice."

The scripture our brother began with I want to touch on for a moment, Hebrews x. 5-10. It is a quotation from Psalm xl. He says there (ver. 8), speaking as the Man of God's counsel, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." Jehovah's will filled His heart and governed His lips. In Hebrews x. it says, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Why does the Spirit of God leave out here those two words, "I delight," which appear in the psalm? In Psalm xl. the language is very striking. "*I delight* to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest." (Vers. 8, 9.) There we have the prophetic description of what He was in the whole of His pathway here. He preached righteousness, and it was the delight and joy of His heart. But in Hebrews x., where the doing of the will of God in relation to atone-

ment and putting away sin is in view, it is very striking how the Spirit leaves out "I delight." The awful question of sin-bearing and atonement is before Him. You could not speak of delight in that matter, though He came to do the will of God and did it. In holiness of soul He deprecated the cup of wrath—He would not have been perfect if He had not—and then, in love, drank it to the very dregs.

But look how Psalm xl. presents Him as coming into this world. He was coming to do the will of Another—to be a servant, hence the introduction of the ear, the sign of a listener. Three times in scripture we get it, pointing on to Christ. Here it is, "Mine ears hast thou *digged*." (Ver. 6.) He had never had ears before. He had never been a listener before. A Creator He had been; a Law-giver He had been—the blessed Lord Jesus Christ—but He had never been a listener. It is lovely to see the way in which the psalm presents Him—as having *ears* digged for Him. Where it is presented and expanded in Hebrews x. it is translated, "A *body* hast thou prepared me." This is a quotation from the Greek version of the psalms, the Septuagint. The then translators of the passage seized the idea that the coming One, if He had ears digged for Him, was about to possess a body, and so they rendered it, a free but a true translation, as all see and know who have been

studying scripture. It is evident that the expression "Mine ears hast thou digged," indicated something that had never been before. It is a figure, or oriental trope, as it is called. If you have to dig a pit it is a proof the pit was not there before. The digging of the ear indicated that the speaker, the Son, was going to be incarnate. Paul quotes from the Greek, not the Hebrew version of the psalms, and thus God stamps as divinely correct what we have in Hebrews x. so beautifully rendered, "A body hast thou prepared me." In that prepared body Jesus perfectly does the will of God and the will of the Father. The psalm refers to His incarnation, His birth.

Another beautiful allusion to the ear in scripture is found in Isaiah l. It shews what the life of the Lord was. We have Him as our pattern as we pass through this scene, and we see here how the prophet depicts the pathway of this lowly Listener as He passed through the scene. In verse 3, where it says, "I clothe the heavens with blackness," we see a divine Person, then immediately we get, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned . . . he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner." What a blessed unfolding of the whole pathway of this lowly dependent Man! A great many of us here, there may be, whose whole life is devoted to His interests, but, I ask you, is not

your heart witness that many are the cases you have met that you have not been able to speak the word in season to. You have tried to speak to the weary and you have failed. What is the secret?

I remember our brother J. N. D. forty years ago speaking on this scripture and it sank into my soul. "The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Said he: "There never was a weary person who crossed the pathway of the blessed Lord that He did not speak the seasonable word to. Many times have we sought to do so and failed. Why? The secret is we are not near enough to the Lord to get all our thoughts and words from His communications with us day by day. What then is to be desired? That we should be nearer the Lord, in deeper communion with Him." And if we were nearer Him, and knew Him better, we should be able to put our feet down more in His footsteps down here, and be more used of Him to meet the weary. "He wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner." That was His life. The psalmist gave His birth, the prophet His life.

Then, thirdly, you have the well-known story of the Hebrew servant (Exo. xxi. 2-6), If he will not go out free, then the master takes him and bores his ear through with an awl, and he is

a servant for ever. That is love unto death. The psalmist gives His birth, the prophet His life, and Moses, in figure, gives the story of His death; but in all He is devoted to His Master, to the will of God, and coupled with it undying devotedness to His own. Has not Jesus plainly said, "I love My Master, My wife, My children; I will not go out free"? Who are they? His own. Have you not the sense of it in your soul? "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (John xiii. 1.) The Apostle Paul had it in his soul; he could say, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) Nothing satisfies love but love. "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." (Cant. viii. 7.) In the deep love He has for us He counts upon the reciprocity of our love, and says, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father," as He goes again into that scene of love and joy and satisfaction.

Let me now quote a verse in chapter iv. You see there again what the blessed Lord was as He passed through this scene. He says to His disciples, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. . . . My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (Vers. 32-34.) Again, in chapter vi. He is a little more definite, as He says thus sweetly, "I came down from

heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He was here just to do the Father's will, and that will is complete blessing for the present moment, and for eternity, for His own.

One can understand something of that verse quoted this morning, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Now turn to Hebrews x. 36, 37. There the apostle says, "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." We have to tread the path God has marked out for us. In that path we have need of patience, and in "a little while he that shall come will come and will not tarry." How sweet to be reminded again to-day, as we are thus gathered before the Lord, that the next thing for us may be to hear His voice, and rise to meet the blessed Lord. Then we shall see Him and be like Him for ever.

We have just sung, "And shall we see Thy face?" We have never seen it yet; but Peter puts it, "Whom having not seen, *ye love*; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Pet. i. 8.) That is what Peter says.

You have not yet seen Him, but you love Him, and do we not rejoice that He has gone to the Father? We are deeply thankful He has entered that scene of holy joy, and soon we shall be with Him, and that word of John's come true, "They shall see his face." (Rev. xxii. 4.) It will make up for all we have had to pass through down here in the discipline of the pathway, to see His face. Yes, He now is well-known and well-loved; for we have known His love, and care, and grace. That we have, thank God, whatever may fail and go. You will find that everything will go down here. Teachers will go; evangelists will go; husbands will go; wives will go; everything will go. But One remains—Jesus. He remains. "Thou remainest" scripture says. And so, let go what will, I have Jesus. A little hymn says—

"I want for nothing man can give,  
Since I have Jesus here."

Well is it for our souls if we can truly say so. The next thing is, we shall see His face.

The Lord keep us moving on in His pathway, doing His will, until we see His face and for ever praise and worship Him! Ah! what glory! what joy! what worship there!

May the Lord keep us more and more occupied with Himself till we see His face!

W. T. P. W.

---

# THE LIGHT OF GOD, AND THE COMFORTER PRESENT.

(JOHN XII. 44-50.)

WHAT I hope to do, beloved brethren, God helping me, is to gather up some points which were before us yesterday, still keeping in mind what, I think, God would specially bring before us at this time. We have prayed much that things might be real with us, and the only way, it seems to me, in which we can be in the reality of things is by communion with Him who is the source of them. Mere knowledge will not do, we must take the blessed place of communion which God has given us. I do not mean by communion the fellowship of saints, but what that fellowship is founded on; we have been called by God into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I do not know a better word than communion as expressing the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is the One in whom all the light of God shines for us, and hence that what is revealed in Him becomes the portion of our hearts; the common portion it is true, but that which each is in communion with. In speaking thus of light, I do not mean the knowledge of certain truths which may have come to us with much force and vigour, but the light of God, as the Lord speaks of it in this passage.

Our souls have been brought into the light of God. It could not have been known in the Old Testament times, because God was not revealed until the Son was here. How could He have been known until then? His power and Godhead were manifest in creation. Abraham knew Him as the Almighty securing the promises; I understand how He could be known by Israel as Jehovah, and in that name would make good everything for His people by His holy government, in spite of all that they are, or that may go on in this world. Evil may have come in and apparently triumphed, but we can say, "Jehovah reigns." You do not suppose the world is going to pieces. No, "Jehovah reigns." (Psa. xciii.) Everything for Israel and for the government of this world is secured in that name, but that is not the light of God. There is a place of perfect repose which the light of God reveals. Such I conceive to be the effect of the knowledge of God, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." That could not be until the Lord Jesus Christ came.

We speak of the Trinity: it is a word not found in scripture; it is a kind of technical expression which we use to express what *is* in scripture. But our thoughts are apt to be limited in the use of a human expression. The first and leading thought in the Old Testament was

*unity.* "The Lord our God is one Lord," but with that there was no revelation of God, but a claim that every thought and affection should flow to Him. When the light of God shines, then there is the revelation of divine Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is God coming out in light *to us*, and this light is connected with the Son having become man; it shines in Him, and is the revelation of divine love, a place of rest for us.

I refer to a point we had before us yesterday—that the Lord was here as the revelation of God to man, and also that He took up man for God. I revert to it to emphasise what I sought to bring out; it was taken up more fully last evening. In John's gospel the point is not that Jesus is Lord or Christ, but that He is the Son. Lord and Christ are official titles. In John's first epistle the title Lord is not used, and only once in the second epistle. The point with John is not Lordship or Headship, though there is an immensity attached to these titles as we saw yesterday, it is who the Person is that gives full character to the official titles, and John gives us the Person of the Son, and He was here as light. Jesus is the Christ, the anointed Man, but the title He takes is Son of man. The Son of man is the One whom the Father sealed, and as such He is the Bread of God come down from heaven that He might be the food of our souls.

Thus He is on our side. Three times He speaks of the Son of man being lifted up, and it is remarkable in chapter viii. how the divine glory immediately shines out on His saying, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, ye shall know"—not that I am the Son of man, but that "I am he." The light shines out at once, the humbled Son of man is a divine Person—the Son. What I want to convey is this, that we have the light of God brought to us, not through official titles, however immense and glorious their significance, but through divine Persons; the revelation of God in love and light to us is that of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. I would make a remark here which may be helpful to those who are younger. You cannot have the Father apart from the Son, and whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. (1 John ii. 23.) The Son alone could make known to us the name of Father, as He said to Philip, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" If there was to be a family in the relationship of sons, the Son must come to reveal the Father, and to declare the name of Father to His own. There is another thing connected with this knowledge of divine Persons. When much is said about the effects of having the Spirit, I can easily understand young Christians turning in upon themselves and wondering whether they have the Spirit. The question

came up fifty years ago and more, when the sealing of the Spirit was spoken of as distinct from conversion or new birth, and I remember many brethren were opposed to Mr. Darby on the subject. When you are told that you have everything subjectively by the Spirit, and it is so, perhaps you begin to look for the effects in yourself, and then wonder if you have the Spirit. I may be speaking to some who would not like to utter their minds, or tell what they feel, but if they uttered all their hearts, I am persuaded many would speak thus. What I want to come to is this, that Christ and the Spirit, now that the Spirit has come, always go together, even as the Father and the Son cannot be separated in our knowledge of these divine Persons. The Son became man, and as man was sealed by the Spirit, in order that He might give us "of his Spirit" (1 John iv. 13), and as He was in the Father and the Father in Him in one blessed community of being, so being in Christ and Christ in us is not mere position, but living reality because He hath given us of His Spirit:

"God's nature, love without alloy,  
Our hearts are given e'en now to share."

I would say to a young believer, Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you love Him? Is He precious to you? How did this come about? You must have the Spirit for it to be so. The

great business of the Spirit here is to make Christ known; He would be nothing to you if you had not the Spirit, there would be no holy affections centering round Christ but for the Spirit. Do you say—He is very precious to me; He has got a place in my heart; well, how did He get that place? Perhaps you could not tell. Ah! it was the Spirit of God. It was He that shed the love of God abroad in your heart, and He shed it there as having come to us in Jesus. The love of God is known in Jesus, His dear Son. Ephesians i. 13 shews us how the Spirit is connected with Christ. "In whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed." The Spirit is not merely a Spirit of power as in the Old Testament; but the Spirit of God is in us as the Spirit of Christ, and thus in Jesus, God's dear Son, the heart of God is known.

Referring for a moment to John iii., the Lord speaks of Himself as the Son of man lifted up, but with that we get the revelation of the heart of God, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." It was in the heart of God to give His Son, and side by side with that eternal life was in God's heart for us who believe in His dear Son. Now how did that thought of eternal life first come to each of us? Was it not that we should through the love of God live in eternal blessedness for ever? And yet perhaps few of us knew

what that eternal life, that eternal blessedness (for I do not want to undo that first thought) meant. It was necessary some few years ago to fight the battle as to the character of eternal life, but I do not think any one would wish to undo the first thought, that a poor dying creature in a scene of death and ruin through redeeming love is going to live in eternal blessedness with God. But how is that going to be? God not only makes known His love in saving us, but He makes known Himself. Side by side with the manifestation of eternal life in 1 John i. is the knowledge of the Father and the Son, and that as a matter of communion. I know it was apostolic communion, but the apostles have passed it on to us in their writings. I always feel that I am brought by John's epistle immediately into contact with the apostle, without any line of succession. He wrote what he and the others had heard and seen of the Word of life, that we might have communion with them in the knowledge which they had of the Father and the Son. I can read what the apostle says as to the true God and eternal life.

In the passage I read the Lord speaks of Himself thus, "I am come a light into the world." In the gospel everything is presented to us in the Lord Himself; in the epistle we are brought into fellowship through the apostles with what

they had heard and seen in Him, that so it might be true in us. Christ's commandment to the disciples was the communication of what He was Himself, and Christ's words were the expression in Himself of the Father's commandment. I emphasise the point before us, that which becomes light for us and life in us is in the Person of the Son and is known through His words, because however great the glories may be which will fill the universe, and however wonderful all that will be displayed, yet I do not find rest for my spirit in surveying glories, but directly my eye rests upon the Person of Jesus, I am at rest. In Him is the light of God; but then He is our life so that by the Spirit we should be able to enjoy what has come to light in Him; that is my thought of communion. A young Christian might be bewildered in hearing an older Christian speak of the glories to be displayed of which the Christ is the centre, but if I speak of Jesus, and God made known in Him, Ah! you say, I know Him. Now Jesus, ever blessed Son of God, knew well the blessedness of His Father's commandment—He kept His Father's commandment, and abode in His love—and the commandment of Jesus is given to keep us in the blessedness of His own love. Mr. Darby has spoken of Ephesians iii.; that one might be lost in the survey of the immensity of glory, "What is the breadth and length and

depth and height," but that the apostle leads our thoughts back to this blessed Person. "To know the love of Christ." There we are not lost. He will fill all things, and we are filled in His fulness—the fulness of God—but the youngest believer knows Christ, and He can fill your heart.

In the few verses I read the Lord not only presents Himself as Light, but as doing and saying what the Father commanded Him. He says "I came not to judge the world." Nothing moved Him to haste; nothing moved Him from the Father's commandment. The glory of Jehovah shone in Him (ver. 41) as indeed every glory, but He came from the *Father* to make known the heart of God in a heartless world, and nothing moved Him from it. "As the Father said unto me, so I speak," and He adds, "I know that his commandment is life everlasting." Eternal life takes its character from the words of the Son, who spoke as the Father said to Him. Christ, the Son, was here to make God known in His blessedness; and He is eternal life for us, for that was in the Father's heart for us, so that we might enjoy the blessedness of God made known to us. For this He had come Light into the world. I trust this may leave its divine mark upon us.

I would now revert to the subject of the Spirit and His presence down here as it comes before us in John's gospel. We see in chapter xiv. that the

Spirit would be the link of the disciples' hearts with the Father when Jesus was gone to the Father, because in that day when the Spirit was come, they would know that Jesus was in the Father; and thus we see how that which I have before stated comes out, that you cannot now separate between Christ and the Spirit. In the divine economy, if you have Christ you have the Spirit, and if you have the Spirit you have Christ. Hence the Lord says, "Ye in me and I in you." That is consequent on the Spirit's coming. All this is connected with the light of God as *we* know it, the Spirit having taken the place of Christ down here. If you remember, Mr. Darby's last message to us pointed out that while Paul speaks of the sphere of the display of glory, John gives us the essential character of what will be displayed. The light of God will fill the world to come, and the vessel of that light will be the heavenly Jerusalem. When heaven and earth are set in their proper relationship to each other, the light of God will shine upon this earth. (Comp. Isa. lx. 19.) As forming part of that heavenly city how important it is that we should be in the light of God now. While Christ was here, He was the light of the world; then He left the world and the world was in darkness, but the apostle tells us, "the darkness is passing and the true light now shines." The church, according to Paul, was set as the vessel

of light down here, but John does not speak of the vessel so much (save in Rev. xxi.), but of "the light." "The true light now shines," because what is true in Him is true in us. We are in communion with the light of God in Him. This is not doctrine, but Himself.

In John xiv., xv., xvi. the Lord shews how the Spirit would come to take His place as "the Comforter." That name gives the idea of One having come to take up the things of Christ while He is absent, and thus what is of Christ is kept fresh and livingly before those who love Him. Thus we can go from point to point in each chapter of this gospel, and it becomes a living reality to us. The well of water of chapter iv.—is not that living water for *us*? The bread of God from heaven, is not that living bread for *us*? The quickening voice of the Son of God, do *we* not hear it? All is so fresh and real because the Spirit was sent by the Father to teach the disciples all things, and to bring all that Jesus was on earth to their remembrance. It seems to me something like the baskets of fragments which the disciples gathered up when the Lord was upon earth. Nothing is lost, He came here the bread of God from heaven, and in distributing the five loaves the disciples were instructed in their ministry. Everything of Christ is precious to God, and nothing of what He was in humiliation here must be lost. God

was made known in that lowly life of love, it is the food of our souls. What otherwise might have been fragmentary recollections of Him has been gathered together by the Spirit, and we have it and enjoy it to-day, as so gathered together in apostolic writings. Nothing must be lost.

We could not enjoy His life as thus recorded if we did not know His death, so chapter xiii. comes before chapter xiv. and the sending of the Comforter. He took a towel and girded Himself and washes the disciples' feet. He must shew us that He is separated from everything here; it is really by death. He did not belong to men, though Son of man, His origin was not from men, "He was come from God and went to God," and now He would apply the water of separation to them that they might have part with Him. He was in the secrets of divine love as come from God; and He was going to God, and would carry their hearts with Him. But they were not going to lose what He had been upon earth, and it is ours too by the Spirit.

When the Lord rose from the supper table and left it in the end of chapter xiv., my impression is that in speaking of Himself as the true vine, He is speaking as One in whom was the power of resurrection life. It has been said that chapter xv. is Jchn's way of shewing the truth of Headship. Abiding in Christ is, so to

speak, holding the Head. He is the source of everything to us. As I go through John's gospel and my eye rests upon Jesus, the blessed Son of God, I feel that all the secrets of the Father's heart were known to Him. We want to get away from the things of earth, that we may be drawn into His company. He had to draw away His disciples from Judaism, a religion of the earth; and He has to draw us away by the ministry of the word from all that would be a hindrance and defiling, that we may be in the secrets of divine love. The Spirit has come, so that we may know the Christ in whom we abide and thus bear fruit.

In the end of chapter xv. the Spirit is sent by Christ that we might know Him where He is, within the veil. The One who lived here and then died, we know lives there because He has sent the Spirit to us from the Father. It is not merely that we have the remembrance of Him as He was here, but we have the Witness of Him where He is. Thus by the Spirit we know Him on the other side of death, and His death does not separate us from Him, but it has brought us into company with Him in a most wonderful way. Think what it was for the disciples to have the company of the Lord on the evening of that first day of the week when He rose from the dead! He had been through death and He rejoined them beyond death. We

do not know His bodily presence as they knew it, but the Spirit has come that we may know Him now that He is no longer on earth. He is not lost to us, beloved brethren, any more than all that life down here in which the Father was expressed is lost to us. The Spirit is the witness of Christ to us as having accomplished redemption, and as beyond death though we see Him not. Christ in the fulness of redemption glory is known to us within the veil.

In chapter xvi. the Spirit has come from the circle of glory of which Christ is the centre. He has come to glorify Christ by taking of His things and 'announcing' them to us. We may say that new communications could come out of heaven, because Christ had entered heaven as the glorious Man who had glorified the Father. All glory now shone in Him, the Son who had gone to the Father as man; the whole range of the Father's glorious things was His as Man gone into glory. The Comforter came to speak what He heard in that scene of divine delight. He would shew them in consequence the coming things. Every corner of this world will be filled with the glory of those coming things; but what will come out of heaven in that day? The glory will come out *in those who have gone into heaven*; and if we are to be witnesses now of things to come, and we ought to be, it is because the Spirit has come

to put us in present communion with the things in heaven. "All things that the Father hath are mine" the Lord said; they are a circle of things with which we have communion entirely outside of this scene. They belong to the Son as man, and as man they are those in which He now is with His Father; His own fulness of joy is there. The name of Almighty secured promises connected with this world. The name of Jehovah also secured the rights of God in His people against all the power of the enemy down here. Even the names of God and the Lamb look out towards the earth, and are connected with public manifestation. But the names of the Father and the Son belong to heaven, and connected with those names is a circle of divine and heavenly affections. Those who go into heaven will come out, and it will be known that they have been loved as the Son is loved, but they have learned that love in beholding the glory which Jesus called "my glory" as the One loved of the Father before there was a world, or sphere of display.

May the youngest Christian ponder what I have brought before you. It has been feebly put out, but I shall be satisfied if I have impressed you with all that the Spirit makes known to us of Christ, and if He makes you in any wise long to know the blessed relationships in which we are set.

T. H. R.

## READING.

F. H. B. It has been suggested that we take up the subject of the Spirit in connection with John xiv., xv. and xvi. Read John xiv. 16-20, 25, 26; xv. 26, 27; xvi. 7-15.

T. H. R. I think there are three positions in which we have to look at the blessed Lord. He was pleased to become incarnate, and to take a position here on earth, and there is all He was here as the Revealer of the Father and in grace to man, and His death also, for all ended in the cross. Secondly, there is His present place in heaven, He has gone within the veil and He is now in glory. Thirdly, He is there as the centre of the whole system of glory which will be displayed when He comes again, as well as of the affections of the Father's house. We have the Spirit in these three chapters in connection with these three positions of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Spirit leads us into the apprehension of them.

W. W. Would you recall what you were saying this morning about the Comforter?

T. H. R. What I understand by the term Comforter is that there is One here who takes the place of Christ. It is the same word as in

the epistle, where it says that Christ is our Advocate with the Father. It is one who transacts business for another, though I do not like the term, but it gives the idea. The Spirit is here to take up the interests of Christ. There are three ways in which we can look at Christ: as down here, as gone up, and as coming again. Chapter xiv. 26 is in connection with what He was down here. "He . . . shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." It does not say exactly His works, His word is the great point in John. He said what He was. His works confirmed His word. The word "miracle" in John is always "sign." The sign gave force to the word. His word was the revelation of Himself.

E. D. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

T. H. R. The works came in to confirm, but the words came first.

GEO. C. The works which come afterwards are more important than those here because of the position He had taken.

T. H. R. Yes.

W. J. Why is He called the Spirit of truth?

T. H. R. He is the Witness of Christ, who is "the Truth." That brings us to the second point, He is the Witness to the absent One. In chapter xv. 26 we have the Spirit's witness

when Christ was gone; in chapter xiv. the Father sends the Spirit in Christ's name; in chapter xv. it is Christ who sends Him from the Father, and so the passage supposes Him to be exalted and with the Father in heaven. The disciples were to be witnesses of Christ because they had been with Him down here, but the Spirit is sent as the Witness of Christ up there, gone within the veil, so that in that sense we have not lost Christ; the Spirit is our link with Christ within the veil.

F. H. B. We should not know anything of what is within the veil but for the Spirit.

T. H. R. Then, thirdly, the Spirit would announce things to come. Christ when He was down here could alone reveal heavenly things. (See John iii. 12.) He tells the disciples they could not bear the many things He had to say in the position in which they were. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." They were to know the Lord in an entirely new condition of life. A little while He would be separated from them in the travail of death, and then they would see Him again. It has been spoken of as the birthplace of the new creation. They would know Him then in an entirely new sphere of life such as they had never known Him in before, and that would greatly prepare them for what the Comforter would come to reveal—a system of things

to come connected with Christ risen and glorified.

F. H. B. "All things that the Father hath are mine."

T. H. R. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Him as seated at "the right hand of the Majesty on high," that is, in the very centre of glory, and consequently the coming system of glory is in view (chap. xii.), but the Father's things convey to us the thought of a system of divine affections.

A. H. Would you connect this with Ephesians iii., "Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," &c.? We need the Spirit that we may enter into these things.

T. H. R. Yes. The disciples could not bear them then.

F. H. B. Does it not look on to the future, the universe of bliss—all things to be established on earth?

T. H. R. Yes, I think the "things to come" are what will be displayed on earth, but "all things that the Father hath are mine" carries you into a system of divine affections, and that is hardly what will be displayed. I might go into a house and see everything in the most perfect order, but there is another thing, the breathings of love in that house give tone to it. So there will be a system of glory in full display, right down from God Himself, the angels, the

different families, &c., and everything will be in the most wonderful order under Christ; but the church has been introduced into the sphere of divine love, so that she will come out with the breathings of that love over the whole scene, and the Spirit would shew to the disciples what belonged to Christ as gone to and with the Father.

F. H. B. She will affect the whole scene.

T. H. R. She will. Not only by the administration of the glory of grace, but as in John xvii. 23, "That the world may know that thou hast . . . loved them, as thou hast loved me."

J. S. O. Do you not get the two thoughts in Matthew xi. 25? The first clause is that all things are delivered into the Son's hand, and then the Father's heart is revealed in the last clause.

J. A. I suppose He is the Comforter because He fills our hearts with Christ.

T. H. R. The term Comforter shews that in every way He takes the place of Christ down here.

A. H. The way it is spoken of in John xiv. is that He abides in contrast to Christ's going away.

T. H. R. Yes.

J. A. We have not lost through Christ going away.

T. H. R. It is not only that we have not lost, but things have become enlarged. When the

Lord was down here, to speak reverently, He was straitened; there was round Him the little circle of His disciples, but when the Comforter comes everything is enlarged and expanded; and it will yet expand into the whole circle of the universe of bliss.

W. J. Why is the Spirit spoken of as the Spirit of truth?

H. D'A. C. It says here "another Comforter." Is there any allusion to "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people"? (Isa. xl. 1.)

T. H. R. Christ was the Comforter when here. I do not know if there is any allusion to that.

F. H. B. Now could you answer Mr. Johnson's question, why He is spoken of in this passage as the Spirit of truth?

T. H. R. Christ Himself was "the truth." In Him everything is put into its true relation to God. All the light of God came out in Him. Light and truth are very closely linked together. I think J. N. D. used to say so. Christ has shed the light of God on everything, so that God was revealed, fallen man came out in his true character, and man according to God is seen in Christ. The Spirit has come to make good everything which came out in Christ down here.

F. H. B. So the truth is maintained here in the power of the Spirit, and maintained in the saints.

D. L. H. It means that He is the truth subjectively just as Christ is the truth objectively.

E. D. All the revelation we have in scripture, He is the spirit of it.

T. H. R. Christ, in one sense, is the spirit of scripture; but it is by the Spirit it is maintained, and we are led into it.

A. S. L. You were saying this morning that you could not separate Christ and the Spirit, so that if Christ is the truth objectively, the Spirit is the truth subjectively—"which thing is true in him and in you."

W. H. B.—TT. Is not grace the manifestation of love, and light the manifestation of truth?

T. H. R. Yes, grace flows from love; grace takes account of the condition in which the object of the love is, therefore it must all flow from love, pure love; so grace puts the best robe on the prodigal. Grace must deck him for the satisfaction of love.

QUES. Would you say that love is greater than grace?

T. H. R. Love is the nature of God; it does not say that grace is the nature of God, but love is.

F. H. B. That is the source of all the rest.

T. H. R. Yes. God is the God of all grace.

W. H. B.—TT. In the Lord both went together—"full of grace and truth."

W. J. J. N. D. says, "Mercy is great in the greatness of the need, and grace in the thought of the person exercising it."

A. S. L. You could not speak of the Lord Jesus as being an object of the grace of God, but of the love of God.

T. H. R. Yes, all the grace was *in* Him.

J. S. O. You get the thought of what is subjective in connection with the babes in 1 John ii. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

W. W. Truth is grace added to light. J. N. D. says man needs grace added to light because of the condition he is in.

T. H. R. Exactly.

W. H. Is the truth here general or special?

T. H. R. The truth is the truth; you cannot have anything more, it is not "a truth."

W. W. If we have been awakened to praise, is there anything we could praise for more than the truth, for it came into the world unasked? It was given us; we did not welcome it, nor deserve it.

J. W. B. Would the word "favour" do as well as "grace"?

T. H. R. It is favour, but I think when God uses a word that we must gather the meaning from the way in which He uses it. The word "love" was not used in classical Greek. The derivation of the word is from "to welcome,"

“to entertain,” and so we may get an idea of it because love receives to itself, and gathers to itself; but the word as used by the Spirit of God has its own meaning—the outflow of the heart of God.

J. S. O. Truth in this sense did not come in until Christ came. It says, “He . . . abode not in the truth”; was there truth in any sense in relation to God in His own place?

T. H. R. I suppose with the angels there was. It has often been said that in the Old Testament all that God said and brought out was true; you could not say it was *the* truth, because things were not brought out in their proper relation to God until Christ came.

W. W. In other words, what was absolute could not be revealed.

W. A. W. The object of the Spirit's coming here was to lead us into eternal life.

T. H. R. Well, that is John iv., but in these chapters I think it is more that the Spirit of God comes down to take Christ's place here, so that the links between Christ and the disciples begun on earth should not be broken; but that they might be witnesses of what He was on earth and know Him in heaven. We know Him too in the place where He is, and our links are with Christ there.

F. H. B. And what you were saying this morning, nothing is lost of what He was down here.

W. J. When He says, "I will come to you," is that by the Spirit?

T. H. R. No; Christ *did* come to the disciples on the evening of the first day of the week, and I think the sense of that is maintained by the Spirit.

D. L. H. Now with regard to "bring all things to your remembrance"; strictly that only applies to those who were with the Lord in the days of His flesh; but they recorded these things by the Spirit, and so we are led into them by the same Spirit.

W. B. Through their record; the record was given by the Spirit.

A. E. P. Is "because I live, ye shall live also" by the Spirit?

T. H. R. I do not think there is any entrance into it except by the Spirit. In Romans you get "the Spirit is life," but in Colossians it is Christ who is life; but then all that Christ is as life is formed in the saints by the Spirit.

A. E. P. "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also."

T. H. R. I think what it involves is this, that you really live by the revelation of an Object. In my own mind I always connect it with John vi. 57, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

E. D. J. N. D. said that what is presented as the object of faith becomes the power of life in us.

T. H. R. Exactly; that could not be except by the Spirit.

J. S. O. Say a word on verse 20. "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

T. H. R. There again what Mr. Higgins said about the subjective side of things comes in. In the previous part of the chapter you get this (ver. 11), "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me," but in verse 20 the Lord drops "the Father in me," and says only, "that I am in my Father," because He was no longer going to be down here.

F. H. B. Instead of the Father in Him, it is Christ in us.

T. H. R. Yes, Christ is in us. We are in Him, and He is in us.

E. D. That remarkable statement in chapter xvii. 23, "I in them, and thou in me" goes further, does it not?

T. H. R. Yes, it is there what will be displayed in glory.

H. H. H. How is it that faith is so prominent in the first part of the chapter, and love in the power of the Spirit in the second part?

T. H. R. I think that what has been said explains it; the early part of the chapter is objective, what they knew in Christ, "Hast

thou not known ME, Philip?" and in connection with love it is subjective, and the Spirit is sent in answer to Christ's prayer. The great point of the first part was, did they believe that the Father was in Christ? I think if you had asked the disciples after they had received the Holy Ghost what they saw in Christ, they would have said, We did see the sent One of the Father.

E. D. Is that what John meant when he said, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of an only begotten with the Father"?

T. H. R. Yes, I think they were conscious of a glory they could not then apprehend. I do not think they could have given such an explanation of what they beheld until after the Spirit came. They were really in the company of a divine Person, and it must have affected them, but they understood not until the Spirit was given.

W. H. B.—TT. Has not that link really come in in chapter xvi.? The link is formed there.

T. H. R. The Lord says that He would shew them plainly of the Father when He had gone to the Father and the Spirit had come down, then they would know His relation to the Father, but they did not know at that time. They thought they had understood the Lord's words, "I came forth from the Father," but they had not.

W. H. B.—TT. I thought the link was there because He had spoken to their affections.

T. H. R. He says, "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God," but they did not take in that He had come from the Father. Then He says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." If they had really understood that they would not have been scattered.

A. H. All these chapters apply to a heavenly condition of things down here. Is it not all to bring out "part with me"? In chapter xiii. He brings them into His own place that He may be continued in them down here, "Ye in me, and I in you."

T. H. R. Yes, there was to be the continuation of Christ down here; that is the vine.

A. H. It does not go beyond this world.

T. H. R. No.

A. M. Did not the disciples go a long way when they said, "We believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Holy One of God"? They had the thought of a divine Person.

T. H. R. I am quite sure they had the thought of a divine Person although they could not have explained it then. "Contemplated his glory" has reference to what they understood when the Spirit was given.

W. H. B.—TT. All their senses would be exercised in a new way by the Spirit. The ears and eyes are spoken of as entering into new things in chapter xvi.

T. H. R. They would see Him in a new condition of life altogether.

W. H. B.—TT. That is, they would enter into a new condition of things.

T. H. R. I do not think *they* understood their part in the new condition until the Spirit came. The disciples were in the company of a risen Man for forty days. It was an immense thing for them to see Christ in resurrection; they must have felt in an out-of-the-world condition in His company. What makes us feel out of the world is association with Christ. That is the ground of Colossians, it brings in association with Christ in resurrection.

A. E. P. We have nothing but by the Spirit.

T. H. R. All I would like to guard is that while we have nothing save by the Spirit, yet what we have by the Spirit is Christ. In Colossians *Christ* is prominent. Christ is within the veil, maintaining everything for God there. I see nothing is lost: everything is maintained within the veil, and the Spirit is witness of Him there.

F. C. Do not you think that the disciples when they were in the company of the Lord had an intuitive perception of the glory of the Son

of God, though they could not have given an account of it?

T. H. R. Yes, exactly. We could not put ourselves in their position because we have never been in the actual company of Christ as the disciples were. But if they had then understood His relation to the Father as Son, and that He was going to the Father, their hearts would have expanded outside the limits of their then position, into the enlarged sphere of Christ's place, not with them but with the Father.

H. H. H. Is the Lord seeking to shew them how great the gain would be by His going away and the Comforter coming?

T. H. R. Yes. Everything of Christ would be enlarged to them.

QUES. What is "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"?

T. H. R. Whatever Christ said He was.

G. W. G. The Lord manifested His glory at the marriage in Cana of Galilee.

T. H. R. There is a difference between the glory He *manifested* in Cana of Galilee and His personal glory as the only-begotten of the Father. "We beheld his glory" is apostolic, and thus as in fellowship with the apostles we are introduced into the sanctuary. When He *manifests* His glory it is connected with the

millennium, it is the marriage day on earth. In chapter i. it is the sanctuary, the tabernacle as the resting-place of the glory, its home, so to speak, before the display. "The word was made flesh and tabernacled among us." In chapter ii. we have the temple. The temple is in connection with display and with the millennial glory; but the tabernacle is connected with the manifestation of God in the Person of Christ. God begins with the ark and comes out to the court and the altar, the place of approach. God comes out in Christ, but the light was, so to speak, veiled in a tabernacle of flesh. "The word became flesh." The apostles contemplated the light of God which shone in the Person of His own dear Son. Then in chapter ii., when Israel has failed, the wine is out and the temple is defiled, you get a picture of the millennium. He manifests forth His glory, turning the water of purification into the wine of joy, and the temple is cleansed. The temple is the place of approach of man to God. If the temple was defiled, and the Jews destroyed the true temple, Christ would bring in the power of resurrection.

E. C. Would you say that the tabernacle is connected more with grace, and the temple more with the display of glory?

T. H. R. Perhaps it is.

W. W. "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was

glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him."

D. L. H. Does not the tabernacle set forth the thoughts of God in Christ in regard to the whole universe of bliss, as it is called?

T. H. R. Yes, there is no doubt of that.

D. L. H. The temple hardly does that.

W. J. Does not John's gospel give character to all the other gospels? It lies behind them all.

T. H. R. Yes, it does.

A. S. L. When you speak of the universe of bliss, is it the eternal state or the millennium?

T. H. R. I should say the eternal state; the millennium is a kind of antechamber to it.

A. S. L. The universe is heaven and earth.

T. H. R. I think it goes on to the eternal state. We have to remember that *the church* does not go through the millennium into the eternal state; she belongs to God's ultimate purpose, the eternal state, she is the vessel of the glory of God in the millennium.

REM. She comes out of heaven.

T. H. R. Yes; you see the new Jerusalem as belonging to the eternal state *first* (Rev. xxi. 2), then you see its millennial character. (Ver. 10 and *seq.*)

QUES. Does it come out twice?

T. H. R. Yes, it does in a way; but that is not exactly the point. The *character* of the

New Jerusalem is that it descends out of heaven from God.

A. H. Is the object for which the Spirit is given in chapter xiv. to recall to their remembrance what Christ said to the disciples for the continuance in us now of these things?

T. H. R. Yes. I do not think that anything of the life of Christ on earth could ever be lost. The golden pot of manna is treasured by God in heaven.

W. J. Is not that the reason why the Father sends Him in Christ's name? In chapter xv. He comes from Christ.

A. E. P. That brings you on to the witness.

REM. Everything is not written that Jesus did.

T. H. R. No; but the importance of what is written is that we have everything in divine order. We are not left with a number of facts about Christ in a kind of mass from which we have to select, but everything is in divine order. It is by the Spirit we have it thus in scripture.

E. D. We might say that the facts are given in the gospels to give a perfect presentation of Christ.

T. H. R. Yes, in divine order. Luke says in chapter i. 3, "to write unto thee in order." He puts all the details in order, and yet he was not an eye-witness, but it was delivered to him by

eye-witnesses, and by the Spirit's power he puts it all into divine order for us.

W. H. B.—TR. So that the epistles give us the reality of the things, and you go back to the gospels to see the divine order of them brought out.

T. H. R. Yes, and there is divine order in the epistles too. Timothy was told to have an outline of sound words. He had learnt many things of Paul, but he was to have an outline of them. We learn many things in a very confused way, and what we want is to get things in order in our minds. There is no other outline but scripture.

F. C. May I ask in what way does the Spirit bring to *our* remembrance?

T. H. R. I think *we* profit by the record which is given us in scripture. The Spirit teaches us by the record.

F. C. We get it ministered to us by the Spirit.

W. J. Do you not think this would apply to all scripture? The way in which the Spirit has written scripture is that it is all in order. The moral intention of scripture is the import of it.

E. D. Is not the Spirit now the memory of the Christian?

T. H. R. I thought the things were recalled to the minds of the apostles and those who wrote the scriptures, and the Spirit is our power to enter into them.

D. L. H. There are two statements made in chapter xiv. 26, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." There is the teaching and the recalling.

T. H. R. We have not lost the teaching, that is clear from what it says in the epistle: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

G. W. W. You would not limit the remembrance exactly to the apostles, would you?

T. H. R. My impression is that the Spirit recalled what Jesus said to those who heard Him speak, but then it is all recorded for us.

F. H. B. The point of chapter xiv. is the testimony of the apostles. All this was recalled to their minds by the Spirit that they might bear witness of these things. They only saw the force of these things when they received the Spirit, and they recorded them that we might know them.

W. B. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." How far does that go?

T. H. R. I suppose in a way He opened their understanding at that moment; He was the explanation of scripture to them, though as yet

they had not received the Holy Spirit. Christ did breathe on them and say, "Receive ye Holy Ghost;" it was the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, but they did not receive *the* Spirit until Pentecost. The Holy Ghost came as power to connect them with Christ on high, but evidently their understanding was opened so that they saw that Christ was the spirit of scripture. Peter did apply scripture before the day of Pentecost.

F. W. G. Do you take the opening of their understanding and the Lord's breathing on them to be at the same time?

T. H. R. They go very much together: only we have one in John and the other in Luke.

W. J. Was it not a special thing, opening their understanding?

T. H. R. There is no doubt of that, because the effect of opening their understanding was that they might see that what was in scripture had been verified in Christ, and was part of God's ways and counsels, as there written. See how Peter used scripture in Acts i.

G. W. G. Being Jews they were largely affected by the teaching of the synagogue. Now the Lord opens their understanding and gives them something they had not before.

A. H. Had we not better go on to chapter. xv.?

A. M. May I ask one question with regard to the universe of bliss? Would you connect John xvii. 23 with it? "That the world may

know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

T. H. R. I connect that very much with the millennium; there will be no world in that sense in the eternal state.

A. H. Would you say a word now on chapter xv. ?

T. H. R. Chapter xv. is the continuation of the life of Christ down here, and fruit for the Father. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

A. H. And then the witness.

T. H. R. I think in everything Jesus did there was frankincense. In every detail of His spotless life down here there was always frankincense for God, not exactly fruit, the fruit is borne on the branches of the Vine, the traits of Christ were to be reproduced in the disciples down here, so that there should be what is for the good pleasure of the Father.

A. H. What the Father found His good pleasure in would be in them.

T. H. R. I think the Father would find delight in whatever is an expression of Christ in the feeblest saint; not that we have frankincense, but the Father finds delight in everything that speaks of His dear Son. Not merely doing what Christ did, but as *He* did it through abiding in Him. Thus there would be fruit for the Father. I might have done a correct thing

without any savour of Christ in it. The apostles occupied a peculiar place, because they actually were the continuation of Christ down here. We come in through their word.

While we are speaking of the Spirit I desire to dwell on the importance of not disconnecting Christ from the Spirit. There is a tendency to look at the Spirit as mere power, but it is power to bring out Christ in you. It is not that the Spirit enables *you* to do something apart from Christ; mere power might work in Judas, but there is not love in it, it is like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. You will never treat your body as dead by the *mere power* of the Spirit. "If *Christ* be in you the body is dead" and Christ is in you by the Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ.

J. S. O. We know the position by the Spirit, but "ye in me, and I in you" is the outflow.

T. H. R. It is Christ in us that becomes real power by the Spirit.

W. W. What God is looking for is the continuation of Christ here until He comes again.

F. H. B. It is power to *be*, not to *do*.

T. H. R. Nothing has been a greater snare, and has thrown souls back more than expecting the Spirit to be a power in them, helping *them* to be something. What the Spirit really does is to bring *you* to nothing. Mr. Darby said that the greatest part of the Spirit's power now is taken

up with rebuking the flesh. Christ must be in us if He is to come out of us. The Spirit does not produce anything in us apart from Christ.

W. W. Is not that what is meant in Galatians v. 17, "That you should not do those things which you desire"?

W. J. You cannot divorce the action of the Spirit from the Head. Is it not often done? In Romans viii. it is the Spirit of another man. You must put it together.

A. H. Did not J. B. S. speak of this, that one is the position and the other the endowment? If we are here in the position of Christ, the Spirit is the power to enable us to carry it out.

T. H. R. In the end of Romans vii. we read, "O wretched man that I am! *who* shall deliver me?" The deliverance is in chapter viii., *man's* efforts are over and the Spirit brings in the things of *God*; the things of God are centred in Christ. He is the Deliverer from the man himself, that what is in Christ might be ours by the Spirit. It is a great point that we have not lost Christ because He has gone away. It is where the church first failed. The wise virgins had oil, but they went to sleep as to the Bridegroom. The three disciples the Lord took up the Mount of Transfiguration represented the Jewish remnant whom He was leading into the place of the church. The other disciples represented, it seems to me, those who, though belonging to

Christ, stay below—really on Jewish or earthly ground. Christ being on high they entirely lost sight of Him, and sank down to the level of the multitude below, and so they had no power against the enemy.

QUES. “O faithless and perverse generation!” Whom did He mean? Did He mean the three disciples, or the others?

T. H. R. Both the perverse generation of the Jews and the disciples who had not maintained Him here while He was on the mount. That is the place the church has sunk down into: she has lost sight of Christ’s position on high. The three disciples who went up had not lost sight of Him. He was lost, so to speak, to the others who were below. We have not lost Christ though He is within the veil, because the Spirit makes Him known to us there. If we know Christ within the veil we live because He lives.

F. C. “Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” He is there, and we have Him as much now as the disciples had on earth.

F. H. B. It is a great thing that we can be in living touch with Christ where He now is by the Spirit.

T. H. R. Yes, before He comes out.

W. B. Would not that make us long all the more for the Lord to come?

T. H. R. No doubt it would; but do you not think it is a wonderful filling up of the interval

till He does come? "Because I live, ye shall live also." Take that verse in 1 Thessalonians v., "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." Whether watching down here or fallen asleep that we might live together with Him. It is a wonderful passage.

A. J. P. It says, "To depart and to be with Christ" is "far better"; would it not be "far better" if the Lord were to come?

T. H. R. No one has a doubt of it; but if watching down here, the Spirit is our link with Christ. No one could give witness as to the Lord on earth but the twelve, and they did it by the Spirit, but the Spirit only could bear witness to Christ within the veil, though the apostles received that witness. The teaching in the first four chapters of John's epistle is connected with the witness of the apostles, and in chapter v. with the witness of the Spirit.

E. D. In Acts we get both. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost." (Chap. v. 32.)

F. H. B. Not only witnessing to Him personally, but to all there was in Him. It would take in "the Christ."

T. H. R. There we pass on to chapter xvi.

E. C. Is not the Spirit here in any sense except in the saints?

T. H. R. No, I think not. He took up the

vessel which Christ prepared. You could not limit the Spirit at all, I suppose, the Spirit could act as in creation.

QUES. I was asked the other day whether the Spirit speaks apart from the word?

T. H. R. Whatever a person may be saying in ministry, and you feel that the Spirit is enabling him to speak, yet you have to judge it by the law and the testimony. If I read a passage in scripture, the Spirit of God can enlarge it to my mind and understanding, so that I can help the saints with it. As to revelation you cannot get any but in scripture. All must be judged by that.

F. H. B. There is no present revelation, but there is the present voice of God.

E. C. Does the Spirit dwell here except as in the saints, or was He present objectively? It says, He filled the house and sat upon each of them.

T. H. R. The question is, *what* filled the house; was it the sound or the Spirit? It may be either. It says, "*They* were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

F. H. B. "It" refers in the passage to the sound.

T. H. R. There is really no "it." "There came suddenly a sound out of heaven as of a violent impetuous blowing, and filled all the house where they were sitting." (New Trans.)

It is a point of translation which I do not attempt to decide.

W. B. In Acts iv. it says, "The place was shaken where they were assembled together."

T. H. R. I do not at all dispute that the Spirit of God could act as He has always acted in power. In Revelation iii. Christ has the seven Spirits of God. That is not the Spirit as dwelling in the church. It is a question of government not of dwelling.

F. H. B. When you think of the Spirit's dwelling, you cannot conceive of the Spirit dwelling in anything that is not suited to Him, and that must be in the saints.

T. H. R. The seven Spirits of God are before the throne in Revelation iv.; every operation of God is by the Spirit. In creation the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and all God's government is really by the Spirit. (See Isaiah xi. 2; lxiii. 10-14; Rev. iii. 1.) It was a very important point for Sardis; they did not apprehend that God's governmental dealings were in the hands of Christ who had the seven Spirits of God, and they took up the temporal power, and churches became national.

G. O. Does the Lord make a distinction between "dwelleth with you" and "shall be in you" in John xiv. 17?

T. H. R. "Dwelleth with you" is in contrast to Christ's going away. He was going away,

but the Spirit would abide. You could not say that Christ was *in* them when He was here, though He was with them; but the Spirit would abide, and would be *in* them.

J. S. O. In chapter xvi. where it says, "When he is come, he will convict the world of sin," &c., is that His own presence here apart from the saints?

W. W. Yes, but these effects must be produced out of a vessel.

T. H. R. I do not think the conviction as to the world was for the world, but for the saints. I think when the Spirit came everything was set in its right place. The world would be set in its right place, and Christ in His right place in glory in the thoughts of the disciples. The Spirit came, and there was demonstration as to the world of sin, because it did not believe in Christ. Christ had been here in perfect goodness and grace, and the world did not believe in Him.

E. D. The confusion arises from the Spirit dwelling in the church and in the saints.

T. H. R. Yes.

E. D. It is never said that *the* Spirit dwells in the individual saint. It says, "They were filled with the Holy Ghost."

D. L. H. I suppose there is a distinction there with regard to Christ. "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."

E. D. The same Spirit dwells in the individual believers that dwells in the assembly. It brings in the thought of unity.

J. S. O. That is the body.

REM. The Spirit dwells in the house.

T. H. R. Therefore you get the idea of a spiritual house, because it is formed by the Spirit and the Spirit dwells there.

A. M. Did not J. B. S. say there were the two things, filling all the house and then He sat upon each of them?

T. H. R. Yes, but he gave it up.

F. H. B. Can we have one word as to the other side in chapter xvi., "He shall glorify me"?

T. H. R. He would unfold all the glories into which Christ would enter there and then. He would take of Christ's things and unfold them to the disciples.

A. H. Is the demonstration to the world?

F. H. B. It is the fact of the Spirit's presence here which is the demonstration. That does not imply that the demonstration is brought home to the conscience of the world.

A. H. No, they are not convicted.

D. L. H. That is light for the Christian.



## “THE CHRIST.”

(EPH. I. 9, 10; 19-23.)

I WANT to say a few words on the subject of the Christ. It is a wonderful thing to see the thought of God's heart in view of the dispensation of the fulness of the times, that is, to gather or head up everything in One (ver. 10); everything shall come under one glorious Head, one wondrous Head—the Christ—whether in heaven or on earth. The Christ is to fill the universe of bliss. It always was God's mind from the very beginning. He never had any other thought but Christ. The whole arch of time is spanned by the testimony of the Christ.

In the garden of Eden the promise was made that the woman's seed was to bruise the serpent's head; no doubt it was known to Noah, for according to dates (if you sum up the ages of these men), Noah was born shortly after Adam died. There were men of faith who no doubt treasured what God had promised. Then God made promises to Noah, which must have been known to Abraham. Noah lived to the time of Abraham's father. That is a mere historical fact. I do not say they were communicated that way. Anyhow, the Lord of glory appeared

to Abraham, and what was it about? Of course, about Christ! God could never turn away from His Christ. It was promised that in his seed all nations should be blessed. And the testimony was handed on in divine power. Isaac, Jacob, Samuel and the prophets, David too—all held this great testimony of the Christ. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

And at last Christ came. Oh, what a Christ! But He is to be expanded and unfolded in God's wonderful way, and that is by means of the assembly. The assembly is "the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

It is a wonderful thing to know Christianity, to think of the whole universe being under one great Head—Christ. If we have the sense of what came out in Christ, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," we shall get some idea of what it will be when everything is put under that blessed Man!

But how is God going to do it? How did He get the assembly? Chapter ii. tells us it was from a heathen world, dead in sins, without Christ; not a bit of Christ was there in that heathen world; but God comes in in order to bring it about, quickens us and raises us up together with Christ, &c. What a wonderful thing, for there was not at that time a bit of Christ in the vast heathen world! Christ was alone. There He was the great vessel of

grace and truth. What a vessel! I am looking at it from the point of view of what He expressed down here. There was another side: what He was with the Father. There were those that beheld His glory who were able afterwards, by the power of the Spirit, to tell us "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." The words, "full of grace and truth" are connected with the previous part of the verse. He dwelt among us "full of grace and truth." You have the two sides there, what is expressed and set forth, that great Christ displayed everywhere, the Christ filling the whole universe, and also you have what He is with the Father.

There is our own special and peculiar glory, for He says, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." He prays that we may be with Him to behold His glory; so a peculiar place belongs to that great vessel which expresses Christ in the ages to come—to be with the Father, in communion with the Son, in association with the Son of His love. How wonderful that God can come in and bring it about! Man could not have thought that such a thing could be effected in a world where there was not a bit of Christ—that he could get a company quickened with Christ, so that when it is seen in all its perfection in completion, you find nothing but Christ. It is the setting forth of that blessed One—that

wonderful Body—the body of Christ—is the means by which He is set before the universe, by which the nations and the Jew will learn Christ. It is by that He will so perfectly and adequately express Himself in that universe of bliss. I want to have my mind filled with Christ.

It may seem slow work praying that you may get a full view of Christ in all His greatness; but still, pray on. It is worth praying and waiting for. Many a Christian, if held by the world, would wonder what you are praying for, but it is our privilege to grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ. The body grows up and edifies itself in love. You know all true ministry has that in view. There is not a single gift mentioned here that is not connected with that great subject—the evangelist, the pastor, the teacher were given, it is distinctly stated, “for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ.” Every true servant of God has that in view. It is one way in which he proves himself an apostle, or evangelist, or teacher. He has the great end in view that every one should come up to the measure. Every one of us has our place in the body of Christ. Not one will be

left out. It will all be brought out, but it is the object of ministry now. You may say, there is never a moment down here when we have arrived at that full measure. That may be, but it does not alter the truth that Christ gave the ministry with this object in view, for the edifying of the body till we all come to that measure. You cannot leave out "the faith" and "the knowledge of the Son of God." And as the mind develops in the knowledge of the Son of God you arrive at it. You cannot leave out the Son of God if you would grow up unto Christ. "Till we *all* come;" the body is to be complete—complete in every part, every saint coming up to the measure.

It should be the desire of every one of us to grow up to the Christ. It says "holding the truth," or rather "being true in love." That is the work that is going on—growing up unto Christ. Men on the other hand are developing in the direction of Antichrist and lawlessness. But there is a blessed, glorious, most wonderful work going on unknown to the world, little observed, but dear to the heart of any Christian, and that is, the development of Christ in the saints. It is not a question of what a man knows but of what he is. It is not a question of learning and reading and studying but to get a fresh impression of Christ. Get to know what He is in the eye of God. Was

it nothing to God to see that blessed One down here and what shone out in Him? What a contrast! What He was in Himself and what was all around! The very gospel that brings out so wonderfully what He was, the blessed Son, brings out also so wonderfully what man is; the contrast is wonderful. That blessed One in whom all the glory of God was centred, the outshining of God; and that cold, hard, godless, wicked world around Him.

It is wonderful to see the Lord Jesus in these different aspects. And wonderful to think there was a man here on earth who could write us such a record as John does. That a man was found who could write of the glories of the Son of God and tell us who He was. It was given to the Apostle Paul to bring out the dispensation (as we have heard), that grand dispensation; it was given to John to bring out what should be displayed in the dispensation. John is very distinctly marked by love. There was something very peculiar about him; I do not think any other man could have written John's gospel. No other man could have done Paul's work and no other man could have done John's work or could have written his gospel. He had been with that blessed One, had daily and hourly seen Him and observed Him. We can see it had affected him very greatly. How could he have written what he did otherwise? The Lord would not

allow him to pass off the scene without putting on record what he knew of that divine Person. He was not copying any other gospel. He gives us the Person, the Son, the subject of all testimony.

It is wonderful to trace Him through this gospel and to see Him evangelising, as for instance in chapter iii. Did any one ever before speak of such great things as Jesus did to Nicodemus? He went out in mind to the whole world and brings out the love of God to the world. The word "world" occurs in John more frequently than in any other scripture and it is because it is the glory of Christ, the only begotten Son that is presented, and hence we have those glorious words—"God so loved the world." Also the word "whosoever" is more prominent in this gospel. It is the Lord who took up that word. It is the most comprehensive word that you can have if you want to take in every one.

And then again see the Son of God evangelising in chapter iv. In both chapters He converses with one soul alone. The man ashamed to come by day comes by night; the woman comes at noonday hoping to be alone and ashamed to be seen at the ordinary time for drawing water; but both found themselves in the presence of One they little thought was going to say such wonderful words to them.

And I ask you, Can you tell me the end of that wonderful conversation with Nicodemus? Can you trace to the end those wonderful words to the woman? Can you tell the result for Nicodemus or the woman of Sychar? or the numbers who have been blessed through reading those sacred words recorded in John iii. and iv.? What single word or act of Christ's can you trace the end of? How far-reaching! All is treasured up in the Spirit for nothing of Christ can possibly be lost. And when you think of Him and His glory in that way, does it not make you thankful for what you read in Ephesians ii., "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us . . . hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together . . . that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." How blessed to be associated with that One—to be part of the Christ, that when He fills the universe and His glory is expanded everywhere, that you and I should have a part in it in that day! And you have a part in it now too; for it is our privilege now to set forth Christ. It is not what we *say* but what we *are*. The value of every brother is not so much what he preaches as what he is; what is of Christ in him. And you cannot bring out what is not there, Christ must be wrought in us first. Therefore you have to feed

on Christ and to cherish His glory; we have to let the Spirit have His way with us that we may advance and progress in likeness to that blessed One. And who could limit the blessing of that little bit of Christ which has been formed in you? You cannot tell the extent to which God will use that little bit of Christ in you. Therefore it is of the greatest importance to value the work of God in your soul and to go on with that Christ who has so vividly been brought before us hour by hour in these meetings.

This involves a very great change of walk here. You do not walk as you once did. It is a great reality. There is no sham about it. Sham belongs to this world and will pass away. What is of Christ is real and remains. It speaks here of learning Christ. And what have we learned? "That ye put off the old man . . . and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth."

Dear friends, when you see what the old man is in contrast to Christ and when you appreciate what Christ is, I think then in your soul you have put off the one and put on the other. It is a great thing to get full of Christ. Look at Him in the Psalms. The first time He speaks, the first time He comes to the front is in Psalm xvi., "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put

my trust." He is spoken of before constantly, but His first word is, "Preserve me." Who is that "me"? The dependent Man. It is very wonderful to trace that Christ through the Psalms. Again in Psalm xviii. we get that wonderful "me" Head of the nations. Who could be Head but that wonderful Christ whose pathway was marked by dependence on the blessed God? Then the path to all that glory is through the sufferings of the cross, this you get in Psalm xxii., "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Oh! what a moment when that wonderful "me" was forsaken! Then later on we get His divine glory in Psalm xl. where you have: "In the volume of the book it is written of me," and "Mine ears hast thou opened" or "Thou hast digged ears for me." What a "me" for whom God digged those ears! "A body hast thou prepared me." What a Me! When God's Son came down here what a change took place! What a new day burst upon this world!

If we are going on with that great testimony—and it is the only thing at this present moment—it involves conflict here. It is the privilege of the assembly to maintain the glory of Christ against every opposition. We need the armour for it; there is the power of evil, wicked spirits in the heavenlies; we know the source of it, but there is One above it all. Christ is

above all the power of evil. There was never a new device or trick of Satan set on foot but Christ has known it and anticipated it, and has been able to prepare His people by a ministry to meet it. But the power of the foe is very insidious and very satanic.

May the Lord give us grace to value Christ more and to see His glory more! Whether it be the glory of His Person as seen in John's gospel; or the glory of the dispensation, "all things" put under that wonderful Head, as seen in Paul's writings, it should make us desire to come out like Him here—evidently of His Spirit. It is not the privilege only of those who minister, but of all, as we read in chapter iii., "To comprehend with all saints and to know the love of Christ."

Dear friends, it is a wonderful thing to carry in your hearts "the Christ." The assembly was never meant to carry anything else. It is our treasure.

It prevents a man being worldly. He does not care about the schemes of men here if he has the Christ in his heart. He could not want to be a great man in the political world, or any other, if he thinks of the fulness of that day, the display of God's thoughts as to Christ, and the glories of Christ in that day, and to think we shall have a part in it!

May we each one treasure the testimony of

the Christ and seek to know the place He has with the Father. The wonderful place He has given us in connection with the Father's name. The wonderful grace and truth that marked that blessed One. There is no truth in the men of the world. It is a false world. How refreshing to get where there is truth, to have to do with people who are true, and whom you feel you can get to the bottom of. The Christian is under the shining of Christ. He does not say one thing and mean another. We have to learn Christ that we may come out like Him down here.

May the Lord grant that the Christ may have a greater place in every heart and mind for His namesake !

H. D'A. C.



## “BE NOT ASHAMED.”

(2 TIM. I. 6-12.)

WE are all of us aware that the second Epistle to Timothy has in view the declension of things here and the departure of the saints from the testimony given to them. We have not here the beginning of things of which we have just been hearing from the Epistle to the Ephesians. That ought to have gone on in power operating on the hearts and consciences of the saints, and going forward in the accomplishment of God's purpose according to the mystery of the gospel. It is of great importance to have a clear starting-point. It gives character to the whole christian course to the finish. Take such a scripture as 1 Timothy iii. 16, "Great is the mystery of godliness," &c. Great indeed is that mystery in which the whole scope and character of Christianity is sketched out in the completion of its orbit to the end; great indeed the mystery that was hidden up in it, the developments in result of which it was capable in the productive power of the Spirit; results which will be effectuated without fail to the greater glory of God in a new order of things where all will be brought under the administrative authority of Christ.

But in 2 Timothy things are very different indeed. It is a picture of complete failure and the disappointment of outward hopes. "All in Asia have turned away from me," says the apostle, and the expectations begotten in brighter times had come to naught. It was enough to try the faith of the strongest, and to cast into utter despondency the soul of any who did not find his resources outside of that which was visible to the naked eye. Looking at things as they actually were by comparison with what they ought and what they promised to be, what further hope was possible from the gospel and from "the testimony of our Lord," on which such expectations had been built from ancient times (read Isa. xlix.), now again repeated by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven? It is in view of such circumstances as these that the apostle makes use of these comforting and encouraging words, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God."

In 2 Corinthians ix. 4 he used this word "ashamed," in view of the "boasting" he had made of the Corinthians to those of Macedonia and Achaia in respect of their "readiness a year ago," and their "zeal," which had provoked others. Now he hopes that these boastings may

not be belied, and the disappointment of his hopes in them may not make him *ashamed*.

In the beginning of his gospel testimony Romans i. 16, he says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation." The world had nothing it could set up as salvation. Salvation is not to be found in it. Corruption is there, and falsehood, the power of evil, dissolution and death. It has no spring of resurrection, nor of rejuvenation in it; no deliverance from the evil in which it lies: judgment is on it, and no hope within its compass. But was there really no hope? Well, says the apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation." And so he announces it in all confidence, sure of the results that must most certainly follow. It was a wonderful thing, this gospel which he carried forth into the world. He saw the mystery of it, the potentiality of it, the latent power that was divinely bound up in it for the salvation of mankind from the power of evil, and charged with such a mission (Acts xxvi. 16-18) and empowered with such an instrument he was set upon doing great things and accomplishing mighty results through the preaching of Jesus Christ. (Rom. xv. 15-29.)

Then too as the basis of this testimony the Christ now seated in glory at God's right hand had been here and had fully glorified Him; and

as the consummation of His pathway here He had gone down into death and broken the power of evil thereby. In Hebrews ii. we have given us four reasons for His death, namely:—

First, on account of God, that He might glorify Him in the accomplishment of His purposes of grace.

Secondly, on account of the devil, that He might annul his power and deliver His people from the fear of death.

Thirdly, on account of sins, that He might make atonement in respect of them.

Fourthly, on account of the weakness of those who needed His priestly succour, and to help them in all their difficulties.

And now as risen from among the dead, "all power given to him in heaven and in earth," He sends His servants with the gospel to all nations and to every creature, carrying the saving power of God with it to every one that believes. A wonderful mission, and a wonderful message fraught with wonderful blessing and begetting high and glorious hopes in the breasts of those engaged in it! It was, as it were, a new era in the campaign, where up till now the leaders had been out-generaled, the artillery out-ranged and the forces out-flanked, when there appears a new executive that is to change the whole face of the field. Every heart beats high with expectation, and the sickening of hope deferred gives place

to reanimated courage and joy revived. Paul at least was not ashamed—not even in Rome itself, the mistress of the world, the seat of Satan's power, the present heiress of the multiplied corruptions of Babylon—he was "not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek." And great hopes and expectations are raised in the hearts of those who are led to expect great things from it, hopes which all too naturally soon give way to disappointment as they find that these expectations are not to be realised as they had looked for them.

As a matter of fact, what was the result produced? A certain number of people, at most but few comparatively, were brought under the power of it. Certain ones were gathered around the apostle. At first they were zealous in their attachment to him; they "would have plucked out their own eyes for him"; but soon he became "their enemy because he told them the truth," and in "biting and devouring one another," they seemed more like plucking out each others eyes; and sadly he has to write to them, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 11.) So again, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." How different from the *unopposed* triumphs of the

gospel in a world where Satan had learned to be obedient and man's heart had ceased to be the playground of his temptations! It was quite otherwise; God's servant was again outflanked by the enemy and Paul was left forsaken, as had been his Master before him, by all those who had once rallied to his standard. What now will Paul say? Hear him still with the same old battle cry, "I am not ashamed of the gospel"; and, says he to Timothy, "Do not you be ashamed of it either."

Note here how he insists on this word.

Chapter i. 8. "Be not thou therefore *ashamed* of the testimony of our Lord."

Chapter i. 12. "I am not *ashamed*."

Chapter i. 16. Onesiphorus is not *ashamed*.

Chapter ii. 15. Study to be a workman that needs not to be *ashamed*.

Now, I should like to turn to Luke ix. 18-26. The Lord asks them, "Whom say the people that I am?" They give various answers. Then He asks, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter says, "The Christ of God." That was a wonderful confession. I think it would go to the bottom of what we have been hearing from Ephesians. He was God's anointed Man; God's High Priest and King; the One who was to connect God and man together, the heavens and the earth in blessing; the vessel of the Spirit; the One who was to take everything in His

hand and set it right—a very wonderful Person was "the Christ of God."

Then He says, "Tell no man . . . . The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected . . . . and be slain, and be raised the third day." And then He says, "Now, you must not be ashamed of me." The shame here is connected with the rejection of Christ, and His being in the sight of man, as far as the accomplishment of any good work on earth could be seen, worthless. He was everything to God; but in man's estimation worth nothing. He was "set at nought;" and as far as this world is concerned, led by its religious and political guides, it puts Christ on one side of the equation and on the other side is *nought*. (Mark ix. 12; Luke xxiii. 11.) "Now," He says, as it were, "you must not be ashamed of me; remember who I am, and whom you have confessed Me to be, the Christ of God; though now I am accounted nothing, worthless, cast aside, rejected, put out of man's calculations, yet do not be ashamed of Me, hold on still to Me." That is, as I understand it, how the word comes out in connection with this scripture.

I do not think that here it means shame subjectively, if I might so put it. It is not being ashamed to give a tract away, or to speak a word for the Lord in the presence of the unconverted. It is not merely courage as you might say to a man, "Now speak out and do not

be ashamed." It is rather the being ashamed of *that Person*, "Do not be ashamed of *me*," He says. The courage to give away a tract or to speak a word in season is right enough, but not the meaning of this scripture. Here is One set before them and the question is, are they to be ashamed of *Him*? Every hope and expectation He had begotten in their hearts was to be crushed and brought to nought; and so He finds the two in Luke xxiv. wending their sorrowful way in disappointment and distress: "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." But deliverance was nearer to them than they knew. "Do not be ashamed," He says, as it were, "I am here in resurrection power."

Beloved brethren, I am speaking to some here who know these things better than I do myself, and you can tell me what a wonderful cheer you have found it when the word of the Lord came to you in very trying circumstances and said to you, "Be of good cheer: do not be ashamed of Me!"

Then there is another word that characterises the first part of this epistle coupled with not being ashamed, namely, Be prepared to *suffer afflictions* with the gospel. The gospel is here personified, and the afflictions of the gospel he says are yours. You will remember what the Lord said to the young man who proposed to

follow Him, "Then you must identify yourself with my afflictions." "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Luke ix. 58.)

This is a matter for reflection. We are apt to think that Christ is a stepping-stone to advancement in this world. With great shamefacedness I tell you that I thought so myself once. Not that I acted in that spirit exactly in a gross manner; but the thought was in my mind, and it was a great help to me, an era in my history, when I learned that such was not to enter into my mind any more. The Lord's way is to help you down, down to the bottom. That would be help against the world, and against yourself, and against all that is natural to you, for both you and I like promotion in this world. But blessed is the man who gets promotion in the world to come, at "the resurrection of the just"! Do not look for promotion here; do not seek a front seat here, nor a back one either in the outward appearance of self-conscious humility, but in the truth of it in your heart seek a back seat here where Christ is rejected. Remember, that we follow in this world a rejected Christ. The Christ who commands our affections here is not Solomon on his throne, but David in his afflictions. It is that which carries our hearts out of this world and keeps us waiting for the moment when we shall see Him, the Forerunner, com-

ing in His glory. And even then 'it is not the thought of our exaltation that commands our spirits, for when you get your crown you will join the rest in taking it off and casting it at His feet in holy worship, who alone is worthy. It is a great and blessed thing to have Christ before us. I only wish I could have for my own soul a little more of this great Object. But then Christ here is the rejected One.

Now take these words, verse 9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling . . . before the world began," that is, when there was nothing there to hinder or prevent the unfolding of His own purpose in Christ in respect of us. Then verse 10, death is not to be taken into account. "He hath annulled death." Take that on the one hand and chapter ii. 10 on the other. "*I endure* all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." This word "endure" is a peculiar word; not the same as in verse 3. ("Endure hardness" there, ver. 3, is used in a military sense as enduring the difficulties and hardships of a campaign; and the same word is also used in chapters i. 8, ii. 9, iv. 5; while *suffering*, which is in the root idea of it, occurs again in chaps. i. 12 and iii. 11.) But here in chapter ii. 10 the sense is, I abide under the pressure; I go through the sufferings patiently; I do not seek to escape it; I endure.

Now take these two passages together, chapter i. 9, 10 and chapter ii. 10, and see what a gospel it is, looked at in its inception in the womb of God's eternal purpose, and then maintained in the continuity of the Spirit to be effectuated by-and-by according to divine power in glory. Then let us not be ashamed, beloved. It would be a solemn thing if we came under the restriction pronounced here, "If we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." We may refuse to suffer. (Ver. 12, the same word as in ver. 10.) But if we deny Him He will deny us. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke ix. 26.) And we should not like it to be otherwise; it would not be righteous to have the pleasant and easiful things of this life in the denial of Christ and to look for the glories of the age to come. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." And quite right too. Of course, He loved us and died for us, and will have His own with Him in eternal glory; but that in no way militates against this truth equally true, "If we deny him, he will also deny us."

Here is the pathway set out that He has trodden right up to the glory of God. There is

nothing in that pathway that escapes His eye. Everything is subordinate to His power and marked out by His wisdom. Not a single thing that we consider so untoward and so disastrous but what occurs beneath the eye of God and according to His prescience. His wisdom is above all, and His resources without fail. When the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased Him to accomplish His own purposes. Were I made Prime Minister of the universe I would not use my power to stop for one second the onward course of things, because I feel sure that all is going on in the fulfilment of His purposes. He hath made all things for His own glory, and the wrath of man shall praise Him. Why should I intrude my puny foolishness when God is working all out for the accomplishment of His purposes in Christ? There is all the terrific power of evil. Does the storm rise and threaten to sink the boat? not a wave, not a splash but is obedient to His will. "The stormy wind fulfils his word." (Psa. cxlviii. 8.) "The ship where Jesus sails is scatheless everywhere." All must turn out to the glory of God. "He abides faithful."

Now note chapter ii. 14. "Let them stop their wordy strife," He says. There are great issues at stake, too great for us to waste time in such things. Take into account the purposes of God, stretching out from one eternity to another. Look at that chain stretched across from quay to

quay. In the middle it is lost to sight as it dips into the river. Yet it is securely fastened at both ends. So He would have us travel on in the sense of the security of His counsels, the one end fastened in the womb of His eternal purpose in Christ, the other end in the accomplishment of that purpose in glory by Him. Let us think of these things and not lose ourselves in the strife of words to no profit.

These things are not new to us here to-day, but the more we dwell on them the fuller and fresher they become to us. Everything in this epistle is secured "in Christ." Seven times over in it you get this expression. The first man has no place in the scheme: he is set aside. What we have here is "in Christ" and "to the glory of God by us."

Well, beloved brethren, it was just this that was in my mind. We have nothing in the testimony of our Lord to be ashamed of. It is true He does not now ride the winning horse, as we say; but no matter, do not be ashamed. He will ride the white horse in victory by-and-by as the "Faithful and True" (Rev. xix.), and we would not that He were ashamed of us at that day. Then we must not be ashamed of Him to-day. Shame is a feeling produced in the mind by a failure to come up to what is expected, or by some incongruity whereby a man loses caste and is lowered in the esteem of

others. He falsifies your expectation of him and you feel ashamed of him. How terrible if the Lord had to say, as it were, to any of us, "You were ashamed of Me because I was rejected and you put your trust in a false thing. What a chance you had to confess Me in a wicked and adulterous generation. Now before principalities and powers I am ashamed of you."

The second part of the epistle, chapters iii. and iv., is written in view of the very last days and the corrupting and deceptive influences at work therein, and then he commends the abiding value and sufficiency of the holy scriptures, the blessed word of God. Hold on to that. Joshua started with it (Joshua i. 7-9), and he was commanded to be strong and courageous to obey it; and now at the very end, it is still the guide and furnisher of the man of God. A remarkable word, too, is used of it, verse 16, "every scripture is divinely inspired," to express the fact that it emanates truly from God Himself; hence its sufficiency "to render the man of God complete, fully fitted to every good work." If it be asked then, "what have we to-day to meet the difficulty of the times?" the answer is, we have the Spirit which abides with us for ever; and we have the holy scriptures, the word of God. Nothing alters there; and when all else changes these abide. Paul says, "I am soon going off the

scene," and Paul has gone; but we have his epistles. Peter and John have gone but we have their writings. Others have gone, and others still will go, but we have abiding with us what we ever had, the Spirit of God and His word; all necessary to salvation and to equip the man of God for every good work is here. Thank God that it is so, and while we learn more the difficulties of the closing days may we learn more also the resources at our disposal to guide us safely through. The Lord's name be praised!

E. C.



## READING.

(READ MATT. XXIV. 42-51; XXV. 1.)

A. E. P. Would it be helpful to us to have the watching servant in view of the coming of the Lord?

T. H. R. What is important for us to see in the Gospel of Matthew is that Christ is presented to us in connection with God's ways here upon earth. For that reason it is called a dispensational gospel. It is remarkable that here what we have in Luke xii. is omitted, there the servants are watching and ready to open the door directly the Master returns, and the Master makes them sit down to meat and ministers to them all the joys of heaven. What you get here is the dispensational course of things upon earth.

W. W. And all are His servants. It is profession looked at as having a place on earth.

T. H. R. Even the church is looked at in Matthew as a place for Christ's name down here. Israel being set aside in the ways of God, the church and the kingdom of heaven come in, and in this way God maintains His title to things on earth. The church, as built by Christ, is an

impregnable fortress, as Mr. Stoney used to say, and God maintains His right and the name of His Son upon the earth by the church. God keeps His hand on things here and maintains Christ down here by means of the church. Then the Lord orders things; that is connected with the kingdom. He had a right to put Paul in prison. It might be said that he got into prison by his own act: it was his own fault in a way, but the Lord had a right to put him there. The hand of the Lord was in Paul's being a prisoner. I suppose but for that, we should not have had the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, &c.

G. W. G. He called himself "the prisoner of the Lord."

T. H. R. Yes. It is a very important point, and a great comfort to see how God maintains things on earth at the present moment. God maintains Christ down here. When the church is gone there will be the spirit of prophecy in the remnant, and the testimony will be maintained then, but it will take a different character.

W. J. Does not this take in the whole period of service?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. We get the history of the Jew pursued to the coming of the Son of Man, then the church as set in the place of present responsibility, and then the Gentile.

QUES. Who is the servant?

T. H. R. It is really the church which is in the place of the servant, but more especially those in Christianity who take up the service of their absent Lord.

W. H. B.—TR. Was there ever a time when these conditions would not apply, the call to the servant to beware of the drunken, and to take care of the household ?

T. H. R. No, I think not.

W. H. B.—TR. So it goes on through the whole history of Christendom.

W. W. As to there being only one servant spoken of here, is not the truth set forth in this way so that every other one may come in ?

T. H. R. Yes ; the Epistle to Timothy is addressed to one servant, but it is the direction for every servant.

E. R. In Luke, where it is a question of watching, it says, "Blessed are *those servants*," and here it is *a* servant where it is a question of serving. Why is that ?

T. H. R. I think Luke brings in the heavenly side of things. They have their hand on the latch, ready to open to Him immediately. Then He ministers to them all the joys of heaven.

H. D'A. C. Is not this general here ? "The servant of the Lord must not strive" would be distinctive.

T. H. R. The Lord speaks as about to be absent, and He committed His household to the

care of the servant. What was in the Master's mind was those who are faithful and prudent. It is looked at as *one* faithful and prudent servant, but it is to characterise the whole serving company, who will care for Christ's household while He is away, and give them meat in due season.

W. J. It is "faithful and *wise* servant" here, and "*good* and faithful" in the other similitude. (Chap. xxv. 21.)

A. E. P. What do you understand by "would not have suffered his house to be broken up"?

T. H. R. I suppose he would not let the thief come in.

A. E. P. He guards the house.

T. H. R. It is very much the same thought as in chapter xiii. 25, "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares." Here instead of guarding the Master's house, the servant was not faithful, and let the thief come in.

J. B. Would verse 43 be figurative?

T. H. R. It is all figurative in the end of the chapter. The servant was to be a servant, and not to lord it, nor to eat and drink with the drunken.

W. H. Is there not watching in two ways: watching for the Lord, and over what is committed to us in His absence?

T. H. R. The servant watches for the Lord, and if he is watching he would be faithful as to

what is committed to him and awake when the thief came.

M. G. If we were watching for the Lord we would be anxious to have everything in order according to His mind.

T. H. R. I think the virgins evidently set forth moral purity and separation from the world. The servant sets forth responsibility connected with the church—the Master's household.

A. H. Is not this the whole responsible state of things in the present period? The evil servant is responsible as well as the faithful and wise servant.

T. H. R. Exactly. To me it is most interesting to see that God never gives up the earth.

QUES. He has purchased the earth, has He not?

T. H. R. Yes, and He has taken possession of it in a way. When the children of Israel came to the borders of Canaan, and the ark passed through the Jordan, God laid claim to the land of Canaan as Lord of all the earth. He shewed His title to the earth by taking possession of that bit of land. It is His pledge that all the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ. (Rev. xi. 15.)

A. H. That is the year of jubilee.

T. H. R. Yes, He will make good His claim to the whole earth. We may read the incident

of the ark crossing Jordan and regard it as a thing that is past; but it was really God beginning to take possession of the earth.

A. E. P. Would you say that He maintains His claim through His household ?

T. H. R. Yes; His household maintains His character, the kingdom maintains His right. The kingdom and the house go together in scripture. "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion." In Exodus xv. 17 there is "the mountain" and "the sanctuary." The kingdom and the sanctuary are connected in the mind of God. The dominion maintains the rights of God, and His house, His sanctuary, is that in which He dwells and where His character is shewn. The servant ought to maintain all the gracious character of the Lord in His care of the household.

W. A. W. Is that why you get the title of the "Son of man?"

T. H. R. The Lord takes the title of the Son of man because the kingdom is given to the Son of man. From the moment that Christ begins to *administer* down here He calls Himself the Son of man. He cleanses the leper as Emmanuel, and then you get the Son of man having power on earth to forgive sins. The title is connected with the kingdom of heaven, not so much with Israel.

M. G. So in the last chapter here, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

T. H. R. I take it that that is the Son of man. I do not think the commission there was carried out. If you realise that the Master is absent you watch for Him. Any servant who really loved his master would seek to watch for him and take care of his things. I have known servants who were more careful when their master was absent than when he was there.

W. A. W. Because it was left to their responsibility.

T. H. R. Yes, and to their love. They would like everything to go right in their master's absence.

QUES. Do you distinguish between the house and the household?

T. H. R. The house of God gives a very wide thought. The household is that you know the master's mind, and you really set forth the master's character. You would not know that in a way if you did not know the Priest. If we did not know the sanctuary we should not know very much of the Master's character. In a man's house his character comes out. If you see a well-ordered household and love reigning there, you know what the man is. It is the Master who gives character to His house. The kingdom maintains His rights.

E. E. C. What are the limits of the house?

T. H. R. I could not give a limit to the house. In one sense it is the universe, and every family will have a place in it. The household has come into a state of confusion, but it would really embrace Christianity wherever it is found.

E. E. C. Would it include profession?

T. H. R. Well, God's house is always looked at as God's house, and in God's mind it is where God is pleased to dwell. Profession gets into it, but that is not really the house in God's mind. Profession gets in and will be tested just as the evil servant will be tested as one who has falsified his Master's character in every way, and will be rejected.

G. W. G. The house may go wider in Corinthians.

T. H. R. The house in one sense is His household, "Whose house are we"; and in Christianity in God's mind it is evidently composed of living stones. If you look at it as a household you must admit that it is that which is under the Lord.

A. E. P. It is the Lord's household.

H. D'A. C. The first time the house occurs in scripture it is the household. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." (Gen. vii. 1.)

T. H. R. I think scripture makes a difference between the habitation and the house. "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of

God through the Spirit." As forming a household there is an external idea connected with the house. God's mind and character are shewn out, as well as being His habitation. There were two sets of curtains in the tabernacle; the linen curtains were called the tabernacle; the word really means the habitation—where *God* dwelt. It was also the tent of the *congregation*; the curtains of goats' hair gave it that character. That is what is external, and answers more to the way in which we behave ourselves as God's household; men are to pray everywhere, and women are to adorn themselves in modest apparel, &c. That is not in the meeting. If you are going on with your daily business you form part of the house of God in that sense. Men are to pray *everywhere*, not merely in the meeting. If two of us agree to pray together we may pray in a barn or by the road-side, and we can count on the Lord that it will be heard.

A. H. What distinction would you make between the master of the house not knowing what hour the thief would come, and the faithful and wise servant set over the household? Was the first in connection with the Jewish order of things, and the other with the present period?

T. H. R. The first may refer to the break up of the Jewish system, then the church takes up the place of Israel on earth as the servant.

REM. In Galatians we have the Israel of God.

T. H. R. Yes, things are maintained on the earth for God, and they are maintained now in the church.

M. G. Is not that the way in which Peter speaks of the house of God? "Judgment must begin at the house of God." He is looking at the governmental side.

T. H. R. Yes. It has been said that it is only in the *general* epistles that you get the term "house of God" spoken of, not in epistles to a local assembly, and to my mind that gives a very extended thought of the house of God, not that it goes beyond Christians now. The thought of the priesthood and the sanctuary is internal in a way. A person must go in to learn the secrets of the sanctuary. My ordinary conduct in this world ought to shew out the character of the blessed God.

F. W. G. Do you take Ephesians to be a general epistle?

T. H. R. It is said to be a circular letter.

F. W. G. It speaks of the household of God; that would make it general.

W. A. W. Do we get the two thoughts in Exodus xv.; "I will prepare him an habitation," and "Thou shalt . . . plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in

the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established."

T. H. R. Ah! no; you must take the habitation (ver. 13) and the sanctuary (ver. 17) much as the same thing. My impression is that they anticipated the sanctuary because they were brought to the shadow of the cloud. The tabernacle or habitation and the shekinah, that is the cloud, are cognate words; both come from the same root, signifying habitation. The cloud was the habitation of God, and the tabernacle was the habitation of God too.

W. H. B.—TT. The tabernacle was to answer to the other.

T. H. R. There were also the goats' hair curtains—called the tabernacle—or rather tent of the congregation, for God not only dwelt there, but He gathered His people to the door of His dwelling. They were His congregation. The great point in the household is that the character of God is maintained in this world so that it should not be falsified. God maintained His rights in the earth against any who would have withstood these by means of Israel. They were a kingdom really when they were in the wilderness. God said in Exodus xix. "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests." There was to be a kingdom established; Exodus xviii. proves that, it brings us very distinctly to the kingdom. They were all there at the mount of God, and

the Gentile comes in to offer sacrifices to God, officers are appointed, &c., so that they were established there as a kingdom in a kind of way. When they journeyed Moses said, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." When Amalek came against Israel, he put his hand on the throne of the Lord. He dared to touch the rights of God in touching Israel. Then Israel had the tabernacle also and God gives them His law; He deposits His testimony with them. They ought to have been a testimony to all other nations; every nation should have learnt through Israel what a Jehovah their God was, not merely through power, but in His holy character.

W. J. If you go forward into the Psalms you will find the two thoughts linked together there. Psalm xcix. is the kingdom; Psalm c. the house.

T. H. R. They are constantly linked together. The moment the kingdom is established, you get the house built in Solomon's time.

W. W. The servant is not so much in connection with the kingdom, with the preservation of rights, as with the order within the house, with the administration of what is within.

T. H. R. All the household need care, but in a meeting you will often find those who are feeble and weak, those who want to be carried

and cared for. The poor were not to cease out of the land so that God's bowels of mercy might be manifested. Perhaps there is a poor old saint who knows very little, and he falls asleep, and you lay him in the grave; he has gone to heaven, and you feel that he has been cared for as part of God's household. It is not merely that a number of us can meet here, and talk of mysteries that belong to the sanctuary, but what should come out from us is the fellowship of love; we care for His household.

W. W. In that connection how striking the description of the household is in Deuteronomy—the poor, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow.

T. H. R. Then again, look how the fellowship of love comes out. In the Lord's supper we get first the bonds of divine love; we have fellowship in the sense of the love of Christ. Then there is the fellowship of saints, and we are to care for the feeble and the weak, so the next thing is the collection. Of course there are the expenses, but we think of the poor saints and what may be necessary for the poor, the weak and the feeble. It is a poor thing to put money into the box as if it was in intrusion; it is part of the fellowship of saints. The servant would care for the character of his Master, and that there should not be a feeble one who would not be watched over.

P. Would caring for the saints come in in verse 45, "to give them meat in due season"?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. In every way we are to care for the household, and to watch that the Master's character is not falsified but maintained in the household. "The lambs feed after their manner," and so the Lord said, "Feed my lambs." "Feed my sheep."

G. W. G. He puts the lambs first when He commissions Peter, but He never speaks of lambs when it is in connection with Himself; in His mind we are all sheep. But He speaks of the lambs to Peter that he might not forget them.

W. A. W. It is a great thing that God has a house on earth where His character can be known.

T. H. R. Yes, it is an immense thing that we should maintain the character of God. It was spoken of here last year that we have not merely in a day of disorder to take up 2 Timothy, but we have to go on the lines of 1 Timothy as well. We accept the fact of the great house, and have to purge ourselves from vessels to dishonour, and follow righteousness, faith, love and peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart; but if there are a few together, counting on the faithfulness of the Lord to His people, they seek to walk according to 1 Timothy; they do not give up the order of the house of God.

W. J. The man of God is found in both.

T. H. R. Yes; it is, "thou, O man of God" in 1 Timothy, and in 2 Timothy it is more general.

J. B. Should not the care go out to all the household?

T. H. R. Yes, I would gladly help any saint if I could. It has come before us in prayer several times since we have been together here that we should help others. We have been asking the Lord to throw people in our way that we may help them. Mr. Stoney used to say that a meeting should be attractive.

W. J. Do you not think there is a tendency with us to be sectarian?

T. H. R. The danger with us all is to become unbalanced. If some special truth is brought before us and apprehended, it may occupy us unduly, and we forget that there are other truths which are equally important, and in that way become unbalanced in our minds.

A. E. P. Looking for the Lord to come would keep all that in its right place.

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. That point which I tried to emphasise yesterday, the Spirit linking our hearts with Christ within the veil, would keep things in place with us.

W. J. One of the effects of watching for the Lord would be that we should embrace all His people.

A. E. P. That is what I meant. We should

be more suitable to give them meat in due season. We do not want to cram things down their throats.

W. W. "Meat in due season" is not temporal care only?

T. H. R. Oh, no; only we are to care for one another.

G. W. G. In connection with the collection, might we give to those not in fellowship? I have advocated other Christians outside ourselves being helped.

T. H. R. Quite so. If it is a case the saints can happily recognise.

A. H. You need great wisdom for it, otherwise it might be taken as a bribe.

T. H. R. Yes, you do. Necessarily one must help those one knows and comes in contact with first. You would not help a person in the next parish to the neglect of one in your own.

W. W. The one who administers relief and uses the office of a deacon well must be able to turn up the genealogies; you might find yourself relieving persons who get no spiritual help at all.

T. H. R. It seems to me that Timothy gives the general principles as to that. I feel there are some that we cannot let starve, but I do not feel free to do more than that for them, whilst there are others that I could give everything I had got for them.

**QUES.** Will you explain what you meant by being acquainted with the genealogies, Mr. Walsh?

**W. W.** In the question of relief it is most important not to go contrary to the Lord's order. When people have well-to-do children you would not take the responsibility off their shoulders.

**A. H.** 1 Timothy v. gives us the true principles of relief.

**A. E. P.** What was said just now as to our being in touch with the Lord in view of His coming again would make everything simple and keep us right.

**W. J.** What is the difference between trading with the goods in the next chapter, and what we have in these verses?

**T. H. R.** Here it is the general serving body, the character of one who cares for the Lord's household; there it is individualised, what God entrusts to each one. One has ten talents, another five, and another one. The man with ten talents might be a servant in a different kind of way from the man with one talent, but the point is to use the talent entrusted to him and then to enter into the joy of the Lord.

**E. R.** It is "good and faithful" after the work is done.

**W. W.** How blessed that the joy of the Lord is the reward!

**W. J.** There will be no sorrow then; there is

a certain amount of sorrow now, you feel things. The time is coming when the Lord will have joy and His servants will have joy too.

A. H. Is not what is entrusted to a person according to his ability? If he has not ability there is not so much entrusted to him.

W. J. What is that ability?

T. H. R. I suppose it was connected with the vessel. God forms the servant for what He will entrust to him. Speaking generally the formation of the vessel is most important. Many a gift is marred by an untrained vessel. There is nothing which helps to form a vessel more than the discipline of your daily life, going on with your daily work. You learn habits of industry and patience, and waiting upon God. The husbandman must have long patience. Farmers sow their seed but they do not expect to see the crop the next day.

A. H. The question of ability is a very important point, because if we see that we should not go beyond our measure. We could not be J. N. D.; he had ten talents.

T. H. R. Yes; and when you see a man like G. V. W., who could doubt that God formed that vessel. Mr. Stoney used to say that God leads you into circumstances where you are deeply impressed with some sense of Christ. Moses was qualified at the burning bush; he was deeply impressed with the sense of Jehovah

there. He saw how Jehovah could sustain in the midst of tribulation. God leads you through circumstances where you can prove what God will be to you, and you can learn what Christ is; then your ministry will take that character.



# READING.

(PSALM XL.)

W. J. Psalms xl. and xli. should be read together: it is the conclusion of the first book.

The title of the first Book of Psalms is, "I have found a man to my pleasure"; and in that One He will bless us. God finds the Man after His own heart, who will fulfil all His will, and in Him we are blessed. In reading this psalm you should begin at verse 5, because it is a conclusion arrived at. It is a psalm of the deepest interest.

In the first Book of Psalms you get Satan's man. We learn by contrasts. In Psalm x. you get the moral features of Satan's man, but he is only introduced to make way for God's Man, who comes out in Psalm xvi. The wicked one of whom the apostle speaks in Thessalonians is there. Everything comes out in the Psalms. Then God describes His Man. In Psalm xv. He is described, but in Psalm xvi. He is found—the One who is after His own heart, and who shall fulfil all His will. But this psalm involves resurrection. He could not be a Head except in resurrection. In His person it was all

there, but it was not available for us save by death and resurrection. There is the horrible pit and the miry clay, and then His feet are set on a rock: that is resurrection.

The strict application of the Psalms is to Israel, but the principles apply to us. The remnant learn that if Messiah comes to them, it is that they might be identified with Him. The principle of double identification comes out all through scripture. Hebrews establishes the same principle: He comes to our side, that we may go to His side. It is a great thing for our souls to get hold of by the Spirit the thought of double identification. If His feet go where my feet go, my feet must go where His feet go. That is the key to the understanding of this psalm. Take Hebrews ii. 11. The Sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one. That is identification; we go to His side. Then we get (ver. 14), "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

J. W. B. If God is to bless us He must bring us into suitableness to Himself.

W. J. What God has established in Christ is the security and ground of our blessing. That is the point of this psalm. Verse 5 starts this psalm. "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward." It refers to

Israel, but has its application to us. The thoughts of God could not be expressed in type. Here in this psalm we get the One who takes everything out of type. "Thy thoughts to us-ward." The happiness of the creature is to give the Creator His pleasure. "For thy pleasure they are and were created."

J. W. B. That is we are to be for God's glory and man has come short of that.

W. J. Yes. The principles are the same in their application to us as to Israel. "Bringing many sons unto glory" is God's thought to us-ward. Then verse 5 of Psalm xl. corresponds to Hebrews ii. 10. It has been said that we have the universe of bliss suggested here in connection with one Man; but if you can get one Man, then you can get myriads of men.

J. W. B. What is a universe of bliss?

W. J. It is a universe in which God is revealed and perfectly responded to. God *all* in revelation, and *in all* in response by the power of the Spirit. The revelation and the response come out in the same Person. It is brought out in one Man, and in that way the universe of bliss is suggested here.

J. W. B. There will be a scene filled with the blessing of God.

W. J. You get in Psalm xl. the Man in whom all is established, and in Psalm xli. you are told to consider Him.

J. W. B. Why is He called the poor Man?

W. J. We like a man who can assert himself, and he has wealth in the way of resource. The poor man is the opposite to a man who asserts himself. No man will praise a man when he does well for God. Men will praise you when you do well for yourself.

J. W. B. The poor man is akin to the meek man.

W. J. Yes. When we get God's Man, we get Satan's man in juxtaposition. Read this psalm and John xiii. You get God's poor Man, and then Judas. Psalm cix. is the same, God's poor Man, and Judas, Satan's man. Then God says to the poor Man, "Sit thou at my right hand." He is put at the right hand. Psalm cx. is the answer to Psalm cix. When Judas goes out then the Lord says, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." We ought to love the Lord for that. That is God's poor Man, who glorified God at infinite cost to Himself. God's poor Man is glorified by God. The life we have from Christ in its principle is a God-glorifying one, and therefore the moral sequence is that we must be glorified: it must be glorified by God. The sequence of things is very remarkable. We have had the moral sequence of things brought out the last few years; that is the moral necessity of things.

In Psalm xl. it is the Head presented, and in

Psalm xli. the blessedness which belongs to the Man who considers Him. If I am finding the will of God down here then I am happy; but if not, then I am not happy. Verse 12 of Psalm xli. is the key to the book. "Thou . . . settest me before thy face for ever." Therefore it ends with a doxology.

G. O. He had found His Man.

W. J. We have found our Head.

J. W. B. It is like "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

G. O. It is the moral necessity.

W. J. If our souls were on these lines we should learn things morally. Mr. Bellett said, You learn truth morally in the Psalms; you may learn it doctrinally in other portions of scripture. Verse 8 (Psa. xl.) is the key and all the rest is the result. If God's law is within His heart He must do things rightly. Types and sacrifices could not set forth God. Then He comes, and He says, "Lo, I come . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God." He takes them out of type, and God's thoughts are set forth in Him.

G. O. Israel was only a type of man.

W. J. The first action of the life of Christ in you is according to verse 8; you love God. We constantly think the action of life is in conduct, doing things rightly. The first great thing is to have life expressed Godward. We are so trained up in legality, and we get occupied with

proprieties; but the first great action of life is Godward. The source of life is the object of life. We have not received life from Christ to be occupied with life in ourselves, but we have received life from Christ to be occupied with life in Him. Life is Godward. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." What is that? To love God; and what is the law of sin and death? To love myself. The expression and action of life is very beautiful. Christianity is a living spring of life Godward, and righteousness is the outcome. Then you get proprieties.

J. W. B. That is abiding in Him.

W. J. Yes, it is. Look at the three sentences, "he was manifested to take away our sins"; secondly, "in him is no sin"; and thirdly, "whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." Put these three together.

J. W. B. What is abiding in Him? What is that to you?

W. J. It is, I am kept under His influence. It is all a question of affection. A flower abides in the sunlight, and therefore it reflects the light of the sun; the sun produces the colour. "They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." When you see His face then His character will be reflected.

QUES. Has verse 12 reference to the cross?

W. J. We do not get the cross here. It is

the cry of the victim before the altar, as Psalm xxii. is the cry of the victim on the altar.

P. A. E. S. That can be present—we see His face.

W. J. Oh, yes; we behold His glory and reflect it. Psalm cxii. is “His name shall be in their foreheads”; Psalm cxi. is “they shall see his face.” His beauty is seen, and then the result is the beauty is reflected. Work that out, and think of it. I like suggestions. It is beautiful to see in the Person of the Lord that He perfectly revealed God, and as Man responded.

G. O. None but He could do it.

W. J. It was important what came out as to the Headship and Lordship. He was morally qualified for these official glories, but what gives strength to all is that He was the Son of God. Christ has qualified Himself for Headship and Lordship. It has been pointed out that Lordship and Headship come out in Acts ix., “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Here I am, Lord. But in Acts x. Peter had to learn that Headship involves “whosoever.” Peter went to college to be stretched out to the width of the sheet; he was too Calvinistic. Our tendency is to be unbalanced. The purposes of God are most blessed; but when you come to Headship, it contemplates everybody. Across the great sheet you get whosoever written. It is one of

the most instructive chapters a preacher can read.

P. A. E. S. How far do we carry the thought of double identification?

W. J. Double identification is that He came to our side so that we might go to His side. The "horrible pit" is our distance, Christ has gone into it; "miry clay" is our state. He identified Himself with us where we were, and therefore we are to be identified with Him as the result in the highest glory. In the sacrifices you get God beginning with the burnt offering, and ending with the sin offering. In the latter, the offering is identified with the offerer; the fire of that goes out; in the former, the offerer is identified with the offering, and the fire never goes out. Therefore you can never weaken your acceptance. Then I see in this psalm the three things, faith, love and hope. You get the same features spoken of the Thessalonians, "work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope." The Head was reflected. In the Psalm it is all in Christ. See the simplicity of Christianity. These Thessalonians were set up in the true relationships, "in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ." Look at the simplicity of it! People only converted three months, and yet see their state; there was moral space for God. It was the universe of bliss commenced for God. The disciples in the end of the gospels

were looking for the public display of what they were in morally.

P. A. E. S. It is very wonderful.

W. J. We come under the impression of ministry; you like it because you have a life which answers to it, it stirs desires; but when you go away, what are you going to do? We may refuse the light. But am I going to be exercised by it?

G. O. If you are exercised about it, you will pray.

W. J. I know what it is to be fascinated by the truth, enjoying it as light, and yet not knowing the reality of it. It is the call of the Lord at the moment; the light has been given; but we have not been exercised by it; we have not answered to it.

"He inclined unto me, and heard my cry." He will answer me not according to my cry, but according to the cry of Christ. In Psalm xxii. 24 He says, "For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard." I am speaking of identification. The remnant will measure everything by Christ, and we are put on the same line.

J. W. B. Where was the identification?

W. J. If I was down in the depths He went there. He was identified with the depths where

we were. So God will answer us according to the cry of Christ.

It is interesting to notice that the second Book of Psalms begins with the falling barometer. Then in Psalm xlv. you get the Head, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." So Christ is the secret of the rising barometer. We shall embrace our Head. He is all I want to me. Romans vii. is a great study—a man wanting to do a thing, and he cannot do it. Then you must find your Husband, and you must admire your Husband. We sever Romans vii. and viii. too much. We are "married to another, . . . that we should bring forth fruit unto God." I am not called upon to look upon the expression of life in me, but upon the perfect expression of the life of Christ. My Husband is my true self.

G. O. It is not I, but Christ liveth in me.

